musicHound

folk

The Essential Album Guide

edited by Neal Walters
and Brian Mansfield

foreword by
Mark D. Moss,
Sing Out!
magazine

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DETROIT • NEW YORK • LONDON

VISIBLE INK PRESS

musicHound™ folk
The
Essential
Album
Guide

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musicHound contents

list of sidebars . . . . . *vii*
foreword (by mark d. moss, sing out! *magazine)* . . . . . *ix*
introduction . . . . . *xi*
musicHound owner's manual . . . . . *xiii*
credits . . . . . *xv*
acknowledgments . . . . . *xxiii*

a–z guide to folk acts / **1**

compilation albums / **867**

publications / **873**

web sites / **879**

record labels / **891**

radio stations / **895**

music festivals and workshops / **899**

five-bone album index / **915**

band member index / **923**

producer index / **943**

roots index / **995**

category index / **1023**

musicHound sidebars

editor's choice: 11 folk harp albums 3
the 1920s 8
editor's choice: 7 great highland bagpipe albums 19
the 1930s. 30
editor's choice: 5 uilleann pipe albums 39
the 1940s. 52
editor's choice: 13 celtic fiddle albums. 61
the 1950s. 68
editor's choice: 12 cape breton albums 79
scottish fiddle styles 90
editor's choice: 9 mountain dulcimer albums . 101
bodhrán 112
editor's choice: 15 singer-songwriter albums . 123
celtic music 132
editor's choice: 11 blues albums 151
cape breton music. 158
editor's choice: 13 english folk-rock albums 173
bagpipes 182
editor's choice: 5 celtic folk-rock albums 195
great highland bagpipe 208
editor's choice: 10 tin whistle albums 221
folk harp 224
editor's choice: 5 zydeco albums 245
british folk rock 256
editor's choice: 9 dobro albums 271
old time music 280
editor's choice: 10 acts to watch 291
old time fiddle 300
blues guitar styles 308
slack key guitar 322
banjo styles 334
editor's choice: 13 desert island discs 349
uilleann pipes. 358
banjo types 368
klezmer music 380
irish fiddle styles 392
bluegrass music 404
cajun fiddle 418
editor's choice: 15 old time fiddle albums . . . 425
hurdy-gurdy 434
editor's choice: 15 unjustly overlooked gems 449
sean-nós singing 460
editor's choice: 12 old time banjo albums . . . 467
bouzouki 482
editor's choice: 4 more pipe albums you can't live without 493
folk rock in the u.s. 506

editor's choice: 20 bluegrass albums 517
concertinas 528
editor's choice: 10 cajun albums 539
morris dance 550
editor's choice: 14 celtic albums 561
cajun accordion 570
accordion. 580
editor's choice: 11 slack key guitar albums . . . 593
cajun music 606
editor's choice: 18 folk albums from across the usa 607
zydeco music 612
editor's choice: 7 autoharp albums 627
the 1960s. 638
editor's choice: 14 hammered dulcimer albums 651
the 1970s. 660
editor's choice: 20 old time albums. 673
the 1980s. 684
editor's choice: 11 country/folk albums 695
the 1990s. 706
hammered dulcimer 716
mountain dulcimer 726
editor's choice: 5 bluegrass albums 739
bowed psaltery. 750
autoharp 760
dobro 772
editor's choice: 5 songs that shook the folk-rock world. 783
open tunings for guitar 788
moses asch (1905–1986) 804
editor's choice: 13 more desert island discs . . 817
harry smith (1923–1991). 830
cecil sharp (1859–1924) 840
alan lomax (1915—) 850

You're holding in your hands an answer to that most reviled of all rhetorical questions: "What is folk music?"

Oh, yeah. I can hear the universal groans already. But if you've picked up a book with the word "folk" emblazoned across the cover in 96-point type, it's likely that you're bringing *some* kind of personalized preconception to the project already. And therein lies the rub. If we want to have a discussion *about* folk music, we have no choice but to find a common ground for the definition of the genre. To do that, it can't hurt to gain a little historical perspective on the subject.

"Folk music," as a phrase, was first coined in the early decades of this century by the noted folklorists John A. and Alan Lomax to describe "orally transmitted, community music." Put simply, they collected the music "of the folk," so it seemed logical to call it folk music. What set it apart from other musical forms was that the genre was driven as much, or more, by the context in which the music existed, thrived, changed, and was used as it was by the "style." The Lomaxes' folk music was played and sung on front porches, on the range, in the fields, in churches, at a cradle, over a pile of wood, at a dance, or in prison. This was music that was an integral and active part of the lives of the people who made it, sang it, danced it . . . not something pasted on via a trip to a mall superstore.

But times change, and with those changes come mutations of even the most exacting definitions. The Lomaxes and other folklorists recorded much of the music they collected. By the late 1940s, a new generation of revivalists, inspired by their work, had come along. They began singing, playing, and recording those same tunes, adding to and processing the material as well. World War II and radio had done much to eradicate most of the regional cultural boundaries in this country (not the music, mind you, but the physical and cultural boundaries that had prevented intermingling of styles). Without calculated forethought, people were cherishing the undefinable thread that runs through traditional and rooted music . . . and incorporating parts of it into the popular music of the times. By the end of the next decade, folk music was in the throes of a commercial boom.

By the time the dust settled in the latter part of the 1960s, the music industry had succeeded in convincing much of the public that "folk music" equaled "singer-songwriter." (Try stopping someone on the street today and asking them to name a folk artist. You're unlikely to get an answer beyond Jewel or Bob Dylan.) Tradition-bearers and aficionados of those traditions began finding other ways to describe their music. Old time . . . country blues . . . gospel . . . Cajun . . . klezmer . . . ballads . . . bluegrass . . . as well as dozens of other genres (and their hybrids) splintered off and went their separate ways. Oh, there remained (and remain) lots of us who continue to carry the torch of a broader, umbrella-style definition for folk music—but it's hard to share a definition that simply doesn't fit into neat, objective, unique columns.

And that's where a book like *MusicHound Folk* gains its power and worth. By looking for that ethereal thread that binds the music of seemingly disparate artists to the roots or continuum of recorded folk music, the editors have created a perfect foundation for our own journeys to find a personal definition for folk music. Leafing through these pages you can find thousands of connections and inspirations between, from, and toward other artists and approaches to music. Yeah, there are

songwriters who are mostly inspired by the folk boom years . . . but it doesn't take "six degrees of separation" to find a traditional artist who sings ballads passed for generations through his or her family tree. Look up the artists you know and love, follow their influences and inspirations back and forth. It won't be long before it becomes impossible to explain folk music with a single artist or style again. And not much longer before you'll be giddy with all the possibilities that this new way of looking at music offers. Go ahead, try it. Before long, you'll know what I mean.

Since 1983, Mark D. Moss has edited Sing Out! The Folk Song Magazine, *the longest running (since 1950!) periodical devoted to folk music in the world. He also serves as the executive director of its parent not-for-profit educational organization, also called Sing Out!, and oversees the SORCe (a multi-media resources center focusing on folk revival material from the 1940s to the present) and Sing Out! Publications, publishers of folk song collections like the enormously popular* Rise Up Singing, *the group singing songbook. He resides in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with his wife, folksinger Anne Hills, and their daughter, Tamlyn.*

The job of co-editing *MusicHound Folk* has been an intensely pleasurable, professionally rewarding, and certainly a humbling educational experience. As a musician myself and an avid collector for nearly 40 years now, I thought I knew a lot about this music. After immersing myself in it for the best part of six months, I can tell you that I now realize just how very little I really did know—starting with the question I was asked nearly every day during this period: "What is your definition of folk music?" Gulp. Until the question was asked, I was sure I knew the answer: folk music was what I liked. Of course, I had also observed Internet discussion groups arguing this question for weeks with an intensity that normally accompanies religious debate and with no one willing to compromise in the slightest. At one extreme, people argue broadly that "it's anything that folks sing," a definition that encompasses nearly everything from children's nursery rhymes to Gregorian chants to Delta blues to Bob Dylan protest songs. Some purists respond that it's anything that folks sing as long as: 1) it has survived some sort of aging process with origins more or less lost in antiquity; 2) the performer learned it through some sort of ongoing oral tradition; 3) it's completely non-commercial in nature; or any of a dozen other qualifiers. Trained folklorists—with whom I did not consult—would presumably tend toward the latter definition, pausing only to add an extra mouthful or two of precise technical jargon to make it read more like a primer for a graduate course in anthropology than a practical definition for "folks" to understand. This definition would exclude virtually everything that you see in the folk sections of our nation's commercial music outlets, dismissing the lot as simply "popular music with acoustic instruments." While that may be academically correct, it ignores the fact that millions of people have a very different definition or, perhaps, millions of definitions. The only thing that we can say with complete certainty is that no single definition of folk music is going to please everybody. This is a discussion that only a lawyer would truly enjoy.

Nobody let me off that easily, though. My co-editor, Brian Mansfield, in his introduction to *MusicHound Country*, quoted Tom T. Hall as saying that country music "is what you make it," a definition that incorporates everything from Montana Slim to the Kentucky HeadHunters and all the states in between. The logic is one of accepting the fact that differing opinions and taste are facts of life in the commercial marketplace. Since this book is intended for the album-buying public in general and not simply for the odd folklorist, we have chosen to recognize those differences and to include those artists that the average consumer would reasonably expect to find in the folk bins at his or her favorite store. This doesn't mean that we are surrendering to the popular tendency to equate the word "folksinger" exclusively with the phrase "singer-songwriter." You'll find plenty of singer-songwriters in here, of course, but we've also included a healthy sampling of old time banjo and fiddle players, bluegrass bands, autoharp players, mountain and hammered dulcimer players, Celtic fiddlers and pipers, and British and American folk rockers. You'll also find artists from such diverse sub-genres as country blues, klezmer, Cajun and zydeco, Western swing, and even rock and country crossovers. These are all part of a larger fabric that—academic purists aside—the general public widely recognizes as folk music. You'll also find that the MusicHound version of folk music isn't a popularity contest measured in terms of platinum albums produced or the number of Grammy nominations received. Some of the best

traditional musicians and singers tend to labor in relative obscurity, making, as the joke goes, "hundreds of dollars a year." They're all in here.

On the other hand, we can't possibly cover every artist across such a broad range of folk genres. For example, you won't find much of what is known as "world music" in here, not because it's not folk music but simply because we didn't have the space and we opted to limit our coverage to artists in the primarily "Anglo" tradition. Additionally, since this is an essential guide for the album-buying public, we also limited our coverage to albums that are currently in print on CD in the U.S. or readily available as imports, an approach that affects many of the Celtic and British entries, for example. This approach also excludes a number of deserving artists who—to date—have no CDs in print. Of the traditional artists who are represented on CD, many also have extensive back catalogs on cassette and LP, most of which have yet to be re-released on CD. Where appropriate, we have identified the more important of these albums as "worth searching for."

Unfortunately for the buying public, not all CDs are created equal in terms of general availability. There is a decided trend toward independent releases in the folk world and many of these small labels do not get shelf space in the larger retail outlets. Happily, much of this material is available for purchase by mail directly from the label or artist, or even—somewhat ironically, given the traditional nature of the music—over the Internet. We've attempted to include appropriate contact information for independent artists and labels as part of each entry and we've also appended an extensive listing of resources that should help you find what you're looking for.

Each entry contains a biographical sketch that provides some pertinent information about the artist, summarizes affiliations with other performers or groups, and indicates primary influences. Sometimes these influences are direct—Ramblin' Jack Elliott and Bob Dylan both owe a direct debt to Woody Guthrie, for example—and sometimes, where direct influences are difficult to discern or the artist really hasn't been around long enough to influence others widely, this merely translates to "if you like *this* artist, you're quite likely to appreciate the music of *that* artist."

As with all the MusicHound volumes, we've included our usual expert advice on what to buy, what to buy next, what to avoid, and what's worth searching for. You'll also find the *MusicHound Folk* contributors' opinions reflected in some very subjective Editor's Choice selections, which you can use as shortcuts to building an informed and eclectic folk collection. As opinionated as I am about the music that I like personally, I can't wait to purchase some of this material that our writers have been raving about.

Since this volume does cover such a broad cross-section of traditional and roots music, some of it may be unfamiliar to you. We have included informational sidebars on many of the subgenres or traditions covered and on some of the more unusual instruments involved.

So whether folk music to you begins and ends with Woody Guthrie, the Weavers, and Pete Seeger; flowered in the 1960s with the Kingston Trio and Joan Baez; only got interesting when electricity was added by folk rockers such as Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span; is never better than when it features the Celtic fiddles of Kevin Burke or Frankie Gavin; is at its best when it celebrates the blues stylings of Mississippi John Hurt or Robert Johnson; or simply has to resonate with that lonesome sound of banjos and fiddles echoing down the "holler," this book should be a useful tool in your search for the vital music that you call folk music.

So how do you use *MusicHound Folk*? Here's what you'll find in the entries, and what we intend to accomplish with each point:

• An introductory paragraph, which will give you not only biographical information but also a sense of the artist's or group's sound and its stature in the folk—and overall music—pantheon.

• **what to buy:** The album or albums that we feel are essential purchases for consuming this act. It may be a greatest hits set, or it may be a particular album that captures the essence of the artist in question. In any event, this is where you should start—and don't think it wasn't hard to make these choices when eyeballing the catalogs of Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Altan, Bill Monroe, B.B. King, the New Lost City Ramblers, and some of the other folk titans. Note that for acts with a limited catalog, **what's available** may take the place of **what to buy** and the other sections.

• **what to buy next:** In other words, once you're hooked, these will be the most rewarding next purchases.

• **what to avoid:** Seems clear enough. This is Hound poop.

• **the rest:** Everything else that's available for this act, rated with the Hound's trusty bone scale (see below for more on this). Note that for some artists with sizable catalogs, we've condensed this section down to **best of the rest.**

• **worth searching for:** An out-of-print gem. A bootleg. A guest appearance on another artist's album or a film soundtrack. Something that may require some looking but will reward you for the effort.

• ⏪: The crucial influences on this act's music.

• ⏩: The acts that have been influenced by this artist or group. Used only where applicable; it's a little early for Dar Williams to have influenced anybody.

We should also remind you that *MusicHound Folk* is a *buyer's* guide. Therefore, for the most part we only discuss CDs that are currently in print and available in the United States.

Now, you ask, what's with those bones? (Down, boy! Sheesh. . . .) It's not hard to figure out—𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥 is nirvana (not Nirvana), a **woof!** is dog food. Keep in mind that the bone ratings don't pertain just to the act's own catalog, but to its worth in the whole music realm. Therefore a lesser act's **what to buy** choice might rate no more than 𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥; some even rate 𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥, a not-so-subtle sign that you might want to think twice about that act. Note that for recent releases that were not available to be reviewed before press time, N/A will appear instead of a bone rating.

As with any opinions, all of what you're about to read is subjective and personal. MusicHound has a bit of junkyard dog in it, too; it likes to start fights. We hope it does, too. Ultimately, we think the Hound will point you in the right direction, and if you buy the 𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥 and 𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥𝅘𝅥 choices, you'll have an album collection to howl about. But if you've got a bone to pick, the Hound wants to hear about it—and promises not to bite (but maybe bark a little bit). If you think we're wagging our tails in the wrong direction or lifting our leg at something that doesn't deserve it, let us know. If you think an act has been capriciously excluded—or charitably included—tell us.Your comments and suggestions will serve the greater MusicHound audience and future projects, so don't be shy.

Editors

Neal Walters has been a folk music performer, teacher, and collector for nearly 40 years with more than 5,000 albums in his personal collection. He has been playing the dulcimer for over 20 years after starting with the guitar and autoharp; he also plays fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and bass. He is a member of two bands: the Mill Run Dulcimer Band, with whom he has recorded seven albums, and a new group, Doofus, which has just released its first CD. An experienced performer and teacher, he has taught dulcimer and autoharp for the past ten years or so in and around Washington and at camps and festivals such as Appalachian State University (Boone), the Augusta Heritage Program in Elkins, West Virginia, Kentucky Music Week in Bardstown, Kentucky, the Great Black Swamp Festival in Lima, Ohio, the Autumn Hills and Housatonic Dulcimer Festivals in Connecticut, the Cranberry Gathering in Binghamton, New York, the String-A-Long workshops sponsored by the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee), and others. He writes a review column for the *Dulcimer Player's News* and, with musical partner Heidi Cerrigione, recently co-published *30 Old Time Songs for Mountain Dulcimer and Autoharp.*

Brian Mansfield previously co-edited *MusicHound Country.* He also has contributed to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound R&B,* and *MusicHound Lounge.* His work has appeared in *USA Today, Request, Country America, New Country, Daily Variety,* and *No Depression.* He currently serves as the Nashville correspondent for CountryNow.com, a daily music news and information service; he has also provided content for the Launch and Wall of Sound Web sites. A graduate of Boston's Berklee College of Music, he currently lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his wife and two sons.

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Kate Dunlay was raised in Massachusetts, studied folklore and ethnomusicology at the University of Indiana, and now lives in Ontario. A fiddler and a stepdancer, she is co-author (with David Greenberg) of *Traditional Celtic Violin Music of Cape Breton,* the DunGreen Collection. She also does research for Puirt a Baroque, a group that performs Scottish traditional and baroque music.

Daniel Durchholz is co-editor of the forthcoming second edition of *MusicHound Rock* and a contributor to *MusicHound Country, MusicHound R&B, MusicHound Blues, MusicHound Lounge,* and *MusicHound Jazz.* He was founding editor of the now-defunct *Replay* magazine, and is a former associate editor of *Request* magazine and St. Louis, Missouri's *Riverfront Times.* He writes for various magazines, newspapers, and Web sites from his home outside St. Louis.

Tom Ellis III has been writing about blues and playing harmonica since 1968. From 1995 to 1997 he authored a five-part series on the life of Paul Butterfield for *Blues Access* magazine and is

currently at work on a book about Butterfield. He lives in Dallas, Texas, and owns Tom's Mics, selling vintage microphones to professional and amateur harmonica players worldwide.

Brian Escamilla is a freelance editor and writer and the former editor of *Contemporary Musicians*. He is a contributor to *MusicHound Rock*.

Shane Faubert played in a band called Cheepskates during the 1980s and is presently a solo artist in Montvale, New Jersey.

David Feld is a contributing writer for *Blues Access* magazine and plays guitar and bass in the Diminished Capacity Revue. By day, he is a deputy public defender in Alameda County, California.

Jon Hartley Fox is an award-winning writer and record producer who lives in Sacramento, California. He is a 20-year veteran of the bluegrass wars and a contributor to *MusicHound Country*.

Bill Friskics-Warren is a Nashville-based freelance writer whose work has appeared in *MusicHound Country, New Country, No Depression, The Oxford American*, the *Nashville Scene*, and the *Washington Post*.

Douglas Fulmer is a Cleveland-based freelance writer who writes extensively for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and has contributed to *MusicHound Country, Bluegrass Unlimited, New Country, Country Weekly, Bluegrass Now*, and other publications.

Christina Fuoco is a music journalist for the Livonia, Michigan–based *Observer & Eccentric* newspapers and has contributed to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound R&B*, and *MusicHound Lounge*. She lives in Berkley, Michigan, with her portly cat.

Lawrence Gabriel is a Detroit-based writer, poet, and musician who is also editor of Detroit's *Metro Times*.

David Galens is the editor of Gale Research's *Drama for Students* print series and *Contemporary Authors* on CD, and a regular contributor to Gale's *Contemporary Theatre, Film, and Television* and *Contemporary Authors* print series. He is also a member of the Detroit-based band the Civilians.

Steve Gardner is a disc jockey at WXDU in Durham, North Carolina, where he plays old time, bluegrass, and Celtic music on his weekly show *Topsoil*. He has also contributed articles and reviews to *Twangin'* and *Country Standard Time*. Steve is not an aspiring songwriter, and frankly, can't play the guitar worth beans, though he's been trying for ten years.

Simon Glickman is the lead singer and lyricist for the L.A. band Spanish Kitchen. He has written for *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound R&B, Contemporary Musicians, Uncommon Heroes, Entertainment Today, Rockrgrl*, and other publications, and served as co-editor of *Native North American Biography*.

Gary Pig Gold has been publishing his own music fanzine, *The Pig Paper*, since 1975, and is a proud contributor as well to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country, MusicHound R&B*, and *MusicHound Lounge*. A member of Hoboken, New Jersey's # 1 "maximum rhythm 'n' bluegrass" combo the Ghost Rockets, he all too vividly remembers his first public performance as a young child, singing Kingston Trio songs to a bemused Canadian Cub Scout pack.

Alex Gordon is an associate editor of *Inside Sports* magazine and the co-author of the book *College: The Best Five Years of Your Life*, published by Hysteria Press and available in finer bookstores.

Gary Graff is supervising editor of Visible Ink Press' *MusicHound* series.

Jill Hamilton is a Los Angeles–based freelance writer whose work has appeared in *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound R&B*, the *Ann Arbor* (Michigan) *News, Rolling Stone*, and other publications.

William Hanson is a former movie critic for the *Detroit Sunday Journal* and has written for Michigan's *Ann Arbor News* and the *Detroit Free Press*.

Jeff Hannusch is a New Orleans–based freelance writer who has written hundreds of articles on the subject of music. His book, *I Hear You Knockin': The Sound of Rhythm and Blues* (Swallow, 1985), won the American Book Award. He is also a contributor to *MusicHound Blues*.

Craig Harris, a native of New York living in Boston since 1981, has been called by *Sing Out!* magazine "one of the hardest working music journalists in New England." The author/photographer of *The New Folk Music*, published by White Cliffs Media in 1991, Harris has written an annual average of two hundred articles for such newspapers as *The Boston Globe* and *The Middlesex News* and for the music magazines *Dirty Linen* and *Folkroots*. His photographs have been used for album covers by Greg Greenway, Northern Lights, Robin Williamson, Max Po-Kriv-Shak, Jazz Futures, and Barbara Kessler. Harris has been the staff photographer for the Winter-

hawk Bluegrass Festival, the Cajun-Bluegrass Festival, and Falcon Ridge Folk Festival.

Geoffrey Himes writes about music on a regular basis for the *Washington Post, Replay, New Country,* and *Country Music.* He contributed to *The Blackwell Guide to Recorded Country Music, The Rolling Stone Guide to Jazz and Blues Albums,* and *The Country Music Foundation Encyclopedia.* He has also written about music for *Down Beat, Request,* National Public Radio, *No Depression, Fi Magazine, Crawdaddy, Musician, Sing Out!,* the *Baltimore Sun,* and the Patuxent Newspapers. He lives in Baltimore with his wife Elizabeth Cusick.

Bill Hobbs is a Nashville freelance writer and former music magazine writer and editor. He is a contributor to *MusicHound Country.*

Steve Holtje has contributed to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country, MusicHound Blues,* and *MusicHound R&B,* and is co-editor of *MusicHound Jazz.* He has written for *The Wire, Jazziz, Newsday, Rhythm Music, Allstarmag.com,* and many other magazines, newspapers, and online publications. He was a senior editor at the late, lamented *Creem.*

Pete Howard is the editor and publisher of *ICE* magazine and a contributor to *MusicHound Rock.*

Stephen Ide is a graphic designer who in his spare time is a writer, photographer, guitarist, and harmonica player. He pens a monthly folk records review column for *The Patriot Ledger* in Quincy, Massachusetts, contributes articles, reviews, and photographs to publications, including the *New England Folk Almanac, Dirty Linen,* and *Bluegrass Unlimited,* and is the webmaster for the Rose Garden Coffeehouse in Mansfield, Massachusetts.

Jack Jackson is a freelance journalist now living in Denmark. His articles have appeared in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune, Offbeat,* Denver's *Westword,* and *The Miami Herald.*

Steve Knopper is a Chicago-based freelancer who has written for *Rolling Stone, George, Newsday,* the *Chicago Tribune, Request, Billboard, Yahoo! Internet Life,* and many other publications. Former music critic for the *Boulder* (Colo.) *Daily Camera,* he is also editor of *MusicHound Lounge: The Essential Album Guide to Martini Music and Easy Listening* (Visible Ink).

John Koetzner is a freelance music critic who has written for *MusicHound Blues, Down Beat, Bass Player, Mix, Relix, Bam,* the *Reno News & Review,* California's *Press Democrat* and *Healdsburg Tribune,* and numerous other publications.

John Lupton is a native of Wilmington, Delaware. In addition to his work as a contributing writer for *Sing Out!* magazine, he is a longtime board member and current president of the Brandywine Friends of Old Time Music, a Delaware-based organization that sponsors concerts and festivals, including the Delaware Valley Bluegrass Festival and the now-defunct Brandywine Mountain Music Convention. He is also a board member of the Green Willow Folk Club, which specializes in presenting Celtic and British artists in the Delaware area. Since 1989, he has been co-host of *Rural Free Delivery,* a weekly radio show featuring bluegrass, country, and old time music, broadcast over WVUD-FM (91.3), the non-commercial station owned and operated by the University of Delaware. Professionally, he works in computer network management and administration at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Elizabeth Lynch is an Evanston, Illinois, writer and novelist who has written for *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country,* the *Chicago Sun-Times,* the *Miami Herald,* the *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, Replay* magazine, and *MusicHound Rock.*

Lynne Margolis is a music critic and entertainment writer for the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* and its sister publications, and a contributor to *MusicHound R&B, MusicHound Lounge,* and *MusicHound Rock.* She has no children, pets, or plants named Dylan.

Patrick McCarty has written about rock 'n' roll for the past 20 years for various publications, including *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound R&B,* Richmond, Virginia's *Times-Dispatch* and *News Leader,* and *Style Weekly.* He is a classically trained musician, producer, and songwriter.

TJ McGrath is a co-founder and contributing editor to *Dirty Linen,* a magazine featuring folk and world music. He also wrote and edited *Fairport Fanatics,* the first American newsletter devoted to English folk-rock and artists such as Fairport Convention, Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, Nick Drake, and Iain Matthews. His freelance writing has also appeared in the magazines *Trouser Press* and *Guitar Extra.* He has written liner notes for albums by Jackson C. Frank and Scott Appel. He has penned feature articles on a variety of folk performers including: Paul Brady, Greg Brown, the Nields, Graham Parker, Clive Gregson and Christine Collister, and Dar Williams. He lives in a drafty cottage in Connecticut called Mole's End with his wife, four boys, and a cat named Lulu.

David Menconi is the music critic at the *Raleigh* (N.C.) *News & Observer.* He has also written for *Billboard, Spin, No Depression, Request, MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country, MusicHound Blues, MusicHound R&B,* and *MusicHound Lounge.*

D. Thomas Moon is a Chicago-based educator, guitarist, and music journalist. His writings have appeared in CD liner notes and in *MusicHound Blues, Blues Access, Living Blues, Blues Revue,* and *Latin Beat* magazines. He is currently working on a children's picture book, *Wang Dang Doodle Day.*

Lisa M. Moore is a freelance writer and editor based in Boston. She has written for *Launch, Pulse!, Alternative Press,* and the *Boston Phoenix* and was the editor for *Boston Rock,* a monthly magazine focusing on the frenetic but fascinating Boston music scene. Her dog did not appreciate her working on this project one bit but thought the bone rating system was inspired.

Jo Hughey Morrison is a Celtic harper and freelance writer whose work has appeared in *Mostly Folk, Folk Tales,* and *The Folk Harp Journal.*

David Okamoto is the music editor at *The Dallas Morning News* and a contributing editor to *ICE* magazine. His work has also appeared in *CD Review, Rolling Stone,* and *Jazziz.*

Allan Orski has written for *Rolling Stone Online, Replay, Requestline, Black Book,* and SW Radio Networks, as well as for *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country,* and *MusicHound Lounge.* He lives in a loft under the Manhattan Bridge, where he alienates his peers by singing along with Sam Cooke records.

Michael Parrish is Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at Northern Illinois University, with research focusing on dinosaurs and other extinct reptiles. He is also a freelance music writer who contributes to, among other publications, the *Chicago Tribune, Dirty Linen,* and *Sing Out!*

Alan Paul is a senior editor of *Guitar World* and the editor of *Guitar World* Online (www.guitarworld.com). His proudest professional moment was interviewing Albert King for *Guitar World* in 1991.

Bob Paxman is a Nashville-based entertainment journalist whose works have appeared in *MusicHound R&B, Country Weekly, Billboard, TV Host,* and numerous other publications.

Matt Pensinger is a music writer and columnist for the *Colorado Springs Gazette* and Digital City Denver, a site on America Online. He has also written for national music publications such as *Blues Access* and *No Depression* and contributed to *MusicHound Blues.*

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Rick Petreycik lives in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and has written for *Guitar Player, New Country, Keyboard, Musician,* and *Live.* He is also a contributor to *The Comprehensive Country Music Encyclopedia* and *MusicHound Country.*

Doug Pippin is an advertising copywriter in New York and a drummer who ran the band music practice facility Jamland. He is a contributor to *MusicHound Rock* and *MusicHound R&B.*

Randy Pitts is a contributor to *MusicHound Country* who has labored in the vineyards of traditional music in various circumstances for nearly 20 years, most recently as artistic director of the Freight and Salvage in Berkeley, California, where he worked from 1989 until 1996.

Bryan Powell is a musician and freelance writer-editor based in Lawrenceville, Georgia. He is a regular contributor to *Blues Access* and *Acoustic Guitar* magazines and has also written for *MusicHound Blues and MusicHound Lounge.*

Doug Pullen is the music and media writer for the *Flint* (Michigan) *Journal* and Booth Newspapers. He is a contributor to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country, MusicHound R&B,* and *MusicHound Blues.*

Bob Remstein is a keyboardist and composer who was music editor for *Los Angeles View* before he began writing for publications in cyberspace, where he now resides.

Chris Rietz has been managing the record department (now the CDs & tapes department!) for 17 years at Elderly Instruments, one of the world's most elite folk music retailers and mail-order houses. In addition to publishing occasional pieces about folk and indigenous music in various publications, he currently chairs this year's Showcase Selection Committee for the North American Folk Alliance. And—he plays the guitar a lot.

Ken Roseman is a freelance journalist who's covered Anglo-European folk and roots music for over 20 years. Presently he writes the "Discography Notes" column for *The Book of Ballads and Sagas* (Green Man Press), a unique comic book series fea-

turing adaptations of traditional folk ballads, and contributes reviews to: *Sing Out!*, *Big World*, and *Goldmine*. When not listening to (and/or writing about) music, Ken indulges himself by watching his favorite television shows: *Monty Python* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer.*

Leland Rucker is managing editor of *Blues Access* magazine, a quarterly journal. He edited *MusicHound Blues: The Essential Album Guide*, and was co-author of *The Toy Book* (Alfred Knopf, 1992). Everything he knows about music can be traced back to the Kingston Trio or Bob Dylan.

Robert Sacré is a professor at the University of Liege in Belgium, where, since the early 1980s, he has taught ethnomusicology ("Story of African American Music & Literature"). He has conducted research in Africa and the United States and has published numerous articles on blues, gospel, Cajun, and zydeco music. Among his books are *The Voice of the Delta: Charley Patton and the Mississippi Delta Blues Traditions* (Presses Universitaires de Liege, 1987) and *Saints and Sinners: Religion, Blues, and Evil in African-American Music and Literature* (Presses Universitaires de Liege, 1996). He is a contributor to *MusicHound Blues.*

Christopher Scanlon is the former editor of *The Video Source Book* and a contributor to *MusicHound Rock*. He is pursuing his master's degree in social work.

Christopher Scapelliti is an associate editor of *Guitar* magazine and a contributor to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country,* and *MusicHound R&B.*

Tim Schuller was a factory worker/Teamster/rock musician in Ohio and Chicago before moving to Texas in 1977. He presently writes for the *Dallas Observer* and *Blues Access* magazine. A contributor to *MusicHound Blues,* his sidebar passions include European horror videos, guns, and Mexican beer.

Joel Selvin has covered pop music for the *San Francisco Chronicle* since 1970 and has contributed to *MusicHound Rock, MusicHound Country, MusicHound R&B,* and *MusicHound Lounge.* His seventh book, *Sly and the Family Stone: On the Record,* will be published in 1998.

Craig Shelburne lives in Nashville and has written for *MusicHound Country, Nashville Scene, Gospel Voice, Music City News,* and *New Country.*

David Shombert has been around the old time music scene for about 12 years. He plays fiddle and banjo and has done extensive study of the traditional Appalachian music that is preserved in the recorded archives of the West Virginia Collection at West Virginia University. He has written for the *Old Time Herald* on various topics of interest to the old time music community. He currently makes his home in Elkins, West Virginia.

David Simons is a freelance writer who fronts a rock band, the Raymies, in New England. He is a contributor to *MusicHound Country.*

Jared Snyder is a graduate of Boston University who currently lives in Philadelphia. He has published articles on music from the United States, Caribbean, and Africa. His current project is a book of historic images of accordion players from around the world. He plays diatonic accordion and electric guitar professionally in the Philadelphia area.

Denise Sofranko is a freelance writer.

David Sokol, senior editor at *Disney Magazine,* served as music editor and production, manager of the Advocate Newspaper chain in Massachusetts and Connecticut from 1977 to 1993. He was hired as editor in chief to launch *New Country* magazine in November 1993 and quickly turned it into the most respected and objective monthly in the field of country music. His writing appears in *MusicHound Country: The Essential Album Guide* as well as in numerous publications, including *Stereophile* and *Launch Online.*

Steven Stolder is the former entertainment editor for the Excite Internet search engine and Bay Area editor of *Bam* magazine. His byline has appeared in *Rolling Stone, Entertainment Weekly,* the *San Francisco Chronicle, Pulse!, Request,* and several other leading entertainment publications.

Mario Tarradell is the country music critic for the *Dallas Morning News.* His work has also appeared in *MusicHound Country* and *New Country* magazine.

Lauri Taylor, sales manager by day, musician by night, plays fiddle in a contra dance band, violin in a renaissance mixed consort, and plays autoharp and hammered dulcimer just to annoy the neighbors. She wrote reviews for five years for the now-defunct *Best Sellers* magazine. She found it was a pleasure to turn her attention to folk resources on the web and in print.

Suzy Rothfield Thompson grew up in the Northeast, studied classical violin as a child, and became enamored of Cajun music after hearing the Balfa Brothers in 1976. Several visits to southwest Louisiana culminated in an NEA fellowship to study with

master fiddler Dewey Balfa in 1981; other mentors include Canray Fontenot, Wallace "Cheese" Read, and Dennis McGee. In 1981, Suzy helped form the Blue Flame Stringband, which evolved into the California Cajun Orchestra. Suzy has performed and recorded with the Blue Flame Stringband, Any Old Time, the Klezmorim, and Eric Thompson. She has recorded as a side musician with bluegrass singer/fiddler Laurie Lewis, avant-garde vocalist Rinde Eckert, the Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, Sukay, British ballad singer Frankie Armstrong, and others. She appears in the film *J'ai Etais au Bal* (aired on PBS as *French Dance Tonight*), playing fiddle with D.L. Menard and with Danny Poullard. In 1994, she represented the United States on a Masters of the Folk Violin Tour in Scotland and England. She has taught advanced fiddle at several music and dance camps, including Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins (West Virginia), Festival of American Fiddle Tunes at Centrum (Port Townsend, Washington), and Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Camp in New York. She is also a music reviewer for the *Old Time Herald*.

Philippe Varlet is a performer and teacher of Irish traditional music as well as an ethnomusicologist doing research on many aspects of that tradition. In particular, he specializes in the history of early recordings of Irish music, which he collects and with which he has produced several CD anthologies, including *From Galway to Dublin* (Rounder), *Milestone at the Garden* (Rounder), and *Joe Derrane—Irish Accordion* (Rego/Copley). Varlet resides near Washington, D.C., where he performs regularly at local ceilis and concerts and provides private tuition on Irish fiddle playing. His name is familiar to members of Internet Irish music lists who seek assistance in identifying tunes and their sources. He has a master's degree in composition from Catholic University and studied ethnomusicology at the University of Maryland.

Tim Walters's main claim to fame is a losing *Jeopardy!* appearance in 1996, but he's also known among the cognoscenti as the electric dulcimer player for San Francisco folk-rock band Pledge Drive. In addition, he has worked extensively in electronic music, as documented on his CD *The Dry Well* and Circular Firing Squad's CD *Oxide*.

Dan Weber is a copywriter at J. Walter Thompson advertising agency in Detroit.

Hilary Weber is an actress who recently made her first Hollywood picture. A contributor to *MusicHound Rock*, she also contributes movie reviews to *Magill's Cinema Annual* and *VideoHound's Golden Movie Retriever.*

Stephen Winick is a Ph.D. candidate in Folklore and Folklife at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a contributing editor at *Dirty Linen* magazine and the *All-Music Guide*, where he covers folk, Celtic, and related musical styles. His reviews have also appeared in the *Philadelphia City Paper*, Tower Records *Pulse!* magazine, and the *Journal of American Folklore.*

Pamela Murray Winters is a freelance writer whose work often appears in *Dirty Linen.* She is currently researching and writing the first book-length biography of Sandy Denny. She loves serial commas and hates deadlines.

Art Wojtowicz is a Detroit-based freelance copywriter, folk singer-songwriter, and recording studio owner and operator. His writing credits include a successful Broadway-style musical, an album of original piano music, and numerous pieces of political satire and poetry. His upcoming CD will present a loving and humorous look at the heroes of everyday life on this planet Earth. Art's greatest accomplishment is finding continuing peace and happiness. His life's goal—to be a kid again.

David Yonke writes about popular music for the *Toledo Blade* and is a contributor to *MusicHound Rock* and *MusicHound Country.*

Joshua Zarov works for Ticketmaster's Chicago office and writes for "Clublands," a weekly listing on Ticketmaster's World Wide Web site.

Tony Ziselberger is a freelance writer.

Jennifer Zogott currently writes about blues for *Blues Access*, *Blue Suede News*, and *Folk Roots.* She is also a contributor to *MusicHound Blues* and the forthcoming *Rolling Stone Jazz & Blues Album Guide.* She lives in New York City.

This was my first attempt at doing a project of this magnitude. From the outset, I was apprehensive. In the end, I knew I was right to feel that way. Fortunately, I didn't have to do this alone—far from it. I offer my undying gratitude to Brian Mansfield, whose experience and advice proved invaluable in terms of getting things started properly and in subsequently keeping everything on track. In the fullness of time, Brian's passion for accuracy and his "no excuses allowed" attention to detail both proved infinitely more useful than they were aggravating. It's a very good thing I didn't have to judge that around New Year's though. I'd also like to offer very special thanks to Managing Editor Judy Galens, who was gracious enough to nod her head when I asked if she still loved me despite all I put her through. Of course, it's possible that she misunderstood the question. Judy, you're not too bad yourself and I know you didn't mean it when you put that little catch in your voice before sobbing uncontrollably—and incoherently I might add—about some sort of legal action.

Thanks also to Kathy Wieland for mentioning my name to Lauri Taylor, to Lauri who subsequently recommended me to the powers that be, and to the senior people at Visible Ink who actually believed her story.

To the many writers who contributed directly and indirectly to every aspect of the book, I can only say that your combined knowledge and intense love of the music is little short of awe inspiring. It's worth noting also that your combined appreciation and understanding of the concept of a "drop dead date" is improving marginally even if most of you didn't get a merit badge this time around. Special thanks go to Lauri Taylor for singlehandedly compiling the Resources section.

Major huzzahs to the many artists who responded to my requests for information and review material. There couldn't be a book without the music and the music is great. And speaking of great music, thanks to the kind folks at Rounder Records—Bill Nowlin, Ken Irwin, Ellen Taintor, and Amy Bouvé Jodice—for the CD sampler.

I don't know how to properly thank the Internet for its contribution. I do know that this book couldn't have been written in the time allotted without access to e-mail and to the World Wide Web.

This book came together between October and February with a very intense few weeks on either side of Christmas. My wife, Coleen, deserves special praise and a big hug for her patience and understanding throughout that period and, particularly, for helping me to convince my children and grandchildren that I couldn't afford to waste time on such frivolous pursuits as Christmas shopping and Christmas dinner.

Neal Walters

After completing *MusicHound Country,* I told people that working on such a book was like watching your house burn down—you knew you couldn't take everything you wanted, you just had to get as much out as possible before the whole structure came crashing down around you. And, at the end, you might have to choose between saving the wedding pictures and the uninsured computer equipment. In the same way, it's hard to include every worthy performer into a guide that purports to cover a genre as broadly defined as "folk." But with more than

1,100 entries, I think nearly everyone can learn something from this book—and find out about great musicians they never knew existed. I know I certainly did.

This kind of project couldn't be accomplished without the help and generosity of numerous people, and some of the people who contributed to this book without receiving a byline include Lance Cowan, Glen Dicker, Cary Mansfield, Kurt Nishimura, Mark Pucci, Lisa Shively, Rebekah Radisch, and Megan Rubiner Zinn.

This book wouldn't have been possible without Neal Walters, whose scope and expertise shaped the soul of this book. He also provided a thoroughness that brought a much-needed sense of structure to the process. Neal and I spent many hours on the phone and sent literally thousands of e-mails during the course of editing this book. Perhaps now that this book is finished, we can actually meet in person.

Thanks also to Judy Galens and Gary Graff for providing assistance, direction, and information whenever it was needed. Judy, I enjoyed working with you for the first time, and Gary, thanks again for bringing me into the MusicHound fold. It's always a blast.

Finally, I have to thank my wife, Nancy, and sons Nick and Zach, who endured a second consecutive year of having their father on deadline during all the best holidays of the year. I love you all a great deal and owe you even more.

Brian Mansfield

A

A. Robic and the Exertions

See: Paul Brown, Bruce Molsky, Mike Seeger

Rick Abrams

See: Piney Creek Weasels

Nathan Abshire

Born June 27, 1913, in Gueydan, LA. Died May 13, 1981, in Basile, LA.

"The good times are killing me" was painted on the side of Nathan Abshire's accordion case and was his motto in life. He started playing the accordion at six years old, learning from both of his parents, who were well known as accomplished accordionists. As a young teenager, he played dances with his longtime friend, fiddler Lionel Leleux, sometimes walking home 10 miles with his accordion over his shoulder. Legendary accordionist Amédée Ardoin regularly used friendly coercion to have the young Abshire substitute for him at dances. When he finally did record for Bluebird in 1934, his recordings reveal an extremely "bluesy" Cajun accordionist. The accordion fell from favor until the 1950s. One of the records that helped bring back the popularity of the instrument was Abshire's "Pine Grove Blues." The song was a massive regional hit and continues to be extremely popular amongst Cajuns and Creoles. Abshire's singing was just as soulful and bluesy as his accordion playing and he continued to produce regional hits, including "Bayou Teche Waltz," "Musician's Life," and a Cajun version of "The Games People Play."

what to buy: *French Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) brings together all the recordings Abshire made for the Koury label. Forget about the funky quality of the recordings; these are the real deal: a soulful Cajun sound with Abshire's accordion cutting through the sawing fiddle of Will Kegley and a swooping steel guitar. Abshire's playing is a little like "cracklin's," the Cajun delicacy made from fried pork skin: hot like his blues, crisp on the outside like his two-steps, and liquid fat on the inside like his waltzes.

what to buy next: *The Legendary Jay Miller Sessions* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flyright, 1990, prod. Ray Templeton) is a little cleaner than *French Blues*, but there is still plenty of soul in these recordings, which include the superb fiddling of Dewey Balfa. Miller also includes several production experiments, such as the horse clops on the "Mardi Gras Song" and the pairing of Abshire's bluesy accordion with the sound of blues harpist Lazy Lester on "La La Blues."

the rest:
Cajun Tradition: Volume 1 ♪♪♪♪ (La Louisianne, 1990)
Cajun Tradition: Volume 2 ♪♪♪♪ (La Louisianne, 1990)
The Good Times Are Killing Me ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1986)
Cajun Fais Do Do ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1996)

worth searching for: The compilation of great classic Cajun 78s, *Le Grand Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology: The Historic Victor/Bluebird Sessions, 1928–1941* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1990, prod. Country Music Foundation), includes "One-Step de Lacassine" by a young Nathan Abshire and the Rayne-Bo Ramblers. On this one-chord vamp, Abshire surges past the string band with his bluesy riffs, almost tipping over the group as they bear down to keep up. This appears to be the

only one of Abshire's early songs that he never recorded in the later part of his career.

influences:

Amédée Ardoin, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin

The Balfa Brothers, Michael Doucet, Buckwheat Zydeco

Jared Snyder

Acousticats

Formed 1990, in Santa Barbara, CA. Disbanded 1995.

Cyrus Clarke, guitar, vocals; Phil Salazar, fiddle, vocals; Charl Ann Gastineau, fiddle, percussion; Tom Corbett, mandolin, guitar, vocals (1993–95); Mike Mullins, mandolin, mandola, guitar, vocals (1990–93); Rick Borella, bass.

The Acousticats were a five-member band from California, specializing mainly in original, but traditional-based, songs. Featuring the twin fiddles of Charl Ann Gastineau and Phil Salazar and the songs of guitarist Cyrus Clarke and mandolinist Mike Mullins, and propelled by Rick Borella's electric bass, they were an exciting band live or on record. Clarke was one of the founders of the Cache Valley Drifters, and his distinctively mellow vocal style and evocative compositions, many of which reflect the feel of his central California home, were Drifters mainstays that carried over to the Acousticats.

what to buy: The second, and final, album by the Acousticats, *The Cat's Meow* ♪♪♪½ (Ranch Records, 1994, prod. Cyrus Clarke), features some stunning improvisation, particularly during the band's two extended pieces, an acoustic version of the Allman Brothers' "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" and the group's own "Crazy Cat." Otherwise, the emphasis is on first-class original songs, like Clarke's "Kern County Fandango" and Corbett's "As I Go Marching By."

what to buy next: The first Acousticats CD, *Down at Evangelina's* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish Records, 1992, prod. Cyrus Clarke), is another sparkling example of California acoustic music. With the exception of the extended, anthem-like "California Republic," most of the selections, the bulk of which were penned by Clarke, are tightly arranged and concise, emphasizing the twin fiddles of Salazar and Gastineau.

solo outings:

Cyrus Clarke:

Sunrise on the Radio ♪♪♪ (Ranch, 1997)

The Phil Salazar Band:

The Phil Salazar Band ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)

influences:

Cache Valley Drifters, Phil Salazar Band, Kate Wolf, New Grass Revival, Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, Stephane Grappelli

Rincon Ramblers

Michael Parrish

Roy Acuff

Born September 15, 1903, in Maynardville, TN. Died November 23, 1992, in Nashville, TN.

The King of Country Music, elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1962 (the first living artist to be so honored), was an institution and a starring member of the Grand Ole Opry from 1938 until his death. Violinist, singer, bandleader, publisher (Acuff-Rose), Acuff was the first star developed by the Opry primarily as a vocalist; he was enormously popular through the 1940s, with such classic hits as "The Wabash Cannonball," "The Great Speckled Bird," "Wreck on the Highway," and "Fireball Mail." His impassioned, powerful (and loud) vocal style owed much to the Baptist hymns he sang as a youth. He also featured first-rate string bands, in which his great dobroists always figured prominently: first Clell Summey ("Cousin Jody") and later Beecher Kirby ("Bashful Brother Oswald"). Acuff was among many traditional country music artists whose stature received an unexpected boost as a result of participation in the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*.

what to buy: *The Essential Roy Acuff 1936–1949* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, prod. various) contains 20 of Acuff's most familiar hits from 1936 to 1949; the "Wabash Cannonball" here is a 1947 remake with Acuff as featured vocalist. *Roy Acuff Columbia Historic Edition* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1985, prod. various) is an outstanding reissue featuring the initial recording of "The Wabash Cannonball," with vocalist "Dynamite" Hatcher, along with 15 other vintage recordings from Acuff's earliest days. *The King of Country Music* ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1993, prod. various) is an interesting two-CD set of Acuff's post-Columbia 1950s recordings for MGM, Decca, and Capitol.

the rest:

Best of Roy Acuff ♪♪ (Curb, 1991)

worth searching for: Two reissues on Rounder, *Roy Acuff: 1936–1939 "Steamboat Whistle Blues"* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985, prod. Lou Curtiss) and *Roy Acuff & the Smoky Mountain Boys*

1939–41 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Lou Curtiss), contain more outstanding recordings of vintage Acuff and his bands.

influences:

⏪ Hank Williams Sr., George Jones

Randy Pitts

Eddie Adcock

See: Country Gentlemen

Aengus

See: Skylark

Caroline Aiken

Born in GA.

Caroline Aiken has been singing for her supper since she was 14. In just the past few years, her acquaintance with Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of Indigo Girls has gotten her music the attention it deserves, and she's finding that fans and reviewers alike are giving her credit for the dues she's paid on the road for the past 20-some years. Her material, both original and borrowed, is that blend of roadhouse blues and gospel-tinged slow ballads popularized by Bonnie Raitt and Rory Block, and Aiken is certainly in their league. Her spunky, sexy, soulful style elevates her from the teeming masses; her voice wears its years well.

what's available: *Live at the Attic* ♪♪♪½ (Glutton for PuBlishment, 1993, prod. Caroline Aiken) was recorded, as the title suggests, at Eddie's Attic, the renowned club in Aiken's adopted home of Atlanta. "White House Blues" features her Indigo pals to fine effect. *Live Bait* ♪♪♪½ (Glutton for PuBlishment, 1995, prod. Caroline Aiken) is Aiken's second live album. It's also her most personal, with some unexpected covers (including Elton John's "Madman across the Water"). Aiken's young daughter contributes vocals on Michele Malone's "Greatest Show on Earth." The album showcases Aiken's 12-string guitar playing, notably the self-explanatory "Pseudo Kottke." *Butler Field* ♪♪♪½ (Silverwolf, 1997, prod. Murray Krugman), Aiken's first studio album, peters out before it ends—and it's only a 35-minute CD. Its flaws are more a matter of song arrangement than anything else; it's an impressive effort that should convince anyone of her talent. "Left Wet" is a too-rare look at female erotic longing, and the other songs are equally strong.

editor's choice

11 folk harp albums

Sue Richards, *Hazel Grove* (Maggie's Music)
Knodel & Valencia, *Forest* (SpookyTree)
Sileas, *Delighted with Harps* (Green Linnet)
Patrick Ball, *Fiona* (Celestial Harmonies)
Sileas, *Beating Harps* (Green Linnet)
Sue Richards, *Grey Eyed Morn* (Maggie's Music)
Wendy Stewart, *About Time* (Greentrax)
Kim Robertson, *Wind Shadows II* (Invincible)
Wendy Stewart, *About Time II* (Greentrax)
Sylvia Woods, *Harp of Brandiswhere* (Tonmeister)
Loreena McKennitt, *Elemental* (Quinlan Road)

influences:

⏪ Bonnie Raitt, Rory Block

⏩ Indigo Girls

Pamela Murray Winters

David "Stringbean" Akeman

See: Stringbean

Scott Alarik

Born January 5, 1951, in Minneapolis, MN.

With a deep resonating voice, jovial stage persona, melodic fingerstyle guitar, and a command of traditional balladry, Scott Alarik is a throwback to the folk music of earlier days. The brother of Steve Alarik, one-time manager of the Coffeehouse Extempore in Minneapolis, Alarik was a semi-regular on the first shows of National Public Radio's *A Prairie Home Companion*. After releasing a solo album, *Stories*, in 1979, Alarik recorded his second album with the show's house band, the New Prairie Ramblers, in 1981. His third collection, *Simply Christmas*, is a solo celebration of the Yuletide season. The political slant of much of Alarik's repertoire comes naturally. A

non-registering draft resister in 1969, he served a 19-month prison sentence beginning in 1971. Since moving to Boston in 1984, Alarik has focused more on writing about folk music for *The Boston Globe* than on his own career. He founded, edited, and wrote for *The New England Folk Almanac* from 1990 to 1997. During the past few years, however, Alarik has increasingly concentrated on his role as a performer. Appearing frequently at coffeehouses throughout New England, he's been able to recapture the momentum of his days in Minnesota. His latest album, *Old Fashioned*, was released on cassette in 1995.

what's available: The only one of Alarik's four albums in print is *Old Fashioned* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1995, prod. Geoff Bartley), which is available on cassette only. It features traditional ballads and original songs, including the hard-hitting modern ballad, "Mexico."

worth searching for: Alarik's seasonal tribute, *Simply Christmas* ♪♪♪ (Wisconsin Public Radio) is a superb collection of traditional tunes ("Coventry Carol," "Away in a Manger," and "What Child Is This"), memorable covers (Bob Franke's "Thanksgiving Eve" and Bob Stuart's "This Christmas Day"), and well-crafted originals ("Caroling Child" and "Old Scrub Pine"). Recorded for *Simply Folk* (a popular Wisconsin Public Radio show) and unfortunately out of print, *Simply Christmas* is a much-valued treasure.

influences:

◀◀ Gordon Bok, Art Thieme

▶▶ Geoff Bartley, Bob Franke

Craig Harris

Albion Band

See: Ashley Hutchings

Pat Alger

Born September 23, 1947, in Long Island City, NY.

A singer/songwriter with considerable performing experience, Pat Alger became one of the most successful songwriters in country music during the late 1980s and continuing into the 1990s, penning hits for Garth Brooks, Hal Ketchum, Kathy Mattea, Don Williams, Trisha Yearwood, Nanci Griffith, and others. His own performing style is understated and intimate, as one might expect from a veteran of coffeehouses and listening rooms.

what's available: *True Love & Other Short Stories* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. Pat Alger, Jim Rooney) is a chance to hear the man who wrote them sing such songs as "Once in a Very Blue Moon," "Lone Star State of Mind," "True Love," "Small Town Saturday Night," "Going Gone," and "She Came from Fort Worth." *Seeds* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Jim Rooney) contains more originals from this highly successful writer of hits for others, including Alger's version of the huge Garth Brooks hit "The Thunder Rolls."

influences:

◀◀ Don Williams, Kris Kristofferson

▶▶ Fred Koller, Steve Seskin

Randy Pitts

The All Girl Boys

Formed 1989, in Berkeley, CA.

Kathy Barwick, guitar, vocals; Carolyn Cirimele, bass, vocals; Debby Cotter, banjo, vocals; Mary Gibbons, guitar, vocals; Chris Lewis, mandolin, vocals.

It seems fitting that the San Francisco Bay Area, long an attractive destination for eastern and southern folks with itchy heels, should develop a healthy, distinctive bluegrass tradition of its own: a vigorous hybrid of reverence for tradition and California free-spiritedness. From hippie-generation visionaries like David Grisman and Peter Rowan down to modern Olympians like Laurie Lewis, bluegrass music has developed a grand tradition of its own out West. Where else would you be likely to find a band like the aptly named All Girl Boys, a quintet with impeccable instrumental skills, a steeled-in-the-club-scene rhythmic tightness, and five voices wedded in unearthly, lonesome harmony, who also all happen to be women?

what's available: This band was in the trenches for six years before releasing its only album, *Heart's Desire* ♪♪♪♪ (Wildershore, 1996, prod. Jim Nunally), and it has all the polish and flair that a hard-working, committed band can acquire only by playing together for a long time. The three talented songwriters in the band (Cotter, Gibbons, and Lewis) serve up a helping of fresh material into the bluegrass repertoire, seamlessly blended with some deftly chosen older songs from the likes of Clarence Ashley, Lester Flatt, and the White Brothers.

worth searching for: Although this may be a little tougher to find, Carolyn Cirimele's *Lookin' for Ida Rose* ♪♪♪♪ (Wildershore, 1995, prod. Carolyn Cirimele) was a labor of love for the All Girl Boys' bassist, and a cool breeze in the somewhat glutted world of recorded children's music. It's a kid-friendly program with a (not surprisingly) traditional country slant, and with the (re-

grettably uncommon) quality of being worthy listening for everybody else, too.

influences:

◀◀ Muleskinner, Good Ol' Persons, Grant Street String Band

▶▶ Kathy Kallick

Chris Rietz

Red Allen

Born February 12, 1930, in Pigeon Roost, KY. Died April 3, 1993, in Dayton, OH.

One of the truly underrated singers in the history of bluegrass, Harley "Red" Allen was a master of the "high lonesome" style and a major influence on subsequent generations of bluegrass vocalists. Allen first rose to prominence during the mid-1950s, joining forces with the Osborne Brothers for a string of memorable MGM recordings (especially "Once More"). After parting with the Osbornes in 1958, Allen spent most of the rest of his career leading his own band (usually called the Kentuckians), working in Washington, D.C., and Dayton, Ohio, and recording for such labels as Folkways, Melodeon, Rebel, and County. An intense and powerful singer, Allen worked from the late 1960s on with his four sons (Neal, Greg, Ronnie, and Harley), who also performed separately as the Allen Brothers. Red Allen's last recording was the Grammy-nominated *Bluegrass Reunion* in 1992. Some of Red Allen's most inspired music was made with mandolinist Frank Wakefield (born June 26, 1935, in Emory Gap, Tennessee), the player who David Grisman says "split the mandolin atom." Allen and Wakefield first worked together in Dayton, recording for the Kentucky label in 1954; they reunited in Washington, D.C., during the early 1960s, recording an influential album for Folkways, *Red Allen, Frank Wakefield and the Kentuckians*. The partnership ended when Wakefield joined the Greenbriar Boys in 1964, though Allen and Wakefield would occasionally play together during the years before Allen's death.

what's available: It's depressing that, in an age when the complete works of many lesser artists are readily available, virtually nothing by Red Allen is in print. Recorded within the last year of Allen's life, *Bluegrass Reunion* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1992, prod. David Grisman) puts the legendary singer together with David Grisman, Herb Pedersen, Jim Buchanan, Lance Kerwin, and special guest Jerry Garcia. The Allen-Pedersen duet on "Letter from My Darlin'" is the highlight, but some older songs associated with Allen ("She's No Angel," "Is This My Destiny") are also pretty satisfying. Not prime Red Allen by any stretch, but until promised reissues of the County, Rebel, and Folkways recordings materialize, this will have to do. *The Kitchen Tapes* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1994, prod. David Grisman, Peter K. Siegel), which captures Allen and Frank Wakefield sitting around the kitchen table one day in 1963, is an unexpected treat, featuring the two on a collection of 25 songs and tunes. It's raw, loose, and rough as a cob, but the music is transcendent. In addition to the off-hand intensity of songs like "I'm Just Here to Get My Baby out of Jail" and "I'm Blue, I'm Lonesome," the highlights include several original instrumentals by Wakefield ("New Camptown Races," "Catnip," "Hey Mr. Mando").

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Jimmy Martin

▶▶ Harley Allen, James King

Jon Hartley Fox

Terry Allen

Born Terrence Lain Allen, May 7, 1943, in Wichita, KS.

Terry Allen was making Americana music about 20 years before it was cool. That makes his survival in the fickle world of country music, even fringe country music, all the more amazing. A visual artist and songwriter, Allen cut his teeth on rock, country blues, and folk as a kid growing up in West Texas. He moved to San Francisco at age 19, a true multimedia artist who dabbled in music, art, theater, and film. He moved to Lubbock during the late 1970s, at a time when the Texas Panhandle city had become a hotbed of rootsy, rockified country blues with such local artists as Joe Ely and Butch Hancock, a place with a lively club scene that was visited by the Fabulous Thunderbirds, Delbert McClinton, and Stevie Ray Vaughan in his pre-Double Trouble days. Allen's songs lean on sparse, often acoustic, or bare instrumentation as his wizened rasp of a voice veers from the profoundly poignant to hysterically cynical. After all these years—most of Allen's early albums were sold through his mail-order label, Fate, now run by his daughter-in-law in Austin—he's begun to find an audience outside of the cultish, chic Texas fringe art crowd thanks to a deal with North Carolina's Sugar Hill Records, which released his last two albums and plans to reissue earlier work. Allen told William D. Kerns of the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal:* "People tell me it's country music, and I ask, 'Which country?'"

what to buy: Allen met drifters like Ely after he left sunny California for the dingy, flat, Bible-belt town of Lubbock during the late 1970s. But their artistic sensibilities were a good fit, and Ely's brazen, devil-may-care approach to country, rock, and folk

rubbed off impressively on his new friend on *Lubbock (on Everything)* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1979, prod. Terry Allen), a wide-ranging work as sprawling and colorful as the hard Southern plains folk who inspired it.

what to buy next: *Human Remains* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Terry Allen, Lloyd Maines) rocks a little harder than some of his more folk- and country-influenced work. David Byrne, Joe Ely, and the Sexton Brothers, Charlie and Will, make appearances. *The Silent Majority: Terry Allen's Greatest Missed Hits* ♪♪♪½ (Fate, 1993, prod. various) compiles a sampling of Allen's music for films, including contributions to Byrne's *True Stories* soundtrack along with songs for theatrical and dance productions.

what to avoid: Allen's music has always been an acquired taste, but the uneven *Bloodlines* ♪♪ (Fate, 1983, prod. Lloyd Maines, Terry Allen) is a little hard to swallow. Allen's current label, Sugar Hill, reissued it as a two-for-one package with *Smokin' the Dummy* in 1997. It hasn't gotten any better.

the rest:
Juarez ♪♪ (Fate, 1981)
Smokin' the Dummy ♪♪♪½ (Fate, 1982)
Pedal Steel/Rollback ♪♪ (Fate, 1985)
Bloodlines/Smokin' the Dummy ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

worth searching for: Allen's involvement in theater is almost as significant as his musical output, with two records worth finding. *Amerasia* ♪♪♪ (Fate, 1984, prod. Terry Allen) is an out-of-print album that followed a play about Amerasian children in South Vietnam, while *Songs from Chippy* ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1994, prod. Joe Ely, Terry Allen) features two originals and two songs he helped write for the musical theater piece of that name. This show, based on the diaries of a 1930s Texas madame, was conceived by Allen with his wife, actress Jo Harvey Allen, and fellow Texans Ely, Hancock, and Jo Carol Pierce.

influences:
◀◀ Hank Williams, Buddy Holly
▶▶ Joe Ely, Butch Hancock, Jimmie Dale Gilmore

Doug Pullen

Jenny Allinder

Born April 20, 1959, in Gallipolis, OH.

Jenny Allinder was born in Ohio but moved to West Virginia as a child and has remained there ever since. She started playing violin at age 10 with the help of Nelle Wiant, a violinist with the Charleston symphony. With the influence of guitarist and fellow mountain state musician Robin Kessinger, her interest eventually turned to traditional music. Her playing reflects her love of Celtic music, in traditional pieces and her own compositions. Jenny performs in her hometown of Charleston and teaches occasionally at traditional music workshops.

what's available: Allinder's only CD release to date is *Jenny Allinder* ♪♪♪½ (JMP Records, 1996, prod. Jim Martin), which compiles material released earlier on two cassettes. It consists of 19 tunes, with Jenny's sweet fiddling accompanied variously by cello (Jack Bowman), guitar (Robin Kessinger, John Blisard), piano (Bob Thompson), mountain dulcimer (Alan Freeman), Irish harp (John Blisard), or hammered dulcimer (Bob Shank). Roughly half of the tunes are traditional; most of the others are her own compositions, and all have a Celtic feel that tells you unmistakably where her heart is. Allinder mentions the playing of Irish fiddler Kevin Burke as influential in her own playing, and it's obvious in her renditions of "Chief O'Neill's Favorite" and a tune identified only as "G Minor Jig." Another highlight on this disc is the haunting "Women of Ireland" with fiddle and Irish harp. "Rose of My Heart" is a waltz that'll make you look around for your partner. There's a two-tune medley with fiddle and mountain dulcimer that stands out from the others, and one vocal—a poem by Benjamin Cooke that Allinder sings (all three parts) as a round. This is a disc you'll want to have on hand on a cold winter night with a roaring fire in the fireplace. It might be hard to find in record stores but is available from JMP Productions, P.O. Box 152, St. Albans, West Virginia 25711.

influences:
◀◀ Kevin Burke, James Bryan
▶▶ Eugene O'Donnell

Dave Shombert

Luther Allison

Born August 17, 1939, in Widener, AR. Died August 12, 1997, in Madison, WI.

Frustrated by a stalled career, Chicago guitarist Luther Allison moved to Paris in 1983. After establishing himself as something of a superstar in Europe, Allison commenced a strong domestic comeback with 1994's *Soul Fixin' Man*, reclaiming the sterling domestic reputation he earned as a young man. All of his Alligator releases feature a wide range of material spotlighting his slashing guitar work and gravelly, soulful vocals. From uptempo rockers to contemplative acoustic blues, from bouncy, horn-driven soul tunes to organ-fueled, gospel-style ballads, Allison performed with the fiery energy of a teenager and the

grizzled soul of a veteran. His only weakness was an occasional tendency to do a little too much, go over the top. Usually, however, his guitar playing was reckless in the best sense of the word, dancing on a razor's edge, remaining just this side of out-of-control. Allison came from the same school of West Side Chicago guitar as Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Magic Sam, Freddie King, and Jimmy Dawkins, favoring hard-driving, piercing single-note leads with a soul base and a rock edge. He also played a mean slide.

what to buy: *Soul Fixin' Man* ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1994, prod. Jim Gaines) launched Allison's American comeback, and it is a gem—soulful, intense, varied, and never out of control. You also won't go wrong with *Reckless* ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1997, prod. Jim Gaines). *Where Have You Been? Live in Montreux 1976–94* ♪♪♪♪ (Ruf, 1996, prod. Thomas Ruf) is an excellent live collection, spotlighting Allison's transcendent performance powers.

what to buy next: More straightforward than most of what followed, Allison's debut, *Love Me Mama* ♪♪♪½ (Delmark, 1969, prod. Robert Koester), makes clear why he was considered a rising star of the blues at the time of its release. Similarly, *Love Me Papa* ♪♪♪½ (Disques Black & Blue, 1978/Evidence, 1992) is a straight-ahead Chicago-style session performed with flair and a sort of off-handed charm.

what to avoid: *Motown Sessions, 1972–76* ♪♪½ (Motown, 1996) collects Allison's best work as Motown's only bluesman. Even as the creme de la creme, it is not what it could and should have been.

the rest:
Serious ♪♪♪½ (Blind Pig, 1987)
Blue Streak ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Robert Nighthawk, Magic Sam, Freddie King
▶▶ Kenny Neal, Joe Louis Walker

Alan Paul

Mose Allison

Born Mose John Allison Jr., November 11, 1927, in Tippo, MS.

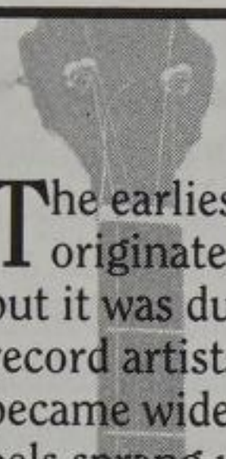
Though Allison's light, improvisational piano style has more in common with jazz than blues, he built his early reputation by personalizing Sonny Boy Williamson's "Eyesight to the Blind," Willie Dixon's "Seventh Son," and Muddy Waters's "Rollin' Stone." Interpreting blues standards in his lazy and smart-alecky—but always warm—voice, he also influenced rockers Pete Townshend, Van Morrison, the Clash, and the Yardbirds. Townshend in particular, who liked the blues but didn't want the Who to become another blues-reviving Yardbirds or Rolling Stones, found inspiration in "Eyesight to the Blind" and Allison's most enduring anthem, "Young Man's Blues." But all the rock influence has distorted Allison's legend. He has been recording albums and touring nightclubs (where he refuses to let anybody smoke) for 40 years, and his devastating sense of humor led to such wonderful jazz songs as "Your Mind Is on Vacation" and "If You're Going to the City." His piano style, reminiscent of long-time Waters sideman Otis Spann, is fast and playful but never so busy it clutters up the lyrics. Not much has changed over the past several decades for Allison, though he collaborated on *Tell Me Something* with Van Morrison (who once covered his "If You Only Knew") and occasionally does joint interviews with his country-rocking daughter, the talented Parlor James singer Amy Allison.

what to buy: *Allison Wonderland: The Mose Allison Anthology* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994, prod. Joel Dorn, James Austin) shows why Allison was such an important link between mid-century Chicago blues and early 1960s British rock 'n' roll. The compilation displaced *The Best of Mose Allison* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1988, prod. Bob Porter) and *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1959/1988, prod. Bob Weinstock) as the essential places to find "The Seventh Son," "Eyesight to the Blind," "Young Man's Blues," and "Your Mind Is on Vacation."

what to buy next: His original studio albums are hard to find, but *Back Country Suite* ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1957), *Local Color* ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1958, prod. Bob Weinstock), and *Ramblin' with Mose Allison* ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1961) are among the best of a prolific recording career. His 1980s Elektra period, which produced *Middle Class White Boy* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1982, prod. Esmond Edwards) and *Lesson in Living* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1983, prod. Philippe Rault), allowed him to revitalize his style with a more soulful touch. *Tell Me Something* ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1996, prod. Van Morrison, Ben Sidran, Georgie Fame), a collaboration with Morrison and Fame, is a nice tribute and return to form after years of nondescript studio albums.

what to avoid: Allison has been churning out records with incredible regularity for four decades, and sometimes he releases a rushed batch of stuff: *Mose Alive!* ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1966), *Western Man* ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1971), and *Mose in Your Ear* ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972) are examples of this lack of inspiration.

the rest:
Parchman Farm ♪♪♪ (Original Jazz Classics)



the 1920s

The earliest audio recording technology originated before the turn of the century, but it was during the 1920s that the ability to record artists cheaply, and in regional settings, became widespread. Literally hundreds of labels sprang up that recorded obscure string bands, solo banjo players and fiddlers, and blues artists throughout the southern United States. Many of these recordings were not distributed far beyond the towns where the recordings were made, others, such as the legendary sides cut by Ralph Peer in Bristol, Tennessee, made stars of Jimmie Rodgers, the Stoneman Family, and the Carter Family throughout the South, and essentially founded the country music industry in the process. Radio shows like the WLS *Barn Dance,* which ironically originated up north in Chicago, were heard all over the heartland every Saturday night, and proved an effective launching pad for country, folk, and string band music. "Race records" were abundant, including the earliest sides by instrumental geniuses like Blind Blake and Big Bill Broonzy as well as the brief but enormously influential recording output of Robert Johnson, who became known and respected only long after his death. Although much of this material was not widely heard until the latter half of the century, a mother lode of incredible roots music was being documented for the first time.

Michael Parrish

Creek Bank ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1958)
Ol' Devil Mose ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1958)
Young Man Mose ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1958)
Autumn Song ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1959)
Mose Allison Plays for Lovers ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1959)
Transfiguration of Hiram Brown ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1960)
I Love the Life I Live ♪♪ (Columbia, 1961)
V-8 Ford Blues ♪♪♪½ (Epic/Legacy, 1961)
I Don't Worry about a Thing ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1962/Rhino, 1993)
Mose Allison Takes to the Hills ♪♪♪½ (Epic/Legacy, 1962)
Mose Allison Sings ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1963)
Swingin' Machine ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1963)
The Word from Mose Allison ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1964)
Wild Man on the Lane ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1966)
I Been Doin' Some Thinkin' ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1968)
Mose Goes ♪♪ (Columbia, 1968)
Hello There Universe ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1970)
Retrospective ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1971)
Mose Allison ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1972)
The Seventh Son ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1973)
Your Mind Is on Vacation ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1976)
Ever Since the World Ended ♪♪ (Blue Note, 1988)
My Backyard ♪♪ (Blue Note, 1990)
Mose Allison Sings and Plays ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1991)
The Earth Wants You ♪♪ (Blue Note, 1994)
High Jinks!: The Mose Allison Trilogy ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, Art Tatum, Ray Charles, Charles Brown, Sonny Boy Williamson II, Otis Spann

▶▶ Pete Townshend, Bonnie Raitt, Van Morrison, Elvis Costello, Ray Davies

Steve Knopper

Peter Alsop

Born 1946, in CT.

Together with such innovative children's music performers as Raffi and Bill Rosen (formerly of RosenSchantz), Peter Alsop, a singer-songwriter, lecturer, and humorist residing in California's Topanga Canyon, has introduced a new generation to songs that are as much fun as they are insightful. Although his first albums were directed at adults, Alsop has shifted most of his attention to children's music since founding his own record label, Moose Head, in 1983. All six of his albums for the younger set, including the memorable *Wha D'Ya Wanna Do* and *Staying Over*, received Best Children's Album awards from either *Parent's Choice* or the National Association of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers. Videos of Alsop's songs for children include the Yuletide classic, *When Jesus Was a Kid,* winner of a prestigious National Parenting Publications award in 1992. Alsop holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology and previously worked as director of the Harbor Schools Residential Treatment Center for emotionally disturbed adolescents in Maine and as an elementary school teacher in the South Bronx of New York. Alsop is a popular lecturer at colleges and universities and conferences for educators, psychologists, nurses, physicians, social workers, funeral directors, and computer programmers—using songs, stories, and humor to examine ethical issues, motivation techniques, communication skills,

and ways to stay creative in education. Among the many films and television shows that have included Alsop's compositions are Steven Spielberg's *The Money Pit* and Nickelodeon's *Nick Jr. Rocks* and *The Fred Penner Show.* Alsop has made numerous appearances as an actor in films, television, and theatrical productions.

what to buy: Alsop's first album aimed at the younger set, *Wha'D'Ya Wanna Do?* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1983, prod. Peter Alsop), remains his most fun. While songs like "My Body," "Be Gentle Robin," and "You Get a Little Extra When You Watch T.V.!" address serious issues, the album is successfully balanced by humorous novelty tunes including "I Am a Pizza," "I Wanna Be a Dog," and "Yecch!"

what to buy next: *Uniforms* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1983, prod. Peter Alsop) remains Alsop's adult masterpiece. Accompanied by such stellar musicians as Byron Berline on fiddle, John Hickman on banjo, Fred Tackett on electric guitar and trumpet, and Robin Willamson on pennywhistle, Alsop's witty and politically minded songs are given an uplifting, West-Coast-bluegrass-meets-folk sensitivity. As he does on his children's albums, he explores serious subjects, including conformity (the title track) and sexual identity ("It's Only a Wee Wee" and "Hopelessly Heterosexual") in a light, witty, way.

the rest:

Family Albums:

Take Me with You ♪♪♪♪ (Moose Head, 1986)
Stayin' Over ♪♪♪♪½ (Moose Head, 1987)
In the Hospital ♪♪♪ (Moose Head, 1989)
Pluggin' Away ♪♪♪ (Moose Head, 1991)

Adult Albums:

Recorded Live in Concert ♪♪♪ (Moose Head, 1975)
Asleep at the Helm ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977)
Draw the Line ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1978)
Fan Club Favorites ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)
Family Roles ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Wake Up! ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993)

worth searching for: *Chris Moos Holidays* ♪♪♪♪½ (Moose Head, 1995, prod. Peter Alsop), Alsop's playful nod to the Yuletide, sparkles with infectious spirit and serves as the perfect antidote to the holiday blues. He also has released the following videos: *Opening Doors* (Moose Head, 1988), *Costume Party* (Moose Head, 1988), *When Jesus Was a Kid* (Moose Head, 1992), *Wake Up!* (Moose Head, 1993), *Get Real!* (Moose Head, 1995), and *When Kids Say Goodbye* (Moose Head, 1995).

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, Ella Jenkins, Malvina Reynolds

▶▶ Ginni Clemmens, Fred Small, Jon Gailmor, Sally Rogers, Marcy Marxer

Craig Harris

Altan

Formed 1987, in Gaoth Dobhair, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, fiddle, vocals (1987–present); Frankie Kennedy, flute, whistle, vocals (1987–1994); Ciarán Curran, bouzouki (1987–present); Mark Kelly, guitar, vocals (1987–present); Paul O'Shaughnessy, fiddle (1988–92); Cíarán Tourish, fiddle, whistle, vocals (1990–present); Dáithí Sproule, guitar, vocals (1992–present); Dermot Byrne, accordion (1994–present).

As sure as Planxty and the Bothy Band were the Irish supergroups of the 1970s, Altan has dominated the traditional scene since the end of the 1980s. What is somewhat unusual about it is that the band's music is deeply rooted in the Donegal tradition, one which had received little attention before Altan's commercial success popularized the Gaelic songs and Scottish-tinged highlands, strathspeys, and reels which give the band its unique sound. From the start, the two main ingredients at the core of that sound were the dynamic interplay of the flute and fiddle, played by husband and wife Frankie Kennedy and Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, and Ní Mhaonaigh's magical soprano. These were first captured on disc on the couple's 1983 *Ceol Aduaidh*, made at a time when few people had ever heard of Irish "Germans" (a type of Donegal barndance) or mazurkas. Ciarán Curran was one of the accompanists, and so was keyboardist Eithne Ní Bhraonáin, better known today as Enya. Indeed, Ní Mhaonaigh grew up in Gaoth Dobhair (Gweedore), in West Donegal, just a few miles away from the Brennans, whose family band, Clannad, had started performing their brand of traditional music and jazz fusion in the early 1970s.

By the mid-1980s, Ní Mhaonaigh and Kennedy had begun touring the United States with Curran and guitarist Mark Kelly when they caught the attention of Green Linnet. As Dónal Lunny and Mícheál Ó Domhnaill had in the Bothy Band a decade earlier, Curran and Kelly were crafting highly inventive accompaniments for the foursome's tunes and songs. Their first album on the new label, released in 1987, was simply called *Altan* after Loch Altan, the name of a lake near Ní Mhaonaigh's home—as well as that of a reel she composed and played on the album. The title stuck and became the name of the band. By the time they recorded their next album, *Horse with a Heart*, in July

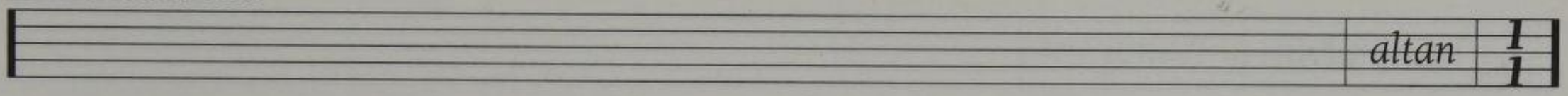
altan

Altan (from left): Ciarán Curran, Frankie Kennedy, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Cíarán Tourish, Dáithí Sproule **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

1988, the quartet had become a quintet with the addition of Dublin fiddle player Paul O'Shaughnessy, and the same ensemble made *The Red Crow* in 1990. Because O'Shaughnessy could not commit to constant touring, yet another musician, Inishowen fiddle player Cíarán Tourish, was added to the lineup, bringing his fiery playing into the mix on the band's highly successful 1992 *Harvest Storm*. Not too long after, O'Shaughnessy was obliged to leave the band for good. Donegal-born singer and guitar player Dáithí Sproule, a long-time friend of Ní Mhaonaigh and Kennedy who lives in Minneapolis, had been called upon on occasion to substitute for Mark Kelly. His status as a full-fledged member was made official on the band's next album, *Island Angel*.

The 1993 release was to be the band's last original recording for Green Linnet. These were trying times for Altan, most of all because of Frankie Kennedy's ongoing battle with cancer, one he ultimately lost in September 1994. By then, another longtime musical friend, accordionist Dermot Byrne, from Bridgend in North Donegal, had joined the ranks. Eventually, the band signed with Virgin and in 1996 released *Blackwater*, a rather disappointing mixture of somewhat uninspired tune medleys and overproduced vocal tracks, possibly a result of the transition to the big label. Their latest album, *Runaway Sunday*, is in a similar vein but with more exciting instrumental work, and gives us hope that, indeed, they will carry on.

what to buy: Although not an Altan album strictly speaking, *Ceol Aduaidh* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1983/Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Nicky Ryan) is the first commercial recording made by Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh and Frankie Kennedy. However, the magical sound of their fiddle and flute duets and of Ní Mhaonaigh's singing, already accompanied by Ciarán Curran's cittern, are just as you can hear them on later albums by the group. *Altan* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1987, prod. Dónal Lunny), the first official band album, is very similar in some ways, but the accompaniments and the song arrangements in particular have become quite sophisticated thanks to the addition of Mark Kelly's gui-



tar. However, it is the magnificent *Horse with a Heart* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1989, prod. Phil Cunningham) that established Altan as a new force on the Irish traditional music scene. As with the Bothy Band's 1975 album, instrumental medleys such as the opening reel set "The Curlew" or the jig "The Road to Durham" were learned and repeated at many a session in the early 1990s. Other, quieter moments of the album, like Ní Mhaonaigh's achingly beautiful vocals on "The Lass of Glenshee" or Kennedy's flute solo on Tommy Peoples's air "An Feochán" are likely to be remembered as well. Throughout, the production by ex–Silly Wizard Phil Cunningham, who also contributes understated keyboards and whistle parts, is exemplary. Although recorded with the same lineup and later given a NAIRD award, *The Red Crow* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1990, prod. P.J. Curtis) is not quite as strong an album as *Horse with a Heart*. Still, Ní Mhaonaigh's singing on the County Down song "The Flowers of Magherally" and on "Mallaí Chroich Shlí," as well as the instrumental renditions of Jerry Holland's now universally known reel "Brenda Stubbert's," Ní Mhaonaigh's own reel "The Red Crow," and the charming "Tommy Bhetty's Waltz" are some of the album's high points. The addition to the lineup of yet another fiddler, in the person of Cíarán Tourish, could have been a mixed blessing, but the opening track of *Harvest Storm* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. P.J. Curtis) dispels all doubts. The powerful sound of the band's three fiddles on the reel medley "Pretty Peg" is simply breathtaking. This is followed by one of the very best vocal tracks recorded by the band, the song "Dónal Agus Mórag," featuring beautiful guitar work by Kelly and haunting vocal harmonies. With the presence of guest musicians like Dónal Lunny, Hothouse Flowers' Liam Ó Maonlaí, and ex–Stockton's Wing percussionist Tommy Hayes, there is some experimentation with new instrumental sounds, like that of the bass bodhrán and of the Australian didgeridoo, but P.J. Curtis's production keeps things nicely balanced. *Island Angel* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Brian Masterson, Altan) continues in the same vein. The band got around to recording some tunes Ní Mhaonaigh and Kennedy had been performing for years, like their friend Fintan McManus's reel, known to many as "The Guns of the Magnificent Seven," or Charlie O'Neill's highland. Ironically in view of sad events yet to come, Kennedy's flute playing is heard very strongly, for instance on his own reel "Humours of Andytown," or on the bittersweet "Island Angel," a piece composed for him by Ní Mhaonaigh. Ní Mhaonaigh's voice shines on "Bríd Óg Ní Mháille" and the children's song "Dúlamán," with superb vocal harmonies that evoke the sound of Clannad (they recorded the song in 1976). There are two well-produced anthologies available, *The First Ten Years, 1986–1995* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Dónal Lunny) and *The Best of Altan* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. various), both based on the band's first five albums. The latter includes a bonus CD containing eight tracks recorded live in Germany in 1989 by the *Horse with a Heart* lineup and first released as part of the collection *Ireland* ♪♪♪♪ (WDR, 1993, prod. Christian Scholze, Jean Trouillet, Jan Reichow). The sound is quite good and one gets a chance to experience the strength of the band's live sound. The last track, a medley of reels concluding with that essential Donegal reel "The Gravel Walk," was not recorded on any of the band's studio albums.

what to buy next: The band's latest, *Runaway Sunday* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1997, prod. Altan, Alastair McMillan), is not quite in the same vein as Altan's early work but is a step up from the previous *Blackwater*. Obviously, the sound of Kennedy's flute is missed on the instrumental tracks. This time around, though, they include some mighty tunes, "John Doherty's Reels," the two Con Cassidy jigs in "Australian Waters," and a version of "Scots Mary," with a third part that came from Doherty as well, to name a few. As on *Blackwater*, however, the song arrangements often sound suspiciously mainstream, as if Ní Mhaonaigh were being promoted as the next great Irish folk vocalist. Still, it is hard not to fall under the spell of Ní Mhaonaigh's heart-rending "Time Has Passed," seemingly a sung acknowledgement of the trauma caused by her husband's death and of what the last three years must have been like—"Time has passed, You are gone, Your tune is played, I must carry on."

what to avoid: *Blackwater* ♪♪½ (Virgin, 1996, prod. Altan, Brian Masterson) was the band's first album after Frankie Kennedy's untimely death. What may have been a cathartic experience for the musicians did not necessarily translate into their best work. The instrumental tracks, while missing the unique tone color to which Kennedy's flute contributed, still feature some superior lead playing by Ní Mhaonaigh, Tourish, and new band member Dermot Byrne on accordion. However, the vocal tracks suffer from overproduction, with the addition of everything from Brendan Power's harmonica to Dónal Lunny's popish keyboards, to a string quartet on "Blackwaterside." The album concludes on Ní Mhaonaigh's somber "Tune for Frankie."

the rest:
Altan ♪♪♪½ (K-Tel, 1996)

worth searching for: The most devoted fans of Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh's playing and singing may want to look for the first

LP recorded by the Irish all-women band Macalla, *Mná na hÉireann (Women of Ireland)* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1984, prod. Nicky Ryan), featuring, alongside Ní Mhaonaigh, Paul O'Shaughnessy's mother, Pearl, on fiddle, and a host of other terrific musicians.

influences:

⏪ John Doherty, Con Cassidy, Proinsias Ó Maonaigh, Tommy Peoples, Clannad, Planxty, the Bothy Band, Macalla

⏩ Four Men and a Dog, Déanta, Dervish, Craobh Rua

Philippe Varlet

Dave Alvin

Born November 11, 1955, in Los Angeles, CA.

As a member of the Blasters, Dave Alvin coined the term "American Music," and he has spent the rest of his career defining the term, crafting a distinctive brand of music commonly called roots—a genre that draws on such solidly domestic forms as country, vintage R&B, rockabilly, and blues. After a split with his brother Phil ended the Blasters' too-brief run, Alvin joined X for one album, then began a solo career that has been marked by songs showing a gift for narrative and a fine poetic sense that cuts through Alvin's brusque delivery. He also plays a mean lead guitar. Of late, Alvin has gained a reputation as producer of West Coast roots music, and he also put together the excellent Merle Haggard tribute *Tulare Dust* in 1994.

what to buy: *Blue Blvd* ♪♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1991, prod. Chris Silagyi, Dave Alvin, Bruce Bromberg) reads like a book of short stories and rocks like nobody's business. "Haley's Comet," co-written with Tom Russell, recounts the dubious end of rock 'n' roll legend Bill Haley, while "Andersonville" is the most vivid song about the civil war since "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down." *King of California* ♪♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1994, prod. Greg Leisz) is an acoustic-based album on which Alvin finally grew into his voice, allowing quieter arrangements to show off its distinctiveness rather than its limitations. You could carp about Alvin taking still another run at "Fourth of July," but songs like "Barn Burning," which rolls like a freight train, and the lush title track, Alvin's best ballad ever, more than make up for the repetition.

what to buy next: *Romeo's Escape* ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1987/Razor & Tie, 1995, prod. Steve Berlin, Mark Linett) contains some of Alvin's finest songs, including several reprised from the Blasters' albums. And while some of the arrangements, notably "Border Radio," cast the songs in new light, Alvin's limited vocal abilities hold him back. *Museum of Heart* ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1993, prod. Chris Silagyi, Bruce Bromberg, Dave Alvin) is a wrenching album of heartbreak, as most of this album's 13 tracks sift through the shards of a shattered relationship. The best of the lot, "Don't Talk about Her" and "A Woman's Got a Right" could be seen as the laments of a man smart enough to see both sides of the story.

the rest:

(With the Guilty Men) *Interstate City* ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1996)

worth searching for: The bizarre "stuporgroup" effort *The Pleasure Barons Live in Las Vegas* ♪♪½ (HighTone, 1993, prod. Mark Linett, Country Dick Montana) is of more interest to serious fans of any one of the principals—Alvin, Mojo Nixon, and the late, lamented Country Dick Montana—than it is to the general populace. Alvin's cover versions of "Closing Time" and "Gangster of Love" stand out, but Country Dick's Tom Jones medley must be heard to be believed.

solo outings:

The Blasters:

The Blasters Collection ♪♪♪♪ (Slash/Warner Bros., 1990)

American Music ♪♪♪½ (Rollin' Rock, 1980/HighTone, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Big Joe Turner, Sonny Burgess, Chuck Berry, Hank Williams, Merle Haggard

⏩ Big Sandy & His Fly Right Boys, the Reverend Horton Heat, Jason and the Scorchers, Chris Gaffney, the Derailers

Daniel Durchholz

Amazing Blondel

Formed late 1960s, in Scunthorpe, England.

John David Gladwin, lute, oboe, cittern, double bass; Terry Wincott, pipe organ, harmonium, cittern, recorders, flute, crumhorn, tabor pipe, ocarina, guitar; Edward Baird, guitar, guitern, percussion.

Amazing Blondel was a 1970s trio that specialized in a "medieval" sound *a la* City Waites or Gryphon. Named for Richard the Lionhearted's legendary favorite minstrel, they recorded their first album, *Amazing Blondel*, in 1970. The trio became known for playing upwards of 40 instruments on stage, passing the instruments around so that no more than three instruments were ever played at once. The instruments required an incredible amount of time to tune and the band would sometimes refuse to perform if they couldn't actually get in tune. Their ma-

terial tended to be long and somewhat boring but their switching of instruments managed to keep audiences entertained. Gladwin, who was the band's songwriter and soul, left the band soon after the release of their most popular album, *England*, in 1972, and Wincott and Baired soldiered on as a duo for the next album, *Blondel*, in 1973. Their later work was more rock-oriented and not nearly as successful. The really "amazing" thing about this group is that 24 years later they reunited to tour again and release a new album, *Restoration*, seemingly picking up where they left off. They are alive, well, and touring together as of this writing.

what to buy: *Restoration* ♪♪♪♪ (HTD Records, 1997, prod. Amazing Blondel) reunites the original trio in a collection of 12 songs that hearken back to their most successful formula. The trio obviously spent a long time in the studio trying to recapture the magic and it shows; however, the band's musical sensibilities have changed somewhat over the years. *Restoration* incorporates elements from all four of the band's Island albums, with a liberal sprinkling of new musical directions.

what to buy next: *Fantasia Lindum* ♪♪♪♪ (Island Records, 1971/Edsel Records, 1997, prod. Paul Samwell-Smith) is considered the band's magnum opus and resonates with the medieval images the band cultivated. "Swifts, swains and leafy lanes, this country brings them near; As a love to his lass, and a woodsman to his deer." You get the picture. Of course, embellished with outstanding harmonies and with more than competent instrumental work, it wasn't nearly as bad as the above snippet may indicate.

the rest:

The Amazing Blondel/The Amazing Blondel & a Few Faces ♪♪½ (Bell Records, 1970/Edsel Records, 1995)
Evensong ♪♪½ (Island Records, 1970/Edsel Records, 1996)
England ♪♪½ (Island Records, 1972/Edsel Records, 1996)
Blondel—The Purple Album ♪♪ (Island Records, 1972/Edsel Records, 1996)
Mulgrave Street ♪♪ (DJM Records, 1974)
Bad Dreams ♪♪ (DJM Records, 1974)
Inspiration ♪♪ (DJM Records, 1975)
Live in Tokyo ♪♪ (DJM Records, 1977)
Englishe Musicke ♪♪½ (Edsel Records, 1993)
A Foreign Field That Is Forever England ♪♪½ (HTD Records, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ King Crimson, Moody Blues

▶▶ Gryphon, Jethro Tull, Traffic

Neal Walters

The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Formed 1972, in Memphis, TN. Disbanded 1980. Reunited 1994.

Russell Smith, guitar, vocals; Butch McDade, drums, percussion, vocals; Barry "Byrd" Burton, guitar, dobro (1972–77); James Hooker, piano (1994–present); Billy Earhart III, organ; Jeff Davis, bass; Duncan Cameron, guitar (1977–80, 1994); Danny Parks, guitar (1994–96); Kelvin Holly, guitar (1996–present).

Formed by Russell Smith and Butch McDade, the Amazing Rhythm Aces were essentially a country band that blended elements of old-time music, bluegrass, R&B, and Western swing into its repertoire. The band is probably most well-known for the hit single "Third Rate Romance," which appeared on its debut album, *Stacked Deck*. Subsequent albums lacked *Stacked Deck*'s verve and drive, although in 1976 Russell's "The End Is Not in Sight" garnered the band a Grammy award. After the group formally disbanded in 1980, Billy Earhart joined the Bama Band, Duncan Cameron joined Sawyer Brown, and Russell Smith, after releasing a solo album, joined Run C&W, a country/bluegrass novelty group. In 1994, original members Smith, McDade, Earhart, and Davis reunited and hooked up with pianist James Hooker and guitarist Danny Parks for *Ride Again*, a tasty reworking of former ARA tunes. The group then delivered a one-two punch in 1997 with *Out of the Blue*, a brilliant amalgam of blues-soaked country soul, cleverly crafted lyrics, and killer guitar work courtesy of new member Kelvin Holly, who replaced Parks.

what to buy: *Out of the Blue* ♪♪♪♪ (Breaker Records, 1997, prod. Russell Smith) features the trademark melding of Stax-Volt funk and down home country that the group built its career on more than two decades ago. Especially noteworthy is Smith's gritty, "bluesy" vocal delivery on "The Blue Room" and McDade's rollicking "Get Down."

what to buy next: *Ride Again* ♪♪♪ (Breaker Records, 1994, prod. Russell Smith) features newer versions of fan favorites from the mid-1970s to early 1980s.

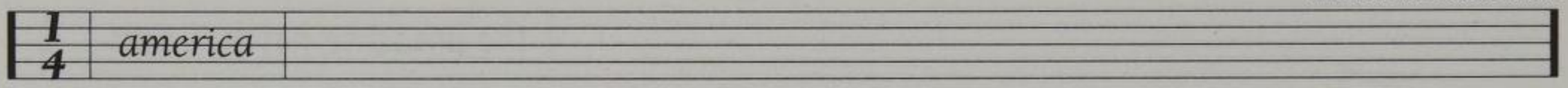
worth searching for: *Stacked Deck* ♪♪½ (MCA, 1975, prod. Barry "Byrd" Burton) contains "Third Rate Romance," which showcases some hot guitar playing by Barry Burton, and the "bluesy," gospel-tinged "Life's Railway to Heaven."

influences:

◀◀ The Boxtops

▶▶ Sammy Kershaw, Sawyer Brown, Toby Keith

Rick Petreycik



America

Formed 1969, in London, England.

Dewey Bunnell, vocals, guitar, drums; Gerry Beckley, guitar, vocals; Dan Peek, guitar, vocals (1969–77).

America was folk-rock's Fabian—tuneful and easy on the ears, not terribly subversive and, therefore, more commercial. The trio, which formed on a U.S. armed forces base, enjoyed a string of hit singles during the '70s, beginning by aping Neil Young on "A Horse with No Name" and hitting a few other high points—including some sides produced by Beatles collaborator George Martin—along with the drivel of "Muskrat Love." After Peek left, however, the bottom seemed to drop out. With the exception of the 1982 hit "You Can Do Magic," Bunnell and Beckley simply soldier along on the oldies circuit, pairing up with fellow travelers such as the Beach Boys and Three Dog Night.

what to buy: *History: America's Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1975, prod. various) has everything you'd want—and need—from the group's peak period.

what to buy next: *Encore! More Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990, prod. various) provides a nice addendum for those who want more of the story.

what to avoid: *Alibi* **woof!** (Capitol, 1980) is the worst of the myriad sub-par albums America, as a duo, has recorded during the '80s and '90s.

the rest:

America ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972)
Homecoming ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972)
Hat Trick ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1973)
Holiday ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1974)
Hearts ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1975)
Hideaway ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976)
Harbor ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976)
Silent Letter ♪½ (Capitol, 1979)
View from the Ground ♪♪ (Capitol, 1982)
Your Move ♪ (Capitol, 1983)
Perspective ♪½ (Capitol, 1984)
Hourglass ♪♪ (American Gramophone, 1994)
King Biscuit Flower Hour Presents ♪♪♪½ (KBFH, 1996)

influences:

⏪ James Taylor, the Eagles, Jackson Browne, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Poco, the Kingston Trio

⏩ Firefall, Roger McGuinn, Gene Clark & Chris Hillman

Gary Graff

The American Cafe Orchestra

Formed 1985, in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Ruthie Dornfeld, fiddle, viola; Morten Alfred, guitar.

The American Cafe Orchestra is not really an orchestra, and that's not just because there are only two people in it. It's more an attempt to formalize the relationship between two people who discovered that they love playing together, enough that more than a decade of fertile music-making and a couple of splendid, bafflingly eclectic recordings have resulted. Ruthie Dornfeld is little known outside the Northeast, where her stellar fiddling is much in demand among traditional dance circles. She's a longtime member of Yankee Ingenuity, an institution among New England's contradance bands—but Dornfeld's dazzling, decidedly post-modern tune-mongering sensibility is hard to contain, and if her style owes much to the grand Maritimes fiddling tradition, her wide-ranging tastes and seemingly immeasurable repertoire completely defy any such stylistic circumscription. Morten Alfred is a kindred soul, a man of pangalactic musical interests and a beguiling way of insinuating his swingy archtop acoustic guitar style into nearly anything. Dornfeld and Alfred met at a bluegrass festival in Denmark in 1985 and hit it off instantly. Despite that the North Atlantic lay between their two home towns, they started to visit each other regularly, playing dances in the U.S. and cafes in Europe. "The American Cafe Orchestra grew out of this confluence of dance and cafe music," wrote Dornfeld, "as well as just plain fooling around with fiddle tunes of all types."

what's available: Except for an earlier self-produced cassette tape, the cryptically titled *Egyptian Dominoes* ♪♪♪♪½ (Northeastern, 1992, prod. Ruthie Dornfeld, Morten Alfred) is the only recording the Orchestra has produced—although there's such a profusion of musical riches here and such a bewildering array of stylistic tangents that there's more than enough to satisfy through repeated listenings. The Orchestra expands to a quintet for this recording, adding "members" Bill Morrison on bass; Danny Noveck on tenor banjo, fiddle, and percussion; Maine's instrumental whiz, John McGann, on mandolin, mandola, guitar, and pedal steel, and an array of other musical guests. The program is sprinkled equally with southern Appalachian fiddle tunes and traditional fiddle music from Scandinavia, as well as a Greek kalamatianos, some waltzes, guest Glenn Jones's indefinable "Cant," and the title cut. All this is knit together with Alfred's compelling, jazzy guitar and Dornfeld's dark-toned, fiery fiddling. If you want to hear more of Dornfeld, check out her band the Poodles, a quartet consisting of Dornfeld, bassist Carol Hamm, fiddler Leah Weiss, and guitarist Ruth Rappaport

(they all sing, too). Their sole CD features a far-ranging stylistic bent akin to the American Cafe crew: modal Appalachian, Cajun, Southwestern swing, and some detours to eastern Europe.

solo outings:
The Poodles:
Unleashed ♪♪♪½ (Northeastern, 1993)

influences:

- Rodney Miller, Wild Asparagus, Fourgone Conclusions, Yankee Ingenuity
- Hillbillies from Mars, anyone who's ever played (or wanted to play) "Jesusita en Chihuahua" for a contradance

Chris Rietz

The Amidons

Formed 1975, in Cambridge, MA.

Peter Amidon, vocal, piano, guitar; Mary Alice Amidon, vocal, banjo, accordion; Sam Amidon, vocal, fiddle; Stefan Amidon, vocal, percussion.

Peter and Mary Alice Amidon met in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1975, where they became deeply involved in traditional music and dance. After touring the U.S. and Europe with Vermont's Word of Mouth Chorus/Bread and Puppet Theatre, the Amidons moved to Brattleboro, Vermont, and eventually became elementary school teachers. They also became Vermont Council on the Arts touring artists and VCA Artists-in-Education, performing their songs and stories at concerts throughout New England. They eventually left their teaching jobs to devote full time to their music, and to conduct elementary school residencies of singing, storytelling, and traditional dance. Peter is founder and director of the Brattleboro Music Center Children's Choir and is stage manager for Circle of Song, a participatory singing stage at the Great Hudson Clearwater Revival Music Festival. Additionally, he leads Sacred Harp singing at the Old Songs Festival near Albany, New York. Mary Alice is co-director of the Village Harmony Camp, which brings together 20 teenaged singers from Vermont and around the world who rehearse and tour, performing a concert of early and contemporary American folk hymns, Eastern European village music, and vocal music from the Renaissance. Sam and Stefan have been performing with their parents for several years and, with Thomas Bartlett on piano, have recorded *Popcorn Behavior*, an album of New England contradance tunes.

what to buy: *I'll Never Forget* ♪♪♪ (Amidon Music, 1993, prod. Pete Sutherland) features the family in a varied program of traditional songs and tunes ranging from fiddle tunes like "Texas" to sacred harp songs. It will probably be the only album on which you'll hear "Benton's Dream," a fiddle tune from Benton Flippen, paired with "Amazing Grace" in a medley. Mary Alice's vocals and banjo playing are a special treat. All recordings are available from the Amidons, 6 Willow St., Brattleboro, VT 05301.

what to buy next: The Amidons' other releases are available only on cassette. The seasonal offering *This Longest Night—Songs of Christmas, Chanukah, and the Winter Solstice* ♪♪♪ (Amidon Music, 1989, prod. the Amidons) is excellent holiday fare and features several winter songs that are "off the beaten path."

the rest:
Things Are Going My Way—Traditional Songs for Children ♪♪½ (Amidon Music, 1984)
All I Really Need—Songs for Children ♪♪♪ (Amidon Music, 1988)
This Pretty Planet—Songs for the Earth ♪♪½ (Amidon Music, 1990)

solo outings:
Popcorn Behavior:
Popcorn Behavior ♪♪♪ (Amidon Music, 1995)

influences:

- The Beers Family, the Dildines
- The New Golden Ring

Neal Walters

Eric Andersen

Born February 14, 1943, in Pittsburgh, PA.

Eric Andersen hit the folk circuit during the '60s, becoming one of the first "new" Dylans, a label that is somewhat shortsighted. Andersen is similar to Dylan only in his phrasing; but where Dylan is elusive and biting, Anderson is open and thoughtful. His vision is nowhere near as far-reaching, however, as he prefers to stick to more romantic themes. His career was thrown off track during the '70s after the master tapes for the follow-up to his masterful *Blue River* album were inexplicably lost. After meandering for a decade or so, Andersen appears to be back on track, recently releasing some of the most focused work of his career.

what to buy: *Blue River* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972, prod. Eric Andersen) is undoubtedly his greatest work and stands alongside anything that the singer movement produced during the '70s. Once located, the tapes for *Stages: The Lost Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Co-

lumbia, 1991, prod. Amy Herot) proved as complete and substantial as the rumors indicated. Certainly "Baby, I'm Lonesome" is one of the more moving love songs he's recorded. Also included are some strong new recordings with guests Garth Hudson, Rick Danko, Shawn Colvin, and the Hooters' Eric Bazilian.

what to buy next: *Ghosts Upon the Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Gold Castle, 1988, prod. Steve Addabbo, Eric Andersen) marks a full-force comeback. It's a mature, vast record with vivid, literate songs including the 10-minute title track. *The Best of Eric Andersen* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1970, prod. various) is a solid intro to his coffeehouse folk beginnings, containing his signature "Thirsty Boots."

what to avoid: *More Hits from Tin Can Alley* ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968, prod. Al Gorgoni) is not without its moments, but the Beatlesque production will be a bit florid for the purists and is certainly incongruous with anything else in his catalog.

the rest:
Today Is the Highway ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
'Bout Changes and Things ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966)

worth searching for: *Andersen, Danko, Fjeld* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1993) is a wonderfully intimate and understated album recorded with Jonas Fjeld and the Band's Rick Danko.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams
▶▶ John Gorka, Tom Rush, James McMurtry

see also: *The Band*

Allan Orski

Pink Anderson

Born February 12, 1900, in Lawrence, SC. Died October 12, 1974, in Spartanburg, SC.

Pink Anderson sang East Coast acoustic folk music, blues, minstrel tunes, and ballads. He hit the road at age 14 as a performer in the Indian Remedy Company's traveling medicine show, staying with the show until 1945. As captured in his recordings, he performed diverse material in a plaintive style, drawing from both black and white country traditions. Like many of his peers from the Piedmont region of the Southeast—and unlike countless Mississippi Delta bluesmen—his legacy in modern folk music, or even blues or rock 'n' roll, is not substantial (ironically, Anderson's most lasting recognition may come from the fact that the rock band Pink Floyd took his first name as their own when naming their band). The obsolescence of Anderson's music only serves to make his recordings all the more unique and valuable as documents of a musical heritage that—though not embraced by contemporary culture—certainly is worth remembering.

what to buy: *The Blues of Pink Anderson: Ballad & Folksinger, Vol. 3* ♪♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1995) captures some of Anderson's best work, including "The Titanic," "Boweevil," and "John Henry." This reissue of Prestige/Bluesville LP BV-1071 was recorded by Samuel Charters in September 1961. One negative point: at less than 35 minutes, it's over too soon!

what to buy next: *Pink Anderson: Carolina Blues Man, Vol. 1* ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1992) packages Anderson's more overtly blues-based material. It's well executed, but less unique and more familiar than *Ballad & Folksinger*, including tunes such as "Baby Please Don't Go" and Brownie McGhee's "Meet Me in the Bottom." *Rev. Gary Davis and Pink Anderson: Gospel, Blues and Street Songs* ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1987) includes seven tunes from Anderson recorded in 1950 in Charlottesville, Virginia, among them the irresistible "Greasy Greens." The sound quality does not measure up to Anderson's 1961 recordings or to the standard of the day, however.

worth searching for: Inexplicably, the second volume of the series mentioned above, *Medicine Show Man*, which captured Anderson's medicine show recordings, is not available and not scheduled for reissue at press time. The original Prestige/Bluesville LP is worth finding, though.

influences:
▶▶ Paul Geremia, Roy Book Binder, Steve James

Bryan Powell

Molly Andrews

See: Duck Baker

Any Old Time String Band

Formed 1976, in the San Francisco area. Disbanded 1980.

Kate Brislin, guitar, banjo, bass, vocals; Sue Draheim, fiddle, guitar, vocals; Genny Haley, guitar, banjo, dobro, triangle, bass, vocals; Valerie Mindel, guitar, mandolin, bass, vocals (1976–79); Suzy Rothfield (Thompson), bass, fiddle, vocals (1976–79); Barbara Montoro, bass (1979–1980).

The Any Old Time String Band's eclectic mix of old-time, Cajun, country, and Dixieland styles made them a popular concert at-

traction in their native Bay Area. The more eclectic counterparts of the other pioneering mostly female Bay Area ensemble, the Good Ol' Persons, Any Old Time featured the considerable talents of Kate Brislin and Suzy Thompson, who also worked together in the Blue Flame String Band, along with ex–Albion Band member Sue Draheim and multi-instrumentalists Valerie Mindel and Genny Haley.

what's available: The recent reissue/compilation *I Bid You Goodnight* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1996, prod. Chris Strachwitz, Mike Cogan) contains all the tracks from the group's two LP releases *Any Old Time String Band* ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1978, prod. Chris Strachwitz) and *Any Old Time String Band* ♪♪♪½ (Bay, 1980, prod. Mike Cogan). On the group's debut album, they alternated between fine harmonies ("Dear Companion"), hot picking ("Dixieland One-Step"), French-Cajun waltzes ("Valse de Orphelin"), and depression-era camp ("Home in Pasadena"). The second LP's sound shifted away from the jug band material, emphasizing country ("Hello Stranger," "California Blues"), early blues (Brislin's hot rendition of Bessie Smith's "Lock and Key"), and Cajun music.

influences:

◀◀ New Lost City Ramblers, Balfa Brothers, Pindar Family, Carter Family

▶▶ Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin, Eric and Suzy Thompson

see also: *Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin, Eric and Suzy Thompson*

Michael Parrish

Scott Appel

Born August 3, 1954, in Brooklyn, NY.

Scott Appel is a talented guitarist who has mastered traditional bottleneck playing and Celtic open tuning styles. He has made his name in the folk world as one of the foremost interpreters of the music of Nick Drake. Appel learned to play the guitar at age 8 and grew up listening to such stylists as Davey Graham and Bert Jansch. His dexterity on the six-string earned him admission to the Berklee College of Music in Boston in 1972. During this time, to make ends meet, Appel played in supper clubs, coffeehouses, and jazz nightspots as a solo artist. Realizing the potential to earn good money playing rock, Appel worked in a number of "cover" bands in the New York/New Jersey area during the 1970s. By the early 1980s, Appel turned once again to his first love, acoustic folk, and began to make his name as a regular on the coffeehouse folk circuit. His first full-fledged album, devoted mainly to his original songs, was *Glassfinger*, which highlights his singular bottleneck style of playing. More than just straight blues bottleneck, songs like "Meshes of the Afternoon," "Bridge," and "Leaving" are mini-mood pieces that tend to roam across time and space and the heavens: New Age with punch, as one musician describes it. *Glassfinger* also includes rousing Celtic traditional tunes like "Killakee House" and "Haste to the Wedding," wonderful and frantic jigs and reels that prove Appel's cleverness on the fretboard. Appel's next album, the highly praised *Nine of Swords*, is an homage to Nick Drake and his (Drake's) inventive guitar style. Filled with Drake's own compositions like "Place to Be," "Parasite," "Blossom," and "Bird Flew By," the album also includes the fascinating "Nearly/Far Leys," a song inspired by a snippet of unreleased music of Drake's sent to Appel by Drake's mother. Appel's own songs like "Somnus" and "Thanatopsis" meld seamlessly into Drake's, and there is a slow and pulsating melancholy to the experience of listening to the songs as a whole. *Billboard* called the album "Magnificent!" and *Tower Pulse!* said it was "highly recommended!" Both albums feature outstanding session musicians Chris McNally (guitar), Don Sternecker (keyboards), and Ace Toye (drums).

what's available: *Nine of Swords* ♪♪♪♪ (Schoolkids' Records, 1995, prod. Scott Appel) can be ordered by contacting Schoolkids' Records, 523 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, or e-mail: steve@schoolkids.com. Written up by Dave Fricke in *Rolling Stone* as "a compelling salute to Drake's tortured genius," this album features six Drake tunes and eight other songs and instrumentals, all dreamy landscapes of the drifting soul-spirit.

worth searching for: *Glassfinger* ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1985, prod. Scott Appel) is available on cassette from Kicking Mule Records, P.O. Box 158, Alder Point, CA 95411. *Brittle Days* ♪♪ (Imaginary Records, 1992, prod. Alan Duffy) is a collection of Nick Drake songs performed by various artists. Appel's rendition of Drake's "From the Morning" and "Hazy Jane" is worth the price of the album itself. Appel provides the liner notes to this collection and explains Nick's transcendental influence. It is an English import. Another rare album with two Appel songs is *Songwriter* ♪♪ (X111 Bis Records, 1995, prod. Johan Asherton), which was released in France. Appel produced the original songs "Let All the Clocks Stop" and "Winterlight" for inclusion in the collection.

influences:

◀◀ Nick Drake, Richard Thompson, Leo Kottke, Tim Buckley, Joni Mitchell, Sandy Denny

◀▶ David Sylvian, Duncan Sheik, Jeff Buckley, Sloan Wainwright, Syd Straw, Peter Blegvad

TJ McGrath

Dan Ar Bras

See: Fairport Convention

Arcady

Formed 1988, in Dublin, Ireland.

Johnny Moynihan, bodhrán; Frances Black, vocals (1988–94); Niamh Parsons, vocals (1994–present); Patsy Broderick, piano; Brendan Larrisey, fiddle; Nicolas Quemenar, guitar, flute, whistle; Jackie Daly, accordion (1990–95); Conor Keane, accordion (1995–present).

Named for the land in ancient Greece where poets and artists came together, the group Arcady does indeed represent the coming together of many of Ireland's top traditional musicians. Anchored by founder Johnny Moynihan's bodhrán and the outstanding piano playing of the underrated Patsy Broderick, Arcady plays a rhythmic, straightforward style of Irish music with a few world music elements (harmonica and didgeridoo for example) thrown in for spice. Like Moynihan's earlier band De Dannan, Arcady features English language songs sung by talented, accessible singers such as Frances Black and Niamh (pronounced "Neeve") Parsons. A constant fixture on the concert scene, Arcady has managed to fashion an identifiable style in spite of a tremendous amount of turnover in personnel. Sharon Shannon, Sean Keane, Cathal Hayden, and Tommy McCarthy are a few of the people who have briefly passed through the band during its history.

what's available: *Many Happy Returns* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995, prod. Johnny McDonough) is a tribute to the tunes and songs that form the backbone of traditional Irish music. Each of the musicians knows this material inside and out from years of playing it in sessions and competitions, and they give it their all in the studio. The band's adventuresome yet tasteful arrangements, using non-traditional instruments like didgeridoo and harmonica, keep these well-known pieces sounding fresh and contemporary. Accordion player Conor Keane, in particular, must be singled out for his driving, exuberant style that keeps the energy level high from the album's very first tune. The vocals are handled by Niamh Parsons, whose husky, Dolores Keane–like alto breathes new life into songs that have been sung literally millions of times. Anyone wishing to play Irish music would receive a crash course in the standard Irish music repertoire with a few listens to this album. *After the Ball* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1991, prod. P.J. Curtis) is Arcady's debut album: a solid, pleasant collection of traditional and contemporary material from Ireland and beyond. Singer Frances Black brings her sweet voice to pop-folk songs by Bill Staines, Stan Rogers, Andy Stewart, and Dan Seals, and the players attack a variety of tunes from Ireland, Brittany, and the U.S. The playing, while always solid, lacks a little of the fire that shines so brilliantly on *Many Happy Returns*.

solo outings:

Frances Black:

Talk to Me ♪♪♪ (Dara Records, 1995)

Frances Black and Kieran Goss ♪♪♪ (CBM Records, 1994)

Niamh Parsons:

Loosely Connected ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ De Dannan, Planxty, Joe Cooley

▶▶ Sharon Shannon, Four Men and a Dog

see also: *Jackie Daly, De Dannan*

Tony Ziselberger

Jann Arden

Born Jann Arden Richards, March 27, 1962, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Arden writes and performs convincing, heartfelt tales of heartbreak, though critics have been quicker to notice than listeners. Her debut album, *Time for Mercy*, earned her two Juno Awards (the Canadian version of the Grammys) for Most Promising Solo Performer and Best Video for "I Would Die for You."

what to buy: A collection of beautifully structured, full-throated pop songs, her second album—*Living Under June* ♪♪♪♪½ (1994, A&M, prod. Ed Cherney)—made her a minor force in the burgeoning AAA radio format. Her songwriting, as in the delicate but spiteful ode to an ex-lover, "Insensitive" ("I'm out of vogue/I'm out of touch/I fell too fast/I feel too much/I hope that you might have some advice to give/on how to be insensitive"), shows a gem that's been shining from the beginning.

the rest:

Time for Mercy ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Sarah McLachlan, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Jewel, Chantal Kreviazuk

Christina Fuoco

Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin

Born November 16, 1927, in Duralde, LA.

"Bois Sec" (meaning dry wood) grew up playing triangle behind his uncle, the legendary Creole accordionist Amédée Ardoin. He rapidly learned to play accordion and teamed up with fiddler Canray Fontenot. It was a partnership that would survive until Fontenot's death in 1995. Their duets of fiddle and accordion were eventually augmented by Bois Sec's sons and, eventually, grandsons. The sound was always funky and loose with a great beat and an engaging originality. At the heart of the music is the syncopated accordion of Ardoin and the soaring fiddle of Fontenot. Ardoin continues to play and influence a new generation of young Cajun and zydeco musicians.

what to buy: *The Ardoin Family Band with Dewey Balfa: A Couple of Cajuns* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sonet, 1987, prod. Samuel Charters) is the best recording of the Ardoin Family band. They swing and swoop around Bois Sec and guest fiddler, Dewey Balfa. Lawrence Ardoin kicks the drums the way his son Sean does now in Double Clutchin', and Russell Ardoin's bass bounces off the beat like a superball. Balfa gives some of his most blues-inspired playing with this group, showing a looser funkier side than his own recordings reveal. Bois Sec is the focus that holds it all together, with the gentle croak of his singing and his accordion-playing that constantly shifts beats and accents.

what to buy next: *Les Blues du Bayou* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Melodeon, 1967, prod. Richard Spottswood) is simply duets between Canray and Bois Sec with triangle contributed by Revon Reed or Isom Fontenot. Recorded at a studio in Washington, D.C., when both were fresh from an appearance at the Newport Folk Festival, the playing is crisp and marvelous. Bois Sec and Canray played with a loose kind of telepathy, where both musicians knew the melody for the tune but rarely played it, preferring to play around the melody. Canray's fiddle, gliding high, cries over the bouncing rhythmic playing of Bois Sec.

the rest:

Louisiana Cajun French Music from the Southwest Prairies, Vol. 2: 1964–1967 ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976)

worth searching for: *La Musique Creole* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1997, prod. Chris Strachwitz) contains recordings of the Ardoin family band from Morris Ardoin's Cowboy Club and more duets by Canray and Bois Sec made in 1970 and 1971. There is almost no overlap with the above recordings and even when there is you'll barely notice because these guys never play a tune the same way twice.

editor's choice

7 great highland bagpipe albums

G.N.M Stoddart, *Pipers of Distinction* (Klub)

G.N.M Stoddart, *The World's Greatest Pipers, Volume 3* (Lismor)

Donald MacPherson, *Highland Bagpipes* (Tradition)

Colin MacLellan, *The World's Greatest Pipers, Volume 11* (Lismor)

James McGillivray, *The World's Greatest Pipers, Volume 10* (Lismor)

Donald MacPherson, *The Master Piper* (Lismor)

Greg Wilson, *Pipers of Distinction* (Klub)

influences:

◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Dennis McGee

▶▶ Chris Ardoin, Keith Frank, Geno Delafose, Tasso, Beausoleil

see also: *Canray Fontenot*

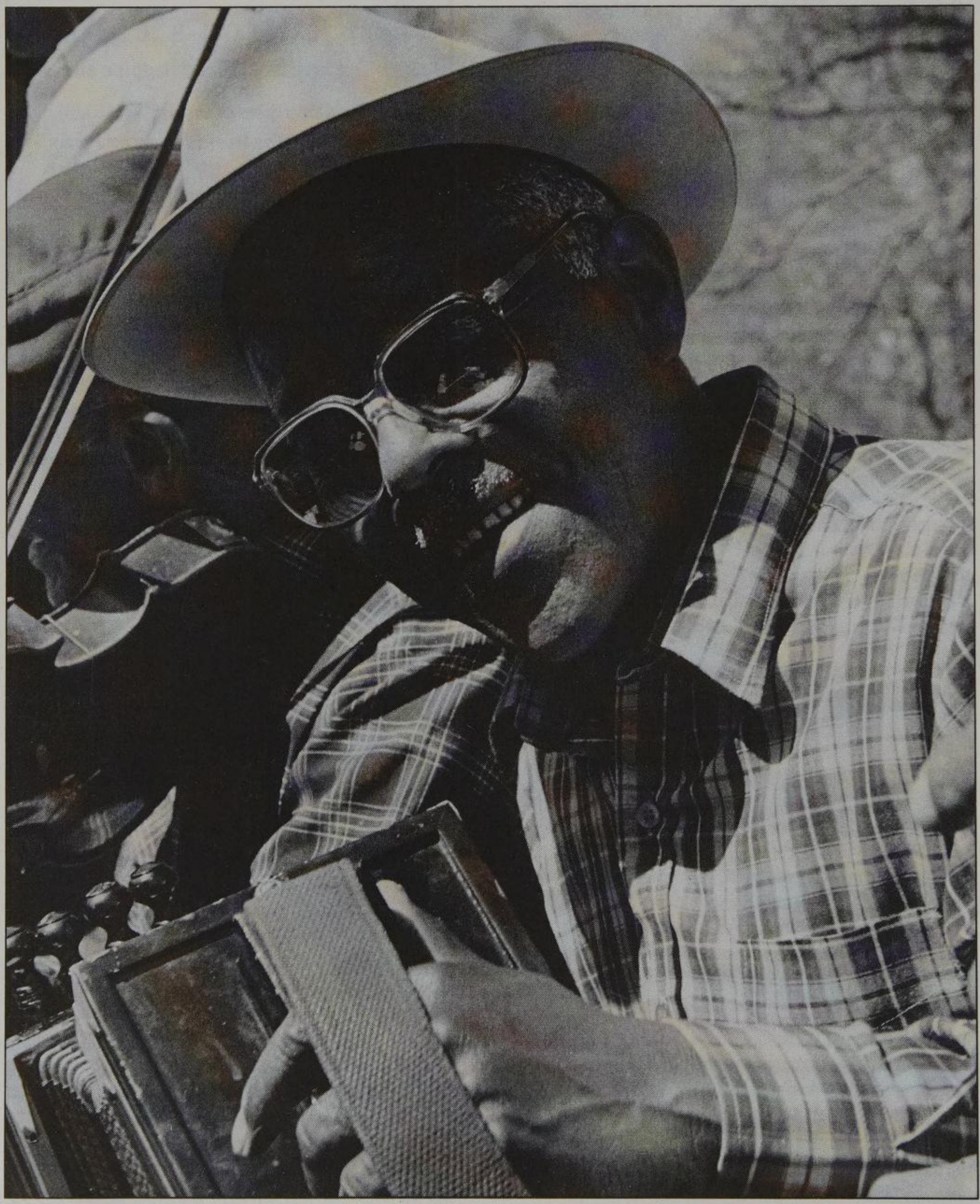
Jared Snyder

Amédée Ardoin

Born c. 1896, in L'Anse Rougeau, LA. Died November 4, 1941, in Pineville, LA.

The heart and soul of traditional Cajun music is Amédée Ardoin, an artist who can be considered the true father of both modern Cajun and zydeco music. His virtuoso accordion playing and emotionally charged singing continues to be highly respected by both black and white musicians. He refined and adapted traditional Cajun and Creole songs that had been played on the fiddle or the diatonic accordion. His music was a major influence on both Clifton Chenier and Iry Lejeune as well as the primary influence on the "bluesy" fiddling and singing of Michael Doucet and the accordion of Marc Savoy. Born the seventh of seven brothers, he was raised in L'Anse Rougeau near the town of Basile where he became friends with fellow accordionist Adam Fontenot (father of Canray Fontenot). He met Cajun fiddler Dennis McGee while sharecropping in 1921 and the two rapidly became extremely popular at dances in the Eu-

20 amédée ardoin



nice area. Their partnership eventually led to three seminal recording sessions. These, combined with his final recording session, form a canon for modern Cajun and zydeco music in the same way the recordings of Robert Johnson do for the blues or the Bristol Sessions do for country music. His last years were spent at the state sanitarium in Pineville, where he had been committed after what some sources say was a brutal beating, while others claim he was poisoned by a jealous musician.

what to buy: *I'm Never Comin' Back: The Roots of Zydeco* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Chris Strachwitz) contains all of the second, most of the third, and all of Ardoin's fourth recording session. It's full of classic performances, but the sound is somewhat harsh for those not used to it. "Les Blues de Crowley," which is reissued for the first time on this CD, is clearly the first zydeco recording, just needing some juiced-up bass and drums behind it to make it a current dance hall hit. Almost every song on this CD has been rehashed and re-recorded by other Cajun and Creole performers.

what to buy next: The compilation *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains the six truly classic recordings of Ardoin and McGee that are not found on the Arhoolie release and represent Ardoin at his best. All of these songs continue to be found in the repertory of Cajun and zydeco bands throughout Louisiana, including "Eunice Two-Step," "Quoi Faire," and "Madame Atchen."

worth searching for: *Louisiana Cajun Music, Vol. 6: Amade Ardoin: The First Black Zydeco Recording Artist* ♪♪♪♪ (Old Timey, 1983, prod. Chris Strachwitz) is a fine collection. (In the credits of his early recordings, Ardoin's first name was spelled Amade.) An earlier compilation on LP of Ardoin can be found on Old Timey and covers the recordings on *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do* and many of the tunes on *I'm Never Comin' Back: The Roots of Zydeco*.

influences:

- Dennis McGee, Joe Falcon
- Clifton Chenier, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, Michael Doucet, Iry LeJeune

Jared Snyder

Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Chris Ardoin /Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Formed 1995, in Lake Charles, LA.

Chris Ardoin, one row accordion, three row accordion, vocals; Sean Ardoin, drums, vocals; Tammy Ledet, frattoir, vocals; Derek Dee Greenwood, bass, vocals; Gabriel Pandy Perrodin Jr., guitar, vocals.

Chris and Sean Ardoin have one serious zydeco pedigree. They are sons of zydeco musician Lawrence "Black" Ardoin, the grandsons of Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, and the great grandnephews of the legendary Amédée Ardoin. They are part of a generation of extremely young zydeco musicians who are reshaping the music based on the combination of their strong family traditions and contemporary musical influences. They can mix together funk and hip-hop with a Creole tinge or play revved-up versions of traditional two-steps and waltzes. At 15, Chris already had three albums under his belt. Like Steve Riley has done with Cajun music, the Ardoin brothers have added three-part vocal harmonies to zydeco. Overall, theirs is a new and fresh approach to zydeco that still has roots back out in the countryside.

what to buy: In the first minute of "Lake Charles Connection," featurd on *Gon' Be Jus' Fine* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Scott Billington), you get all the elements that make up the Double Clutchin' sound. The double bass drum beat, popularized by Beau Jocque, mixes with the slinky bass guitar and chippy minor key rhythm guitar, the virtuoso accordion playing of Chris Ardoin, and the clean three-part harmonies. The vocals are mostly in English with the constant interjections and asides sometimes straying to French. This sound seems to work the best on "Lake Charles Connection," "When I'm Dead and Gone," and "I Don't Want What I Can't Keep." The family tradition is represented by the frantic "Ardoin Two Step" and by Sean's singing of his grandfather's valse "Dimanche Apres Midi." A solid and different-sounding record.

what to buy next: *Lick It Up!* ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1995, prod. Lawrence Ardoin) features the early sound of a very young Chris Ardoin. The youthful zydeco band shows that they can bust a groove with a lot of older players.

the rest:

That's Da Lick ♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1995)

influences:

- Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, Beau Jocque, Canray Fontenot

joan armatrading

Keith Frank, Geno Delafose

Jared Snyder

Joan Armatrading

Born December 9, 1950, in Basseterre, St. Kitts, West Indies.

Armatrading's loyal cult following has kept her touring and recording for more than 25 years. Her revealing, emotionally charged lyrics and excellent, though underrated, guitar playing reveal a solid, consistent talent. Raised in England, Armatrading's first public notice came in 1970, when she appeared in *Hair* and began a folk collaboration with songwriter Pam Nestor. After one duo album, Armatrading went solo with a sound that blended jazz, Caribbean, and rock influences into a folk format; she was also among the first to bring synthesizers into an essentially acoustic setting. Her later work featuring electric guitars is less satisfying, but her steady songwriting skills have maintained the integrity of the music. The coordination and interplay between her vocals and her guitar playing lend distinction to much of her work.

what to buy: *Joan Armatrading* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1976, prod. Glyn Johns) is full of pining lyrics and sparse arrangements that color and enhance her pleasing, husky voice. The anthem-like gospel ending to "Love and Affection" tops off one of the most joyous and revealing looks ever at the effects of love. Some of her electric stuff does hit, and *The Key* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1983, prod. Steve Lillywhite, Val Garay) is one of Armatrading's least introspective forays. There's a taste of the old Joan on "Drop the Pilot," "(I Love It When You) Call Me Names," and the title song, but she also casts an eye on the social ravages of drugs and violence. *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1996, prod. various) is exactly what it says.

what to buy next: Much of what fans like most about Armatrading is on *Back to the Night* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1975, prod. Pete Gage), a spare, folkish work with great songs such as "Dry Land," "Cool Blue Stole My Heart," and "Body to Dust."

what to avoid: Armatrading's ability to produce a hook or memorable line largely evaded her on *Hearts and Flowers* ♪½ (A&M, 1990, prod. Joan Armatrading), although the title tune is a keeper.

the rest:
Whatever's for Us ♪♪½ (A&M, 1972)
Show Some Emotion ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1977)
To the Limit ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1978)
Me, Myself and I ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1980)
Walk under Ladders ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1981)
Track Record ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1983)
Sleight of Hand ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1986)
Classics, Vol. 21 ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1986)
The Shouting Stage ♪♪½ (A&M, 1988)
Square the Circle ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1992)
What's Inside ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1995)

worth searching for: The hard-to-find *Secret Secrets* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1985, prod. Mike Howlett) contains some of Armatrading's most densely produced music, including horns, but the change does her good. There's a pervasive joy here so that even a "bluesy" lyric such as "Friends Not Lovers" gets delivered with a bouncy, infectious beat.

influences:

Odetta, Joni Mitchell

Tracy Chapman, Dionne Farris

Lawrence Gabriel

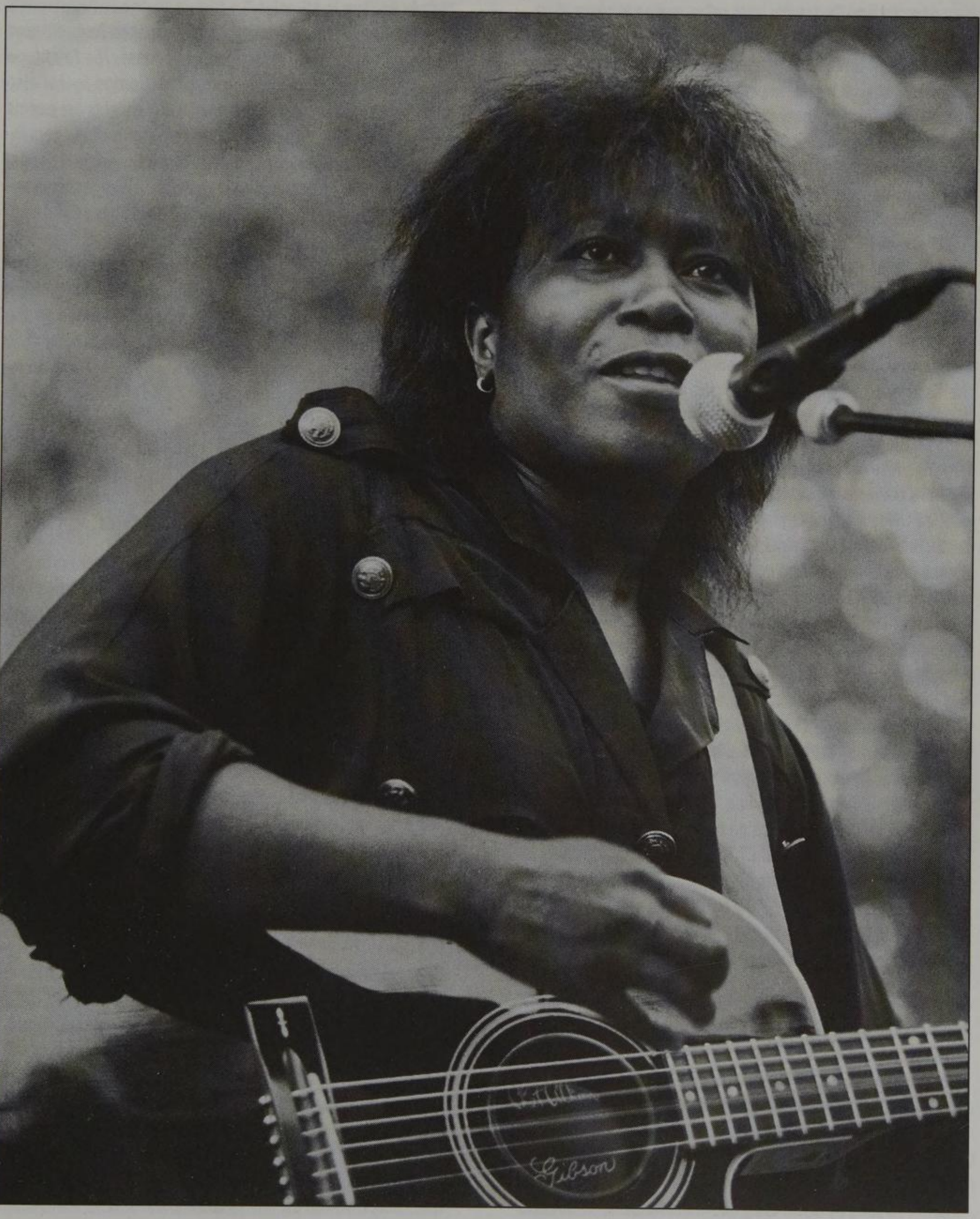
Frankie Armstrong

Born in Workington, Cumbria, England.

Frankie Armstrong is one of the classic voices of the English folk-song revival. A social worker who has worked with blind people as well as with addicts, Armstrong brings a strong sense of social justice and concern for humanity to the songs she sings. She came to the attention of the listening public in 1966, when she sang two songs on the album *The Bird in the Bush*, a thematic album compiled by the leading folklorist of the revival, A.L. Lloyd. During the same period, she joined the Critics Group, a collection of young singers who gathered to discuss and explore folksong and the revival, under the direction of Ewan MacColl. She released several albums with the Critics Group during the later 1960s, and in 1971 began her career as a solo recording artist. In 1975, Lloyd wrote that Armstrong was "the outstanding woman singer in the folk revival," no small praise from such an eminent critic and authority. Lloyd also pointed out that Armstrong's great strength lies in her combination of "a distinctive approach to traditional ballads with a discriminating ear for contemporary songs." Unfortunately, the numerous solo albums she recorded during the 1970s and 1980s, all of which are marvelous examples of these talents, are out of print, although plans are afoot to reissue at

Joan Armatrading **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

frankie armstrong



artisan

least one of them. During the later 1980s and early 1990s, Armstrong concentrated on areas of life other than her own career as a recording artist. She was, for example, running singing workshops at which she helped others to liberate their own voices. Therefore, the only CD release during this period was an album that she shared with Dave Van Ronk. During the later 1990s, however, she decided to strike a different balance between teaching and recording, which led to three CD releases in a six-month period during late 1996 and early 1997.

what to buy: *Till the Grass O'ergrew the Corn* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fellside, 1996, prod. Paul Adams, Frankie Armstrong) features Armstrong singing her favorite traditional British ballads. Accompanied on many tracks by John Kirkpatrick on accordion or melodeon, and on a few by Maddy Prior's vocal harmonies, Armstrong treats the listener to 12 magical and mysterious ballads from the "Child Ballad" canon. Her voice is as strong as ever, and the hairs on the back of one's neck are apt to stand up listening to her sing these old songs. Most of Armstrong's ballads deal with relations between the sexes, from husbands rescuing their kidnapped wives ("Young Orphy") to incest and murder between brothers and sisters ("Fair Lizzy"). The most powerful of them are the ones she sings with no accompaniment, including "Lady Diamond" and the 11-minute "Child Waters," whose hair-raisingly cruel storylines are enhanced by the starkness of unaccompanied performance. Similarly frightening is the ballad of "The Well below the Valley," a story of incest and rape in which the victim takes the blame, sung by Armstrong with harmony vocals by Prior; and "Clerk Colvin," the story of a two-timing rogue whose mermaid lover does him in, to which Kirkpatrick adds ominous accordion drones and noises. A few of the ballads are lighter-hearted, including "The Broomfield Hill," "John Blunt" and, in an unusual version told from a woman's point of view, "Hares on the Mountain." These do a lot to add levity to the otherwise gloomy feeling of the album. Erudite liner notes by Brian Pearson, who is clearly better-read and more knowledgeable about ballads than many professional folklorists, add the finishing touch to this fine package.

what to buy next: *Ways of Seeing* ♪♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1996, prod. Charlie Grey) is a recording made live at London concerts. It's a diverse collection of material, including Eastern European songs, a translation of a Gaelic croon, and many modern songs. Armstrong is accompanied by a chorus of women singers on many cuts, and on the rest sings unaccompanied. Some highlights include the Sydney Carter song "Girl in a Garden," on which Armstrong does incredible things with her voice, "Low Ground," a song by David Craig about the Norse in Britain, and "I Only Believe in Miracles," a tribute to one of Armstrong's friends. The album, including its title, makes frequent and poignant references to Armstrong's blindness. *The Fair Moon Rejoices* ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1997, prod. Gordon Jones) also contains a variety of material. Two of the highlights are poems by William Blake set to music by Mike Westbrook. Others include songs from plays, poems set to music, original songs, and several tunes by songwriter Leon Rosselson. Accompaniments are provided by Peter Stacey on saxophones and bagpipes, Ben Lawrence on djembe and cello, and Geoff Haynes on piano. The overall feeling of many of the songs—due to Armstrong's emotional and dramatic singing and the jazz/classical arrangements, is that of theater music, but inflected by the folksong movement. *Let No One Deceive You: Songs of Bertholt Brecht* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989, prod. Gary Cristall) was an inspired idea. The politics and poetry of Brecht were an inspiration to many in both the American and the British folksong revivals, and this album brings together a giant of the American movement, Dave Van Ronk, with one of the British. Armstrong's contributions are among her most powerful, enraged, defiant, and sometimes gentle recorded performances. Van Ronk's beefy growl is equally riveting.

worth searching for: Armstrong has recorded numerous solo albums over the years, all of which are worth hearing. Some highlights of her career include *Lovely on the Water* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic Records, 1972), her debut album, and *Songs and Ballads* ♪♪♪♪, a 1975 collection of traditional songs that was issued in the U.S. on the Antilles label. Her collaboration with Brian Pearson and Blowzabella to create the song cycle and LP *Tam Lin* ♪♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1980) is also a fascinating piece of work. Finally, several LPs that she recorded with the Critics Group are worth hearing, especially *The Female Frolic* ♪♪♪♪ (Argo, 1968), on which she was joined by Sandra Kerr and Peggy Seeger to sing traditional songs from a feminist perspective.

influences:

- A.L. Lloyd, Ewan MacColl
- June Tabor

Steve Winick

Artisan

Formed 1994, in Birdsedge, Yorkshire, England.

Brian Bedford, vocals; Jacey Bedford, vocals; Hilary Spencer, vocals.

Artisan has to be heard to be understood; even then, it's hard to describe why an art that is so simple works so well. Akin in

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some ways to fellow British vocal groups such as Swan Arcade, Artisan was not initially influenced by such folk artists; the members were more familiar with the Andrews Sisters and other pop artists. The trio began as a hobby in 1984, and it's been a full-time, internationally touring entity since 1990. The group's winter "Stuff the Turkey" shows are an annual tradition in England. Artisan's style is theatrical, entertaining, and original, drawing on everything from music hall to gospel. In just over five minutes on *Breathing Space*, the trio kicks out the jam (and scones) Yorkshire style in the goofy "Bed Rap" and then offers one of its best serious songs, "The Rainbow Never Came." All three singers are superb, but Artisan's secret weapon is the songwriting of Brian Bedford, who has a photographic eye for detail and an excellent melodic gift.

what to buy: *Our Back Yard* ♪♪♪♪ (Bedspring, 1996, prod. Brian Bedford) is a nostalgia trip that suits the timeless charm of Artisan's voices. *Breathing Space* ♪♪♪♪ (Bedspring, 1993, prod. John Adams) is quite different: while it includes silliness like "Silly Old Fool" and "Hammer Ghost" ("Hammer" as in the horror film series), it also includes such sophisticated songs as "Power Cut" and "Curupay Freijo." Brian Bedford's hallmark lyrical detail shines here.

the rest:
Rocking at the End of Time ♪♪♪♪ (Festival, 1991/Bedspring, 1995)
Bygone Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Bedspring, 1994)

worth searching for: One of Artisan's two Christmas albums, *The Season of Holly and Ivy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Brewhouse, 1989, prod. Eric Cowell), is available only in the United Kingdom; it's a marvelous collection of wassails and carols.

influences:
◀◀ Andrews Sisters, the Beatles, Vin Garbutt
▶▶ Black Voices

Pamela Murray Winters

Karen Ashbrook

Born April 28, 1959, in Columbus, OH.

Known for her delicate touch and natural affinity for Irish music, Karen Ashbrook has made her mark in the hammered dulcimer world. After spending five years traveling the world and studying its music, she settled in the Washington, D.C., area, where she has become a celebrity. Her in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of musical styles and traditions has made her an extraordinary all-around musician. Besides her exquisite hammered dulcimer playing, she also plays a mean pennywhistle and wooden flute. She studied flute with celebrated flautist Chris Norman. She has worked with several groups, including Ceoltoiri, King David's Harp, and Celtic Naught. Karen began learning how to play the hammered dulcimer the week after building one as a high school project. Her love of her instrument is reflected in her nationally acclaimed instruction book and cassette *Playing the Hammered Dulcimer in the Irish Tradition*. Across the country, Ashbrook teaches at festivals and workshops, including Common Ground in Westminster, Maryland, and Augusta Heritage Arts Center in Elkins, West Virginia. Notable performances for Ashbrook have included the Smithsonian Institution, National Public Radio, and a request to play for part of the festivities surrounding the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana.

what's available: Ashbrook's debut recording *Knock on the Door* ♪♪♪½ (Fools-Cap Pub., 1988/Maggie's Music, 1995, prod. Karen Ashbrook) has been digitally re-mastered. On this delightful collection of Irish and Breton tunes, Ashbrook works with many other talented musicians to display her first-hand understanding of Irish music, creating an upbeat and enjoyable recording. On *Hills of Erin* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1994, prod. Bob Read), Karen is joined by a host of excellent musicians, including David Scheim on piano, Bob Read on reeds, Carolyn Surrick on viola da gamba, and Sue Richards on harp. The result is a rich tapestry of Irish music, taking the listener on a magic carpet ride to Ireland. The choice of tunes ranges from the slow and haunting "The Osprey" to the jolly and jocular "The Cabin Boy." Karen displays her versatility and passionate expression with her rendition of J.S. Bach's "Prelude to the First Suite for Unaccompanied Violincello" on hammered dulcimer.

influences:
◀◀ Bach, the Bothy Band, Alasdair Fraser, the Irish Tradition, Nick Blanton, David James
▶▶ Jody Marshall, Maggie Sansone

see also: *Ceoltoiri*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Clarence "Tom" Ashley

Born September 29, 1895, in Bristol, TN. Died July 2, 1967.

Clarence "Tom" Ashley played with traveling medicine shows as a comedian and a performer on the banjo and guitar from 1913 to 1943. He had a short recording career with Victor and Columbia between 1929 and 1933, recording solo and with such bands as Byrd Moore and his Tarheel Hotshots. In 1960,

after Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* compilation (which included some of these old sides) was starting to take hold among young musicians devoted to this old style of folk music, Ralph Rinzler met Tom Ashley at the Union Grove Old Time Fiddlers Convention. Ashley had given up playing banjo during the '40s but when Rinzler asked Ashley to make a recording he spent the next four months reintroducing himself to the instrument. On Labor Day weekend, 1960, Ralph Rinzler recorded Tom Ashley along with many of his neighbors (including Clint Howard, Fred Price, and a young Doc Watson.) Thus began the second recording career for Clarence "Tom" Ashley. From that time until his death in 1967, Tom performed all over the United States and England. It is impossible to say how many young musicians Tom has influenced over the years through his performances; it is fair to say, however, that old-time and bluegrass musicians the world over owe a debt to this influential man.

what to buy: Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley's two-CD set *The Original Folkways Recordings 1960–1962* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1994, prod. Ralph Rinzler) presents the music from the beginning of Ashley's second phase of his recording career through 1962.

what to buy next: Many of Ashley's recordings from the late '20s and early '30s can be found on Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1952/Smithsonian/Folkways, 1997, prod. Harry Smith).

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon

▶▶ Doc Watson

Steve Gardner

Asleep at the Wheel

Formed 1970, in Paw Paw, WV.

Ray Benson, guitar, vocals; Lucky Oceans, pedal steel; Leroy Preston, drums, guitar, vocals; and a cast of nearly thousands.

The brainchild and passion of its towering frontman and sole surviving founding member, Ray Benson, Asleep at the Wheel got its start in West Virginia as an attempt to keep the spirit of traditional country and Western music, particularly Western swing, alive. Benson moved the band to Austin, Texas, during the early 1970s and managed to weather myriad personnel changes while keeping his artistic vision intact. Musically the group pays tribute to and updates Texas swing, blues, rock and even pop—along with jazz, Cajun, blues, rock, and hardcore country. Its various lineups have included double fiddle, accordion, pedal steel, sax, guitar, mandolin, keyboards, and harmonica, with each new face bringing something fresh to the mix. Recognition has come slowly to this eclectic, elastic band of Texas transplants. But it has come. Among the group's recent accolades are two Grammys for its loving Bob Wills tribute album.

what to buy: For lots of pure Wheel fun, check out the boxed set *Still Swingin'* ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1994, prod. various), which features a wide range of material, from previously unreleased obscurities to remakes of AATW staples featuring such high-profile guests as Garth Brooks and Dolly Parton. This exhaustive collection features 51 tracks, including Wheel spokes like "Take Me Back to Tulsa," "Route 66," "The Letter That Johnny Walker Read" and some of its best lesser-known stuff, like the torchy "Ruler of My Heart" (featuring former AATW vocalist Chris O'Connell).

what to buy next: *Asleep at the Wheel: Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys* ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1993, prod. Ray Benson, Allen Reynolds) is the most ambitious album this little ol' swing band from Texas ever attempted. Wills is the band's sturdiest musical root, so with surviving Playboys Johnny Gimble and Eldon Shamblin in tow, the Wheels and guests (Lyle Lovett, Chet Atkins, Vince Gill, George Strait, Garth Brooks) eloquently and faithfully recreated Wills signatures, including "Red Wine" and "Corine, Corina." The album won two Grammys.

what to avoid: Benson has spent most of the 1990s looking back on the band's career with hits albums, live albums, and a boxed set. A misguided attempt to combine all of those formats, *Greatest Hits (Live & Kickin')* ♪♪ (Arista, 1992, prod. Ray Benson) doesn't do the band's live show, or its legacy, any justice.

the rest:

Asleep at the Wheel ♪♪ (MCA, 1985)
10 ♪♪½ (Epic, 1987)
Western Standard Time ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1988)
Keepin' Me Up Nights ♪♪ (Arista, 1990)
The Swingin' Best Of ♪♪½ (Epic, 1992)
The Wheel Keeps on Rollin' ♪♪ (Capitol, 1995)

worth searching for: The Wheel's earliest, edgier efforts are long out of print. One vinyl album worth tracking down is *Collison Course* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1978, prod. Ray Benson), which captured the band in all its stylistic diversity, with two fiddlers, velvet-voiced singer Chris O'Connell, and pedal steel guitarist extraordinaire Lucky Oceans.

influences:

Bob Wills, Phil Harris, Count Basie, Merle Haggard

Lyle Lovett and His Large Band, Marty Stuart, Mark O'Connor, Alison Krauss

Doug Pullen

Chet Atkins

Born June 20, 1924, in Lutrell, TN.

An internationally known guitar wizard who guided many artists' careers (from Elvis to Dottie West to Steve Wariner) as label executive/producer for RCA, Chet Atkins, for better or worse, was an important contributor to what became known as the "Nashville Sound"—also referred to as "countrypolitan" music, mixing pop rhythms and instrumentation with country elements, and incorporating classical, jazz, and other music as well. Atkins's first instrument was a fiddle, which he learned as a child before switching to guitar at age 9. His first professional job was as part of the Bill Carlisle Show on WNOX radio in Knoxville. Other artists he worked with early in his career included Homer and Jethro, Mother Maybelle and the Carter Sisters, and Red Foley. Hired as assistant to RCA label executive Steve Sholes in 1952, Atkins played on numerous sessions for other artists, recorded many solo albums featuring his Merle Travis–influenced finger-picking style, and began producing countless records for RCA artists. He also helped guide the careers of artists on other labels, most notably the Everly Brothers. By 1957 Atkins was in charge of recording operations for RCA's Nashville office, and became a label vice-president in 1968. After winning a number of Grammys and Country Music Association awards throughout the 1970s, Atkins left RCA in 1982 to sign with Columbia Records, for whom he continues to record. Highlights of the last decade include his tasteful collaborations with artists like Dire Straits' leader Mark Knopfler, Suzy Bogguss, and Steve Wariner. Atkins was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1973.

what to buy: In spite of limited chart success, *The Essential Chet Atkins* ♪♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1996, prod. various) is a collection of 20 tracks that are a good indication of Atkins's influence as instrumentalist and producer.

what to buy next: Chet Atkins and Mark Knopfler's *Neck and Neck* ♪♪♪♪ (CBS, 1990, prod. Mark Knopfler) is a collaborative effort that, while sticking pretty close to the pattern established by most of Atkins's recent records, is distinguished by the sheer joy the two obviously have in working together. *The RCA Years* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1992, prod. various), a two-CD set, isn't quite the value of "The Essential," but it's still worthwhile.

the rest:

Chet Atkins Picks on the Beatles ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1966/1996)
East Tennessee Christmas ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
Street Dreams ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1986)
Sails ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987)
Stay Tuned ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987)
Guitar for All Seasons ♪♪½ (Pair, 1988)
Chet Atkins, C.G.P. ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1989)
Country Gems ♪♪½ (Pair, 1990)
Read My Licks ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994)
(With Suzy Bogguss) *Simpatico* ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1994)
Almost Alone ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996)
Chet Picks the Hits ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1996)
Music from Nashville, My Home Town ♪♪½ (RCA Camden, 1996)
(With Tommy Emmanuel) *The Day Finger Pickers Took Over the World* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1997)
Christmas with Chet Atkins ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1997)

worth searching for: If you can find it or afford it, *Galloping Guitar: The Early Years* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1995, prod. Stephen Sholes, Chet Atkins) is a four-CD import set of early Atkins recordings that includes all manner of rarities. *A Prairie Home Companion* aside, you don't normally associate Atkins with singing, but he has quite a nice voice as these recordings show. Of course, you'll also get his incredible guitar stylings in full measure as well. The set includes a great booklet by Russ Kienzle.

influences:

Merle Travis, Les Paul

Mark Knopfler, Lenny Breau

Stephen L. Betts

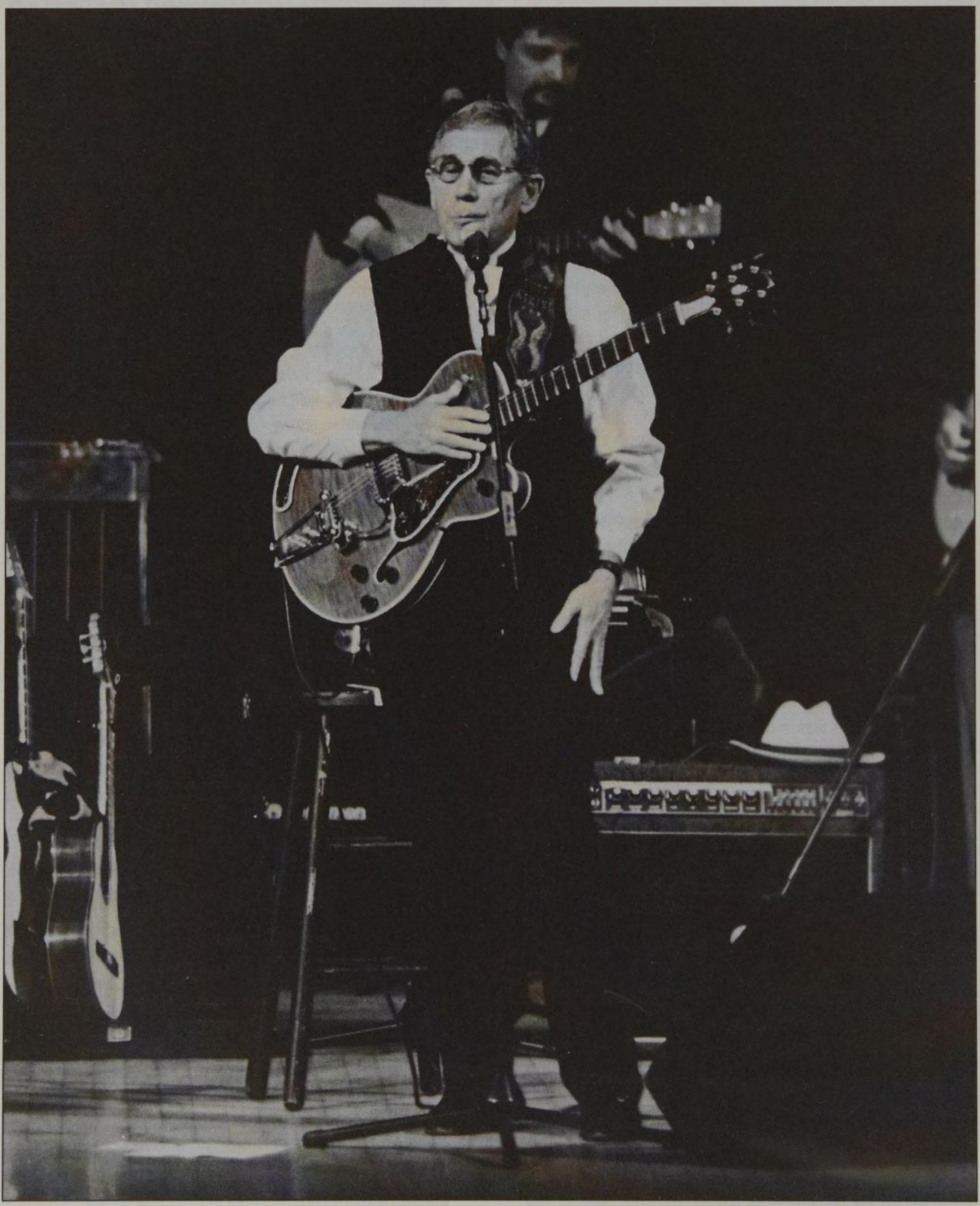
Atwater-Donnelly

Formed 1987, in Providence, RI.

Aubrey Atwater (born September 22, 1963), mountain dulcimer, banjo, guitar, tin whistle, vocals; Elwood Donnelly (born January 30, 1950), mountain dulcimer, guitar, bones, harmonica, bodhrán, vocals.

Consisting of a Rhode Island husband and wife, Atwater-Donnelly is a singing-songwriting team dedicated to preserving the essence of traditional music. They are well known in New England folk circles for their repertoire of traditional Irish, Scottish, and English folk songs, Appalachian music, sea chanteys, and Shaker hymns. Their harmonies, punctuated by Aubrey Atwater's powerful soprano and Elwood Donnelly's solid tenor, are delicious and meticulously crafted, honed since they first

atwater-donnelly



performed together in 1987. Though most of their music is traditional, they are not wedded only to those styles, having included originals on their albums as well. Atwater recorded the solo (though Donnelly joins her on a couple of songs) *Simple Sentences* in 1992, offering a forum for her exquisite voice and a variety of original songs.

what to buy: *Where the Wild Birds Do Whistle* ♪♪♪♪ (Rabbit Island Music, 1997, prod. Atwater-Donnelly) offers a warm blend of mostly traditional music, from Appalachian songs to Celtic music, and a touch of poetry, with the duo singing beautifully mixed harmonies. Along with a few guest musicians, they play instruments from guitar, mandolin, banjo, and fiddle to tin whistle and jawharp.

what to buy next: Atwater's *Simple Sentences* ♪♪♪♪ (Rabbit Island Music, 1992, prod. Atwater-Donnelly) is a personal collection of songs written by Atwater that shows her contemporary side, with originals on such topics as homelessness, alcoholism, and illiteracy, strewn with painful images drawn from her work as a literacy teacher in the low-income neighborhoods of Providence, Rhode Island.

the rest:
Labor and Love ♪♪♪½ (Rabbit Island Music, 1988)
Culled from the Garden ♪♪♪♪ (Rabbit Island Music, 1991)
Like the Willow Tree ♪♪♪♪ (Beacon Records, 1994)

worth searching for: Atwater has published one book of poetry, *Be Careful, Don't Walk Barefoot on My Kitchen Floor* (1995).

influences:
◀◀ Jean Ritchie, Mary Black, Andy Stewart, Andy Irvine, Cari Norris, Ani DiFranco, Loreena McKennitt, Dougie MacLean
▶▶ Cindy Mangsen, Anne Hills & Priscilla Herdman

Stephen Ide

Lynn August

Born August 7, 1948, in Lafayette, LA.

Lynn August grew up in a Creole family in Lafayette. Blind from birth, he gravitated toward music, working the crawfish circuit as a drummer, including work in Buckwheat Zydeco's R&B band prior to Buckwheat's conversion to zydeco. He came to zydeco himself only in 1988 when he began to play the piano accordion with encouragement from his wife and Marc Savoy. He clearly took to the instrument and has become an excellent piano accordionist. His pride in Creole culture is shown by his inclusion of snippets of Creole dialogue and jurès, ancient call-and-response singing only accompanied by percussion, on his CDs. His musical choices are as eclectic a mix as his musical experiences, moving from Esquirita (with whom he played drums) to a very traditional jurè in a couple of pumps of a piano accordion.

what to buy: August may turn off the zydeco purist, but for the open-minded his diversity is just pure fun. *Lynn August: Creole Cruiser* ♪♪♪♪½ (Black Top Records, 1992, prod. Lynn August, Hammond Scott) was recorded in New Orleans and includes bassist George Porter of the Meters in the band. You can hear August howl through a pure Clifton Chenier workout like "Bernedette," but it is when he moves from the totally traditional "Jurè #1" all the way to the other end with "Undivided Love" that you realize what the man can do. Maybe too much range for most to cope with.

what to buy next: *Sauce Piquante* ♪♪♪♪ (Black Top Records, 1993, prod. Hammond Scott) offers more of August and the Black Top sound. This record includes Porter and New Orleans legendary guitarist Snooks Eaglin. This is the sequel to *Creole Cruiser* and it's almost as good. August continues his exploration of the Afro-Caribbean roots of Creole music through the jurè and his Little Richard roots with "Slippin' and Slidin'."

the rest:
Zydeco Groove ♪♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1976)

influences:
◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Clifton Chenier, Buckwheat Zydeco
▶▶ Nathan Williams

Jared Snyder

Mike Auldridge

See: Seldom Scene

Austin Lounge Lizards

Formed 1980, in Austin, TX.

Hank Card, vocals, guitar; Conrad Diesler, vocals, guitar; Tom Pittman, vocals, banjo, pedal steel; Michael Stevens, bass, vocals (1980–84); Tim Wilson, mandolin, fiddle, vocals (1980–84); Kirk Williams, bass, vocals (1984–95); Paul Sweeney, mandolin, vocals (1984–93); Richard Bowden, fiddle, mandolin, vocals (1993–present); Boo Resnick, bass, vocals (1995–present).

It's telling that in the *Austin Chronicle*'s annual readers poll, the award the Austin Lounge Lizards have walked away with more

Chet Atkins **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

30 *judy austin*

the 1930s

An eventful decade in the development of folk music, the '30s saw the emergence of giants of the field as diverse as Lead Belly, Bessie Smith, Woody Guthrie, Bill Monroe, and Josh White. Monroe, first with his brother Charlie and later with the Bluegrass Boys, arguably founded bluegrass, while the close sibling harmonies of the Delmore Brothers captured the style, if not the instrumentation, of the genre. This was also the era of the Singing Cowboys, with performers like Gene Autry, the Sons of the Pioneers, and Roy Rogers becoming stars on record as well as on the matinee screen. Their cowgirl counterparts included Patsy Montana and Girls of the Golden West. The thirties were the era of the first recording trips by John and Alan Lomax, as well as the decade when Moses Asch started up his first traditional music label, Asch Records. In Texas, musicians like Bob Wills and the Light Crust Doughboys blended country music and jazz, creating a new form of music, western swing, in the process. Some of the first folk festivals were established both in the South and on the East Coast, and performers like Big Bill Broonzy and Lead Belly successfully crossed racial lines.

Michael Parrish

than once is "Best None of the Above Band," for this ensemble does indeed resist categorization. Offering the instrumentation and harmonies of a progressive bluegrass outfit, the group quotes liberally from rock 'n' roll songs (a mandolin-driven cover of Pink Floyd's "Brain Damage" is a notable example), and comes with a wry sense of humor to boot. It may be a stretch, but imagine the cast of *Hee Haw* if it was mildly dosed with LSD and had an Ivy League education (founders Card and Diesler met while both were history majors at Princeton). Detractors could probably tag the group a novelty, but the Lizards offer ample chops to go along with the yuks. Because the Lizards hail from the American music capital of Austin, their records are laced with guest appearances by such notables as Junior Brown, Ray Benson, Katy Moffatt, Marcia Ball, Charlie Sexton, and Jerry Jeff Walker.

what to buy: *The Highway Cafe of the Damned* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1988/Watermelon, 1993, prod. Conrad Deisler) offers the Lizards' most potent brew of bluegrass and hilarity. The titles—"Industrial Strength Tranquilizer," "When Drunks Go Bad," and "The Chester Nimitz Oriental Garden Waltz"—give some indication of the level of hijinks going on here. Meanwhile, "The Ballad of Ronald Reagan" indulges the group's political streak and "Cornhusker Refugee" stands as perhaps the first (and only) gay-themed country song.

what to buy next: *Small Minds* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1995, prod. Conrad Diesler) fires satirical salvos at a number of targets: know-it-alls ("Old Blevins," "Gingrich the Newt") and know-nothings (Mark Graham's "Life Is Hard, but Life Is Hardest When You're Dumb") take it in the neck all the same. And the New York downtown hipster scene gets a long-distance wake-up call with a version of Terry Allen's "Truckload of Art." Funny stuff. The six-song EP *Live Bait* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1996, prod. Conrad Diesler) contains a quick tour of Lizard history, from the witty 1981 tune "The Car Hank Died In" to the relatively recent political tract "Teenage Immigrant Welfare Mother on Drugs."

the rest:

Creatures from the Black Saloon ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1984/Watermelon, 1993)
Lizard Vision ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Paint Me on Velvet ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1993)
Employee of the Month N/A (Sugar Hill, 1998)

influences:

◀◀ Homer and Jethro, John Hartford, Frank Zappa
◀◀ Junior Brown

Daniel Durchholz

Judy Austin

Born July 31, in Athens, GA.

In 1987, Judy Austin began performing with Beth Heidelberg, as a duo called Harp and Soul, in the Atlanta area. In 1993, Austin launched her solo act and released her first solo recording. Austin's rich, confident voice captivates her audiences as she sings everything from contemporary songs with a country flair to traditional, well-loved hymns. Austin adds tasteful autoharp accompaniment to her singing, interlaced with nice melodic instrumental breaks. She favors a single-key diatonic autoharp, which provides superb harmony to support her outstanding vocals.

what's available: *Country Radio* ♪♪♪♪ (Rainy Day Records, 1997, prod. Judy Austin) is Austin's solo recording debut. As the

title implies, the selections are country oriented and Austin offers them in a variety of settings. Of the 14 cuts offered, eight are written by Joyce Brookshire, a talented songwriter from Atlanta. Topics vary from "Love Crisis," about a love relationship in trouble, to the comical "Fishing Fever," which will put a smile on any fisherman's face. Supporting instrumental and vocals are provided by a variety of musicians, including Hal Jeans (mandolin, mandola), Jayne Olderman (bass, piano), and Chip Epsten (fiddle). Two traditional hymns, "Precious Memories" and "Sweet Hour of Prayer," are exceptionally well done, and demonstrate the strength and power of Austin's lovely voice. *Country Radio* is available from the artist at 36 String Productions, P.O. Box 49323, Atlanta, GA 30359.

worth searching for: *Pickles and Wine* ♪♪♪ (Harp & Soul, 1990, prod. Judy Austin, Beth Heidelberg) is available only on cassette.

influences:

◀◀ Aretha Franklin, Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Janis Ian, the Carter Family

▶▶ June Maugery, Laurie Sky

Heidi Cerrigione

Gene Autry

Born Orvon Gene Autry, September 29, 1907, in Tioga Springs, TX.

In his younger days in Sepulpa, Oklahoma, Gene Autry passed the night working as a railroad telegraph operator. He played his guitar to break the monotony and made up the occasional tune. One customer heard his voice, told him to quit the dead-end job and try the exciting, relatively new realm of radio. The customer was Will Rogers. Autry heeded his advice, headed to New York, and never looked back. Like Roy Rogers and Tex Ritter, Autry is also widely regarded for his endearing Western films, in which his heroic singing-cowboy characters saved more days than daylight savings time (at least a hundred). Any American who was a youngster during the days of the 10-cent, double-feature matinee remembers the silver-screen Autry. Kids today, however, are usually more familiar with the Christmas carols Autry introduced: "Frosty the Snow Man," "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and the self-penned "Here Comes Santa Claus." Autry's mainstream hits included "Back in the Saddle Again," "Deep in the Heart of Texas," and "Don't Fence Me In"; a song written with Fred Rose during World War II, "At Mail Call Today," sold more than a million copies. An astute businessman as well, Autry also co-founded an American League professional baseball team, the Los Angeles Angels, now located in Anaheim.

what to buy: *The Essential Gene Autry (1933–1946)* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, prod. various) collects 18 songs from Autry's years with the Oriole, Vocalion, Okeh, and Columbia labels. It includes not only such signature Western songs as 1939's "Back in the Saddle Again," but also examples of the pop-oriented fare that Autry favored ("Blueberry Hill," "Maria Elena").

what to buy next: The three-disc compilation *Sing, Cowboy, Sing: The Gene Autry Collection* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1997, prod. various) features much of the music from *Essential* but extends the scope to his later Columbia years, when Autry built a new career singing the original versions of holiday tunes like "Here Comes Santa Claus" and "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." This collection also includes previously unreleased transcriptions from *The Melody Ranch Radio Show.*

the rest:

Columbia Historic Edition ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1982)
Country Music Hall of Fame Album ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1987)
A Gene Autry Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Columbia/Legacy, 1994)
His Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1994)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Back in the Saddle Again: 25 Cowboy Classics ♪♪♪♪ (ASV, 1996)
Back in the Saddle Again ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
Gene Autry ♪♪½ (Member's Edition, 1997)
Christmas Classics ♪♪♪ (Chicago Music Co., 1997)
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer ♪♪♪ (Madacy, 1997)

worth searching for: In his early recording days, Autry seems to have been influenced almost equally by Jimmie Rodgers and Robert Johnson. *Blues Singer 1929–1931: Booger Rooger Saturday Night* ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1996, prod. Lawrence Cohn) shows a side of the singer that is otherwise largely hidden. Silver-screen buffs should note that *Gene Autry with the Legendary Singing Groups of the West* ♪♪♪ (Varese Sarabande, 1997, compilation prod. Cary Mansfield, Karla Buhlman) and *The Singing Cowboy, Chapter One* ♪♪♪ (Varese Sarabande, 1997, compilation prod. Cary Mansfield, Karla Buhlman) both contain the versions of Autry's tunes that actually were used in his films. *Gene Autry with the Legendary Singing Groups of the West* showcases him with the Sons of the Pioneers, the Cass County Boys, and other Western vocal groups.

influences:

◀◀ Sons of the Pioneers, Jimmie Rodgers

▶▶ Rex Allen, Riders in the Sky

Craig Shelburne and Brian Mansfield

3/2 *hoyt axton*

Hoyt Axton

Born May 25, 1938, in Duncan, OK.

From a songwriting family (his mother, Mae Axton, co-wrote "Heartbreak Hotel"), the bearish, gruffy-voiced Axton has been a prolific songwriter and actor (*Heart Like a Wheel, Gremlins*) and sometime performer/recording artist. His songs have been covered by the Kingston Trio, Waylon Jennings, Glen Campbell, Tanya Tucker, John Denver, and Commander Cody, although his biggest hits came from Three Dog Night ("Joy to the World," "Never Been to Spain") and Steppenwolf ("Snowblind Friend," "The Pusher"). Axton's albums were more modest, but he had a minor country hit with 1974's "When the Morning Comes."

worth searching for: At present there are no American albums by Axton in print. An import, *Snowblind Friend* ♪♪♪ (Demon, 1995), recorded in 1977, includes guests Jeff Baxter, Jim Messina, and Byron Berline and includes "Never Been to Spain" and the title track. One stateside disc, *American Originals* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1992, prod. Todd Everett), is hard-to-find but includes down-home sessions with the cream of L.A. folk/country musicians and offers the best of Axton's early 1970s Capitol work. They're long out of print, but two of his A&M albums, *Life Machine* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1974), which includes "When the Morning Comes," and *Road Songs* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1977), a best-of, include some of his best writing and typically professional musicianship.

influences:

◀◀ Elvis Presley, Waylon Jennings

▶▶ Three Dog Night, Bobby Bare

Leland Rucker

B

Bad Livers

Formed 1990, in Austin, TX.

Danny Barnes, banjo, guitar, mandolin, vocals; Ralph White, fiddle, accordion; Mark Rubin, bass, tuba, vocals; Bob Grant, mandolin, guitar (1997–present).

Call it thrash-grass or bluegrass-punk, call it pickin'-and-grimacin', but don't call the Bad Livers late to dinner. This genre-busting trio plays a postmodern form of bluegrass that is informed as much by the Butthole Surfers and Motörhead as it is by Bill Monroe and Ralph Stanley. *Delusions of Banjer*, after all, was produced by Butthole Surfer Paul Leary, and the group has been known to reel off a high-stepping version of rock icon Iggy Pop's "Lust for Life" that inspires fits of furious tater-diggin'. It would be easy to dismiss the group as a novelty—Rubin's occasional tuba playing sticks out like a sore thumb—but they've got the chops to back up their non-traditional take on a traditional music.

what to buy: *Horses in the Mines* ♪♪♪♪ (Quarterstick, 1994, prod. Danny Barnes) contains plenty of attitude, but, for the most part, de-emphasizes the novelty elements that crop up on *Delusions of Banjer*. Anyone doubting the Livers' ability to play pure bluegrass should check out their lightning-fast take on the old-time breakdown "Blue Ridge Express." White's "Chainsaw Therapy" is a fine fiddle tune, and the group's punk influences get a nod on "Puke Grub."

what to buy next: *Delusions of Banjer* ♪♪♪½ (Quarterstick, 1992) is a little schticky, but it's a fine effort, nonetheless. Hard-bitten banjo tunes such as "Git Them Pretty Girls," "I Know You're Married," and "Crow Black Chicken" lead the way, but they're undercut by the bathroom humor of "Shit Creek" and "The Adventures of Pee Pee the Sailor," which are less about rock 'n' roll attitude than the band would wish.

the rest:

Dust on the Bible ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1991/Quarterstick, 1994)
Hogs on the Highway ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1997)
(With others) *Music from the Motion Picture The Newton Boys* ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1998)

worth searching for: Seek out *The Golden Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Southern Studios, 1992, prod. Bad Livers), an import-only gold-vinyl EP that collects early radio transcriptions of covers and a medley of fiddle tunes.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, Killbilly, Motörhead

▶▶ Southern Culture on the Skids

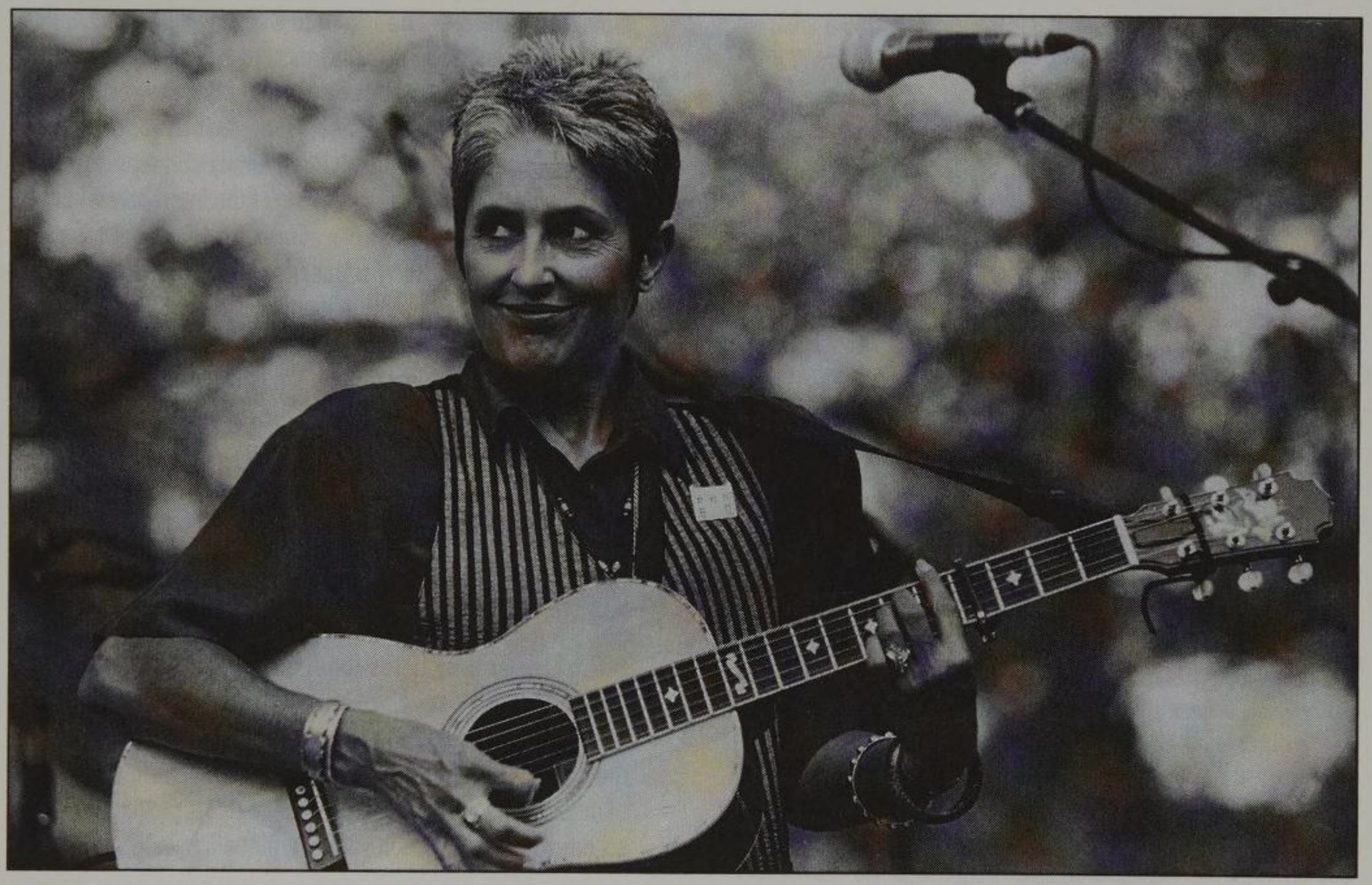
Daniel Durchholz

Joan Baez

Born January 9, 1941, in Staten Island, NY.

The acknowledged diva of the folk-music world, Joan Baez has recorded albums in five different decades and remains an influence to a whole new generation of female song interpreters today. Baez peaked commercially some 35 years ago with an

joan baez



Joan Baez **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

array of studio and live albums that celebrated the protest movement and helped give credentials to the writings of Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs. Though that movement faded, Baez nonetheless remained a "committed" artist, and at the same time delved into a variety of new music forms including Celtic, Latin, and country. During the early 1970s, Baez brought Robbie Robertson's "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" within a whisker of the top of the charts, and a few years later went gold again with her collection *Diamonds and Rust* before reuniting with Dylan in the Rolling Thunder Review. Recently, Baez has toured and recorded with such folk and country voices as Mary Chapin Carpenter, Tish Hinojosa, and Dar Williams. Williams, in addition to country songsmith Sharon Rice, offers songwriting assistance on Baez's most recent effort, *Gone from Danger*.

what to buy: Baez's most influential work comes from her early 1960s period, a good chunk of which is included on *The First Ten Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970/1987, prod. Maynard Solomon), a sampler of Baez's later-1960s folk, Dylan, and country soundings. To catch a glimpse of the singer as she moved into the "modern" folk era, check the enduring work *Joan Baez 5* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964, prod. Maynard Solomon), in which Baez helped raise the profile of Dylan, Phil Ochs, and other important songwriters of the day.

what to buy next: More than 20 years since its release, *Diamonds and Rust* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1975, prod. David Kershenbaum) remains a remarkable "comeback" album in which Baez demonstrated to the world that she wasn't about to be retired as an old-fogie folkie. Besides the memorable title track (her own), she covers Jackson Browne, John Prine, and the Allman Brothers with real flair. Meanwhile, Baez's most recent effort, *Gone from Danger* ♪♪♪½ (Guardian, 1997, prod. Wally Wilson, Kenny Greenberg), finds Baez doing what she's often done so well in the past—unearthing excellent material from promising young songwriters, in this case Dar Williams and Richard Shindell.

the rest:
Joan Baez in Concert, Volume 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1962/1990)

aly bain

Joan Baez in Concert, Volume 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1963/1990)
Farewell Angelina ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
Noel ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966/1997)
Joan ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
Any Day Now ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968)
Baptism ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968)
One Day at a Time ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1969)
David's Album ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1969)
Carry It On ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1972)
Ballad Book ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1972)
Blessed Are . . . ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1972)
Hits/Greatest and Others ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1973)
Lovesong Album ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1975)
From Every Stage ♪♪½ (A&M, 1976)
Best Of ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1977)
Blowin' Away ♪♪♪ (Epic Legacy, 1977/1990)
Honest Lullaby ♪♪♪ (Vanguard 1979/1990)
The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1979)
The Joan Baez Country Music Album ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1979)
Very Early Joan ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1983)
The Contemporary Ballad Book ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1987)
Ballad Book, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1990)
Play Me Backwards ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1992)
Rare Live and Classic ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1993)
Joan Baez Ballad Book ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1994)
Ring Them Bells ♪♪♪ (Guardian, 1995)
Live at Newport ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1996)
Recently ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996)

influences:

Mother Maybelle Carter, Bob Dylan

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Mary Chapin Carpenter

David Simons

Aly Bain

See: The Boys of the Lough

Duck Baker /Duck Baker and Molly Andrews

Born Richard Royall Baker IV, 1949, in Washington, DC.

Duck Baker first hit the scene as one of Kicking Mule Records' stable of fingerstyle steel-string guitarists, recording four LPs for that label from 1977 through 1980. An inauspicious beginning, perhaps, considering that most of that original crew—Ton van Bergeyk, Leo Wijnkamp Jr., Dave Evans, and some others—largely have faded from the racks. But Baker has remained more than visible, thanks in part to a second life for some of his Kicking Mule sides on Stefan Grossman's "Guitar Artistry" series on the Shanachie label, his current albums with Peter Finger's Acoustic Music label, and his many instructional books and videos—not to mention his seemingly ubiquitous appearances on recordings by other artists of the international fingerpicking guitar Mafia: Grossman, Finger, John Renbourn, etc. But perhaps a better reason for Baker's continued presence is his zealous devotion to traditional and indigenous musical forms of all kinds. The world of fingerstyle guitar tends to be something of a parallel universe to the musical mainstream, paying attention mostly to itself and visiting other musical styles and traditions mainly for plundering repertoire (the world of dulcimer players is another such arena). On the other hand, the astonishing depth of Baker's knowledge of (and obvious passion for) myriad musical styles, particularly straight-ahead jazz, blues, old-time country, and Irish, places him in a class by himself. It's not just that he can write an astute review for a magazine or clever liner notes (both of which he has done many times), but Baker seems to have taken to heart Segovia's dictum to his students: "You must love music more than you love the guitar." His knowledge of and commitment to many kinds of music gives a depth and resonance to his playing that transcends that of the garden-variety guitar aficionado.

what to buy: You might as well start with *Spinning Coin* ♪♪♪½ (Avant, 1997, prod. John Zorn, Kazunori Sugiyama), his latest effort and one about which he's professed tremendous enthusiasm. Here he transcribes for the guitar the jazz piano music of Herbie Nichols, a currently neglected master whose music represents a true project of the heart for Baker. This is high-octane stuff, and few guitarists have the acumen even to think about such a project—it's the fruit of two decades of exploring and arranging jazz onto his guitar fingerboard.

what to buy next: And don't miss the often-overlooked *American Traditional* ♪♪♪♪ (Dayjob, 1994, prod. Duck Baker, Molly Andrews), a treasure of an album with singer and autoharp player Molly Andrews. Again the program seems highly variegated; it's mostly old-time mountain stuff but liberally sprinkled with blues, show tunes, Irish, and other things in a way that all seems uncannily organic and relaxed—eclecticism without the self-consciousness. Baker's guitar work is understated and sweet, yet such a perfect complement to Andrews's honeyed vocals; it's some of the best playing he's ever put on record.

what to avoid: *The Art of Fingerstyle Jazz Guitar* ♪ (Shanachie, 1980, prod. Stefan Grossman) is the only one of Baker's Kicking

Mule LPs still in print on CD. Label chief Stefan Grossman showed a penchant for packaging and releasing records with didactic-sounding titles, a regrettable strait-jacket for an instinctively eclectic player like Baker. There are certainly some nice moments here; but there's an adequate array of stronger stuff to choose from in Baker's discography. The fact is, he just plays better now than he did 17 years ago.

the rest:

(With John Renbourn) *A Thousand Words* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Music, 1994)
Clear Blue Sky ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Music, 1995)
(With Molly Andrews) *The Moving Business* ♪♪♪♪ (Dayjob, 1996)
(With Stefan Grossman) *Northern Skies, Southern Blues* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

influences:

Eric Schoenberg, Steve Mann, Davey Graham

Martin Simpson, Pat Donohue, Stefan Grossman, Pat Kirtley

Chris Rietz

Etta Baker

Born 1913, in Caldwell County, NC.

In her quietly unassuming way, Etta Baker has lived a remarkable life. She is among the greatest practitioners of acoustic Piedmont finger picking (an open-tuned guitar style that owes a great deal to bluegrass-style banjo) but toils in obscurity because she spent the better part of her musical career never playing outside of family gatherings. Born to a musical lineage, Baker began playing guitar at an early age and learned the traditional folk-blues dance tunes, rags, and ballads from her father. She remains active on the folk and blues festival circuit.

what's available: Baker first appeared on vinyl with her father and other relatives on the 1956 field recording *Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1956/Rykodisc, 1997, prod. Diane Hamilton, Liam Clancy, Paul Clayton), resulting in the closest thing to being at a Baker family house party. It would be 35 years before Baker recorded again, during which time she worked in the textile mills of western North Carolina and raised nine children before finally turning pro as a musician in her sixties. *One-Dime Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Wayne Martin, Lesley Williams) arrived seemingly out of nowhere—it's a stunning 20-song collection of some of the finest folk-blues guitar you'll hear anywhere, especially the title track (popularized by Woody Guthrie as "New York Town").

worth searching for: The Rykodisc reissue of *Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians* has a different cover than the original. For that reason, the original vinyl version is worth finding—it has a borderline offensive hillbilly caricature on it that is simply not to be believed (and which has absolutely nothing to do with the music) and stands as a landmark in political incorrectness.

influences:

Elizabeth Cotten, Blind Boy Fuller

Roy Book Binder, Andy Cohen

David Menconi

Kenny Baker /Kenny Baker and Josh Graves

Born June 26, 1926, in Jenkins, KY.

The man Bill Monroe called "the greatest bluegrass fiddler in the world" served three tours of duty with Monroe's Blue Grass Boys between 1957 and 1984 after starting with Don Gibson in 1953. Baker worked extensively with dobroist John Graves (formerly with Flatt & Scruggs) during the 1990s.

what to buy: *Master Fiddler* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1993, prod. Gary B. Reid) showcases Baker's work between 1968 and 1983 and is one of the very best bluegrass fiddle albums. The 20 cuts include traditional numbers, songs Baker learned as a child, and six Baker originals, including "Grassy Fiddle Blues."

what to buy next: *The Puritan* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1972, prod. Dave Samuelson), Baker's earliest collaboration with Josh Graves, finds the noted fiddler playing guitar. *The Puritan* collects 24 songs the pair recorded in 1972 and 1973.

the rest:

(With Josh Graves) *The Puritan Sessions* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1972/1989)

worth searching for: Baker and another former Blue Grass boy, fiddler Bobby Hicks, join together on *Darkness on the Delta* (County, 1980) for an all-instrumental album of 11 originals, traditional numbers, and bluegrass standards, including four from their original boss, Bill Monroe.

influences:

Bill Monroe, Don Gibson

Bobby Hicks, Blaine Sprouse

Douglas Fulmer

Butch Baldassari

See: Lonesome Standard Time

The Balfa Brothers /Freres Balfa

Formed 1946, in Basile, LA. Disbanded 1978, after the death of Will and Rodney Balfa in an automobile accident.

Will Balfa, fiddle, vocals; Rodney Balfa, guitar, vocals; Dewey Balfa, fiddle, guitar, harmonica, vocals; Harry Balfa, guitar; Burkeman Balfa, percussion; Hadley Fontenot, accordion; Marc Savoy, accordion, fiddle; Nathan Abshire, accordion.

The Balfa Brothers' sound was based around the lonesome twin fiddles of Will and Dewey Balfa and the rock solid guitar of Rodney Balfa. The two fiddles were not the sweet sound of the western swing, but a hearkening back to the raw sound of the Cajun house dance prior to the introduction of the accordion. At those dances, one fiddle played lead while the other had to provide the rhythm for dancing on the low strings. Taking that as their starting point, the Balfas added a sophistication from their exposure to swing and country music that created a new/old sound. Though the fiddle dominated, they worked with the finest of Cajun accordionists, including Hadley Fontenot, Nathan Abshire, and Marc Savoy. Dewey's singing was always passionate, but Rodney's tenor seems to hit the hardest. Their song choices were always superb, chosen from deep within the Cajun tradition, often from their own family. The thoughtful arrangements respected the occasional extra bar or beat that is the hallmark of music passed down from generation to generation.

The Balfa Brothers began performing in 1946 with just the two fiddles of Will and Dewey Balfa and a friend on guitar. Dewey recorded with Elsie Deshotel in the early 1950s for the Koury label and the band continued to play locally. It was Dewey's experiences as a last minute substitute, playing guitar accompaniment with Gladius Thibodeaux and Louis Lejeune, at the 1964 Newport Folk Festival that changed the career of the Balfa Brothers. Their wildly well-received performance led to Dewey's triumphant return three years later with a band that included brothers Rodney and Will, daughter Nelda, and Hadley Fontenot. Dewey also had a long performing and recording career with the great accordionist Nathan Abshire, accompanying him on records from the 1950s onward. Dewey came away from the 1964 Newport Folk Festival with a sense of the value of traditional Cajun music and the uniqueness of the rich family traditions of the Balfas. The group participated in folk festivals throughout the U.S., Canada, and France, while continuing to live fairly nondescript lives in Louisiana. All that came to an end in 1978 when Will and Rodney were killed in a car accident outside of Bunkie, Louisiana. Dewey continued to perform, with the help of friends like Tracy Schwarz and Robert Jardell and a new generation of musicians that included his own daughter Christine.

what to buy: *The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music, Vols. 1 & 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1987, prod. Floyd Soileau) is the *Rubber Soul* of Cajun music. The Balfas put away the drums and bass and play in an all acoustic setting, long before the term "unplugged" came into vogue. What you get is superbly soulful fiddling and singing, song after song. Many of these songs are standards that have been covered by groups like the Savoy-Doucet Band, Steve Reilly, and Balfa Toujours.

what to buy next: On *J'ai Vu le Loup, le Renard et la Belette* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Gerard Dole), producer Dole has the Balfas play a mix of traditional waltzes and two-steps along with some "house" music like a Cajun version of "Casey Jones" and an old contra dance, "La Vieille Danse a Balfa." The charming "J'ai Vu le Loup, le Renard et la Belette" shows the place where Cajun and French folk music meet.

the rest:
New York Concerts ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1980)

worth searching for: *Louisiana Cajun French Music from the Southwest Prairies: Vol. 1, 1964–1967* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976, prod. Ralph Rinzler) contains the earliest recordings of the Balfa Brothers.

influences:
◀◀ Lawrence Walker, Dennis McGee, Leo Soileau

▶▶ Steve Riley, Balfa Toujours, Marc & Ann Savoy, Tracy Schwarz, Michael Doucet

see also: *Nathan Abshire*

Jared Snyder and Randy Pitts

Balfa Toujours

Formed 1992, in Basile, LA.

Christine Balfa, guitar, triangle, vocals; Dirk Powell, fiddle, accordion, vocals; Kevin Wimmer, fiddle, vocals; Mike Chapman, drums. Regular guests include: Nelda Balfa, vocals and triangle; Tony Balfa, drums and bass; Peter Schwarz, fiddle, bass, vocals.

Christine Balfa is the guitarist, singer, songwriter, and heart of Balfa Toujours (Balfa Forever). She carries on the tradition of her father, Dewey Balfa, and her uncles Will and Rodney. Chris-

tine and her older sister Nelda both write and sing. The lonesome double fiddle sound is recreated by fiddler Kevin Wimmer, who was a protégé of Dewey, and by Christine's husband, Dirk Powell. Powell is also a brilliant accordionist. Although Christine is the dominant voice, both Dirk and Kevin sing and, on record, the band is joined by Nelda.

what to buy: *A Vieille Terre Haute* ♪♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1995, prod. Balfa Toujours) is the second effort of Balfa Toujours and really their finest work so far. The addition of Mike Chapman on drums revs up the traditional sound without detracting from it. The quality of the musicianship is uniform and Christine Balfa has matured into a strong passionate singer. Her songwriting in collaboration with Dirk Powell has matured also. "Les Fleurs du Printemps" stacks up with just about any traditional Cajun song around for the words, in the way that the images fold back into one another. The last four songs qualify as almost a mini-tribute to the Balfa Brothers, but show how Balfa Toujours is developing their own sound, building gracefully on that tradition.

what to buy next: *Deux Voyages* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Tim O'Brien) suffers from the warm sheen in which Tim O'Brien wraps the group. It takes away some of the buzz and wheeze that's an integral part of the appeal of Cajun music. Listening to Christine do that upward glide on Canray Fontenot's "La Valse à Canray" or her passionate reading of the Balfa standard "La Valse à Grand Père" will convince anyone of her skills as a singer. That she and husband Dirk Powell can write pieces like "Le Canard à Bois Sec" that musically and lyrically evoke the essence of old-time Creole music demonstrates their continuing development as songwriters.

the rest:
Pop, Tu Me Parles Toujours ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1993)

worth searching for: *The American Fogies, Volume 1* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ray Alden) is an anthology of regional American groups and includes a track of Balfa Toujours kicking it through "Duson Two Step."

influences:

- Dennis McGee, Marc and Ann Savoy, Lawrence Walker, the Balfa Brothers, Dewey Balfa, Tracy Schwarz, Steve Riley

- Tasso, Magnolia Sisters, Kristi Guillory

see also: *The Balfa Brothers, Horace Trahan, Steve Riley, Tracy Schwarz*

Jared Snyder

E.C. Ball and Orna Ball

Formed 1930s in Rugby, VA.

E.C. Ball, vocals, banjo, and guitar; Orna Ball, vocals, accordion, and pump organ.

Husband and wife, Estil "E.C." and Orna Ball are one of the great singing duos of old-time and traditional music. Like most old-time musicians of their era, the Balls spent most of their lives playing in venues close to home, instead of on a national circuit. Although they owned a general store and service station on the North Carolina–Virginia border, they always found time to attend the fiddlers conventions and dances in the area. E.C. began to play fingerstyle guitar at age 12. E.C.'s first band was the Rugby Gully Jumpers, which was recorded by John Lomax for the Library of Congress. E.C. and Orna are best known today, though, for the fabulous traditional and gospel songs that they sang together.

what to buy: *E.C. Ball with Orna Ball* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Bruce Kaplan, R.N. Drevo, Bob Marsh) is a reissue of their first Rounder LP of mostly gospel material. Even if you are not a religious person this is the recording to get. E.C. and Orna are at their prime when they are singing a religious song. Their strong convictions, E.C.'s picking, and the mixture of Orna's nasally high-pitched vocals with E.C.'s low, smooth, resonating voice provide for some intensely beautiful songs. The CD reissue adds seven cuts from their 1972 radio program on WKSK in West Jefferson, North Carolina.

what to buy next: E.C. and Orna Ball can also be heard on *High Atmosphere* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. John Cohen), a compilation recorded and released by John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers. Originally released in 1974 this expanded reissue includes one cut with the Balls and three more with E.C. solo.

worth searching for: *Fathers Have a Home Sweet Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976, prod. The Rounder Collective) and *E.C. Ball with the Friendly Gospel Singers* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1967, prod. Charlie Faurot) are out-of-print LPs, but either would definitely be worth buying if you happen to find them at a garage sale.

influences:

- The Carter Family, Riley Puckett, Vernon Dalhart, Jimmie Rodgers, Merle Travis

- Hazel Dickens, Alice Gerrard, Tracy Schwarz, Ginny Hawker

Steve Gardner

3/8 *patrick ball*

Patrick Ball

Born March 27, 1950, in San Francisco, CA.

A dynamic performer, Patrick Ball combines his loves of Irish music and history to bring passionate shows to his audiences. His unique touch on the wire-strung harp creates a bell-like tone of great beauty, neither as percussive nor as strident as many of his contemporaries in wire-strung harping. This soft touch allows his music to sing more intimately and more freely, creating at once a magical and expressive sound. Add to this his remarkable talent of arranging for the instrument, and true genius is born. His arrangements take traditional melodies and allow them to shine their brightest through the use of simple, yet full, accompaniment, which never interferes with the melodies in any way. The best way to understand how Ball developed this skill is to explore how he came to play harp in the first place. Growing up, it was always his intention to follow in his father's footsteps and become a lawyer. Without questioning this plan, he dutifully went to college to pursue a law career, until his father's untimely death. Soon, the thought of becoming a lawyer was forgotten, and he was pursuing a graduate degree in history. This led to a trip to Ireland, where he quickly fell in love with the Irish oral tradition. His master's degree did not assist in his search for a job in the field, however, so he soon found himself working odd jobs. Another trip to Ireland brought him to the realization that he would like to combine his love of words, history, and music into one career. Before long, he had taught himself to play harp, and began weaving his magic spell with stories and songs for audiences nationwide. His talents most recently culminated in the completion of a one-man play, *O'Carolan's Farewell to Music,* which Ball wrote in collaboration with Peter Glazer. Ball plays the title role with passion and insight.

what to buy: *Fiona* ♪♪♪♪½ (Celestial Harmonies, 1993, prod. Patrick Ball) features a delightful collection of beautifully arranged Celtic tunes. Ball displays his gift for arranging through the highly-evocative and emotional use of his harp, occasionally joined by Tim Britton on uilleann pipes and tin whistles and Kevin Carr on fiddle. The arrangements have a simplicity and clarity to them that allow the melodies to shine to their fullest, without sounding empty or hollow. Highlights of the album include a bewitching "She Moved through the Fair," and the heart-felt Scottish "Farewell to the Land of Mist." *Christmas Rose* ♪♪♪♪½ (Fortuna, 1990, prod. Patrick Ball) won an Indie award for Best Seasonal Recording of 1991 and contains sprightly arrangements of upbeat carols, such as "Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella," and haunting renditions of more somber carols, including a little-known Appalachian carol, "Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head." This is an unusual holiday recording not to be missed.

what to buy next: On *The Music of Turlough O'Carolan* ♪♪♪♪ (Fortuna, 1983, prod. Dan Drasin), Ball manages to make solo harp remain alive and vibrant throughout an entire album without any additional instruments to add variety to the music: a rare talent indeed. It is a wonderful collection, including 15 outstanding melodies written by the famous blind harper, O'Carolan. Ball's love of O'Carolan's music radiates through his playing. Containing more O'Carolan, as well as a number of other Irish tunes, *Secret Isles* ♪♪♪♪ (Fortuna, 1985, prod. Dan Drasin) also displays Ball's remarkable talents with elegance and vivacity. Particularly lovely on this album is a Manx set, with "Song of the Water Kelpie" and "The Sheep under the Snow" paired together beautifully.

what to avoid: Those who desire strictly music recordings will not enjoy the story albums, despite their excellence. Ball is a master storyteller, and he shows his talent well on his album *Storyteller: Gwilan's Harp and Other Celtic Tales* ♪♪♪½ (Celestial Harmonies, 1995, prod. Patrick Ball). This is not an album for those searching for music, as the stories take center stage, backed by the joyous sounds of Ball's harp. The Irish tales in this collection are hauntingly told. The album won an Indie for Best Spoken Word Recording in 1995. *Finnegans Wake* ♪♪♪ (Celestial Harmonies, 1997, prod. Patrick Ball) is a more ambitious effort; here Ball reads passages from the well-known and highly enigmatic work of James Joyce. These carefully chosen excerpts are read with an ear for the musicality of the words themselves, and brought further alive through interwoven harp music. There is not very much music on this one at all, however.

the rest:

O'Carolan's Dream ♪♪♪½ (Fortuna, 1989)
From a Distant Time ♪♪♪½ (Fortuna, 1983)

influences:

◀◀ Turlough O'Carolan, Derek Bell, Alan Stivell

▶▶ Carol Thompson, Wendy Stewart

Jo Hughey Morrison

Baltimore Consort

Formed 1980, at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, MD.

The core of this group consists of six members: Mary Anne Ballard, viols, fiddle, rebec; Mark Cudek, cittern, viols, guitars, crumhorns, recorder, lute, bandora; Custer LaRue, vocals; Larry Lipkis, viols,

recorders, crumhorns, gemshorn; Ronn McFarlane, lutes; Chris Norman, flutes, pennywhistle, bagpipes, crumhorn, drum.

Baltimore Consort boasts a delightful array of early music instruments, joined with the pure, crystal tones of Custer LaRue's vocal talents. This combination has proven highly successful, creating a nationwide following for this unusual group. Virtuoso string lines and hauntingly lyrical flute lines by Chris Norman characterize their work. In keeping with the themes of their various recordings, and adding complexity and variety to their music, they have included many fine guest performers in their work, including Paul Bensel, recorder; Webb Wiggins, harpsichord, virginal; Edwin George, bagpipe, recorder; and Pat O'Brien, bandura. Originally formed to perform Elizabethan repertoire for "broken consort" (a specific set of instruments including viols, flute, lute, and cittern), the group quickly expanded their musical selections to include their interest in English and Scottish dances and airs. By 1983, Baltimore Consort had put together an entire program of Scottish origin, with a rich repertoire of English, French, and Italian music as well. They have toured across the U.S. and in Europe, holding residencies in such places as the Walters Art Gallery, Peabody Conservatory, and Strathmore Hall, and performing on radio with Performance Today. Their recordings have risen to the Top 10 on the *Billboard* magazine charts on several occasions.

what to buy: The group's best overall album is *Tunes from the Attic* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1997, prod. Douglas Brown). This recording returns to their roots, exploring a variety of English and Scottish tunes and traditions, and captures some of their best, but previously unrecorded, repertoire while reworking a couple of their old favorites. The standouts on the album include the "Paven/Galliard" track, with its spiritually uplifting flute line, and "The Old Maid of the Mill Dust," a fun and frolicking tune featuring bagpipes, lute, and bass viol. This is a wonderful treat for the ears.

what to buy next: The rest of Baltimore Consort's recordings are centered on a variety of themes. *On the Banks of Helicon: Early Music of Scotland* ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1990, prod. Douglas Brown) explores some early Scottish music and its derivatives. Worth noting are the sprightly "Scotch Cap" and the pleading tones of "Our Father God Celestial." Choosing among the vast works collected by John Playford in the seventeenth century, *A Trip to Killburn: Playford Tunes and Their Ballads* ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1996, prod. Douglas Brown) delightfully reproduces some of the popular music played in London circles during that time, although the tunes' origins vary greatly.

editor's choice

5 uilleann pipe albums

Leo Rowsome, *The King of the Pipers* (Claddagh/Shanachie)

Seamus Ennis, *The Return from Fingal* (Radio Telefis Éireann)

Willie Clancy, *The Pipering of Willie Clancy, Vols. 1 & 2* (Claddagh)

Various Artists, *The Drones and the Chanter, Vols. 1 & 2* (Claddagh)

Various Artists, *The Piper's Rock* (Mulligan)

the rest:

Watkins Ale ♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1991)

The Art of the Bawdy Song ♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1992)

La Rocque 'n' Roll: Popular Music of Renaissance France ♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1993)

Bright Day Star: Music for the Yuletide Season ♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1994)

influences:

NY Pro Musica, Musica Reservata, Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartok

Hesperus, Ensemble Galilei

see also: *Helicon, Chris Norman*

Jo Hughey Morrison

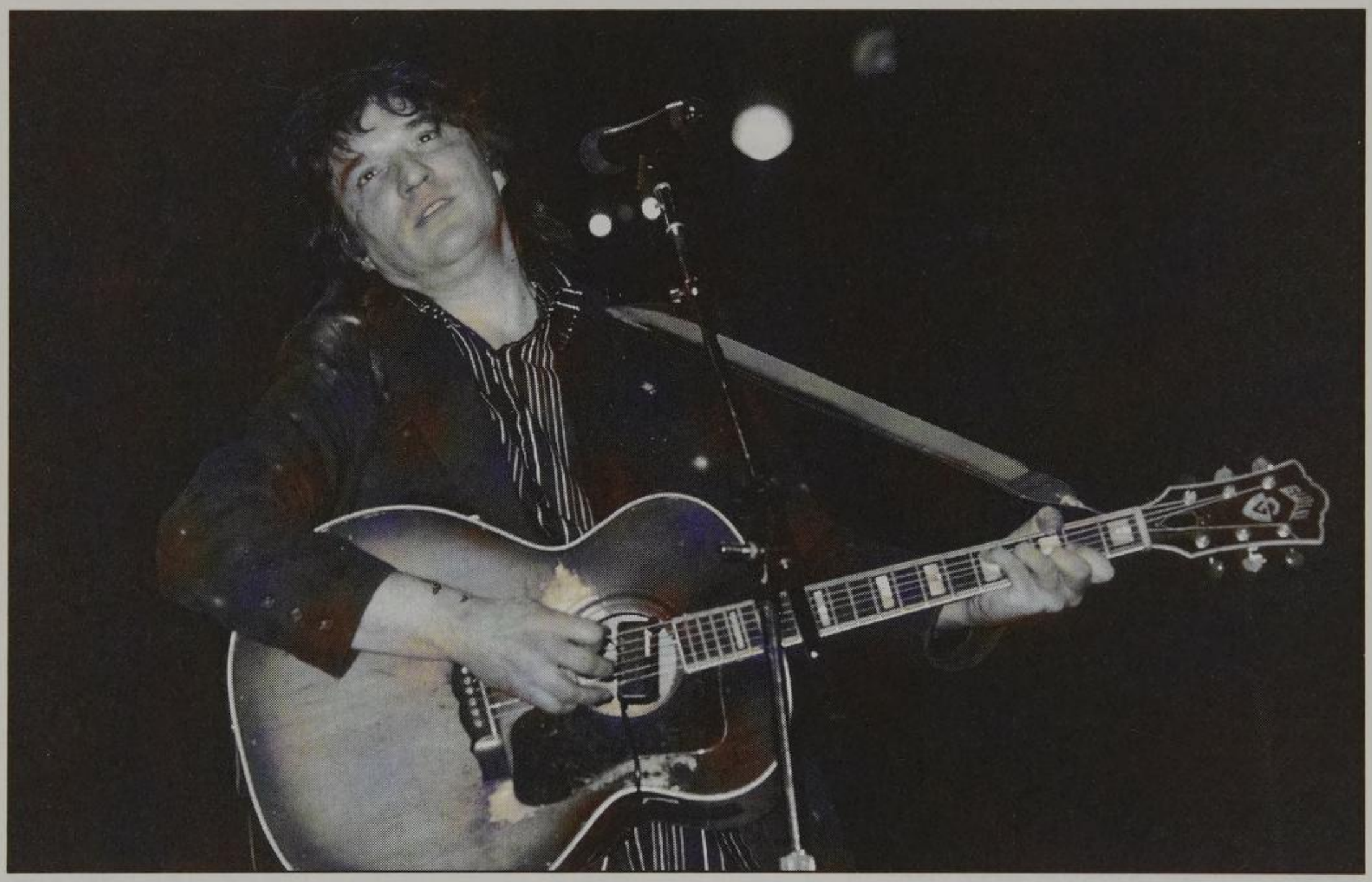
The Band

Formed 1967, in Woodstock, NY.

Robbie Robertson, vocals, guitar (1967–1976); Levon Helm, vocals, drums (1967–present); Rick Danko, vocals, bass, guitar (1967–present); Richard Manuel, vocals, piano (1967–1986); Garth Hudson, keyboards, saxophone (1967–present); Jim Weider, guitar (1983–present); Randy Ciarlante, vocals, percussion (1983–present); Richard Bell, vocals, piano (1986–present).

By the time they became known as simply the Band, the four cocky, young Canadians with the drummer from Arkansas had played together for almost seven years. As part of Ronnie Hawkins's back-up group and later on their own as the Hawks, they had became the baddest of the bad-ass bands that

the band



Rick Danko of the Band **(© Ken Settle)**

roamed the lounge-lizard circuit from Ontario and Quebec in Canada through the Rust Belt and the American South during the early '60s. But they worked as hard as they played, and by the time Bob Dylan tapped them as his electric backing band for a world tour in the summer of 1965, the Hawks had become a very sophisticated quintet, with several unique secret weapons: three equally distinct lead singers, including Manuel's seductive soul pipes, Hudson's multi-instrumental mastery, and Robertson's pin-point guitar; increasingly incisive song lyrics; and the well-lubricated rhythm section of Helms and Danko. After working with Dylan on what became known as *The Basement Tapes*, they released *Music from Big Pink* in 1967, their first collection of distinctly American short stories told in a musical language that bridged the growing generation gap. (Is there anybody under 50 who doesn't know what it feels like to pull into Nazareth a' feelin' about half past dead?) The Band subsequently emerged as a live unit, and the high expectations were never met again. The group toured sporadically and sputtered and coughed through a series of less and less interesting albums; the best of the later work would be re-workings of the bedrock material. They ended it all in 1976 by throwing and filming and recording a huge farewell party dubbed *The Last Waltz*, which, as it turns out, hid well the serious acrimony that had developed among the members, especially between Helm and Robertson. It would be the last time the five of them would appear on stage together. Listening to any of their post-Band efforts, the sad irony is inescapable: Robertson has become a songwriter without musicians, and the others a band without a writer.

what to buy: Fortunately, all the Band's music is readily available. You still can't beat *Music from Big Pink* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1968, prod. John Simon) and *The Band* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1969, prod. John Simon), two of rock's most original, imaginative, enduring, and enigmatic albums and bookends for the group's short-lived collective muse. *Moondog Matinee* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1973, prod. the Band) is a rousing return to their roadhouse days, a set of old favorites that perfectly evokes their youthful

charisma by utilizing their mature sophistication. *Rock of Ages* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1972, prod. the Band) is a superb live recording filtered through Allen Toussaint's soulful horn charts.

what to buy next: *Stage Fright* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1970, prod. the Band), their third album, includes several classics, including "The Shape I'm In," "W.S. Wolcott Medicine Show," and the autobiographical title track. *Across the Great Divide* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995, prod. various), is a fine three-disc retrospective with more than a third devoted to rarities and early recordings.

what to avoid: *Islands* ♪ (Capitol, 1977, prod. the Band) is an uneven plate of leftovers that, as the title suggests, demonstrates the huge divisions that had isolated the group members.

the rest:
Cahoots ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1971)
Northern Lights—Southern Cross ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1975)
The Best of the Band ♪♪ (Capitol, 1976)
The Last Waltz ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1978)
To Kingdom Come ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1991)
Jericho ♪♪♪ (Pyramid/Rhino, 1993)
The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
The Band Live at Watkins Glen ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995)
High on the Hog ♪♪ (Pyramid/Rhino, 1996)

worth searching for: The wrongly titled bootleg the *Concert at Royal Albert Hall*—it's the Manchester, England, concert performed by Dylan and the Hawks in 1965—captures them at their most musically adventurous at a time when hostile audiences were booing them.

solo outings:
Robbie Robertson:
Robbie Robertson ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1987)
Storyville ♪♪ (Geffen, 1991)
Music for the Native Americans ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995)

Rick Danko:
Rick Danko ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1977)
Rick Danko, Eric Anderson/Jonas Fjeld ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1991)

Levon Helm:
Levon Helm and the RCO All-Stars ♪♪♪ (ABC, 1977)
American Son ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1980)
Levon Helm ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1982)

influences:
◀◀ Clarence "Frogman" Henry, Bobby "Blue" Bland, the Impressions, Chuck Berry, the Miracles, Marvin Gaye, Booker T. & the MG's

▶▶ Graham Parker, the Rumour, Eric Clapton, McGuinness-Flint, Long Ryders, Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Son Volt, subdudes

Leland Rucker

Junior Barber

See: Gibson Brothers Band

Bare Necessities

Formed 1980s, in MA.

Peter Barnes, flute, flageolet, recorder, guitar; Earl Gaddis, violin, viola; Mary Lea, violin, percussion; Jacqueline Schwab, piano.

Bare Necessities began as a group of English country dance musicians, and the band still plays at dances in the eastern United States. Its repertoire has broadened, however, to include chamber music sounds and a healthy dose of improvisation, with rhythms driven by Jacqueline Schwab's eclectic musical interests (tango, ballet, etc.).

what's available: *English Country Dances* ♪♪♪♪ (Varrick, 1989, prod. Bare Necessities) is great dance music that also makes for good listening. "Dick's Maggot" and "Maiden Lane" are standouts. *Take a Dance* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. Bare Necessities) is pretty but more stylized than its predecessor; it's got a Renaissance coldness that contrasts with the earthy energy of earlier music.

influences:
◀◀ Vivaldi
▶▶ Ensemble Galilei

Pamela Murray Winters

Russ Barenberg

Russ Barenberg is a virtuoso acoustic guitarist with a background in bluegrass. His albums under his own name exhibit myriad influences, from calypso to traditional Appalachian and Celtic fiddle tunes to inventive original compositions. He has also toured extensively and recorded with fellow virtuosos, dobroist Jerry Douglas and bassist Edgar Meyer.

what's available: *Hollywood Rehearsal* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. various) is a compilation of tracks from Barenberg's Rounder albums up to that point. Atmospheric, beautifully played, at times captivating, *Moving Pictures* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Russ Barenberg) contains seven Barenberg original

les barker

compositions and two traditional numbers. Accompanists include Stuart Duncan, Béla Fleck, Jerry Douglas, Mark O'Connor, Mark Schatz, and Edgar Meyer. *Skip, Hop, & Wobble* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Russ Barenberg, Jerry Douglas, Edgar Meyer) is one of the most enjoyable instrumental albums from the acoustic music scene in years, a breath of acoustic fresh air that showcases the many talents of Douglas, Barenberg, and Meyer—three outstanding pickers.

influences:

Chet Atkins, Doc Watson

David Grier, Scott Nygaard

Randy Pitts

Les Barker

Born January 30, 1947, in Manchester, England.

Les Barker is the holy fool of British folk. He writes song parodies, gently off-kilter poems, and other bits of humorous wordplay. The more you know about British folk music, the more you'll appreciate his humor, but it still brings smiles to the intelligent listener. Barker is an accountant turned raconteur. In his early performances, he toured with his dog, Mrs. Ackroyd. The late Mrs. Ackroyd is commemorated in the name of Barker's erstwhile band and in the numerous references to dogs in his oeuvre ("Dachshunds with erections can't climb stairs," etc.). His many books include *Viva a Spaniel, Dog Only Nose, Corgi and Bess, Hound of Music, A Quite Short Goat and a Pink Dalmatian,* and the unexpected *English Book of Penguin Folk Songs.* Most of these are collections of doggerel. Barker has enlisted such talents as June Tabor and Martin Carthy on his albums; the Mrs. Ackroyd Band usually includes Lesley Davies and Chris Harvey. Barker doesn't limit his work to shaggy dog tales; he's also written a folk opera, *The Stones of Callanish,* and released at least one "serious" album—that is, an album that doesn't hound the listener for laughs. His albums are listed under various artist names, but all can be found at Mrs. Ackroyd Records, PO Box 95, South District Office, Manchester M20 4LB, United Kingdom (phone: 0161 434 7499; e-mail: ackroyd@cix.compulink.co.uk).

what to buy: *A Cardi and Bloke* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1995, prod. Les Barker) is an excellent jumping-off point for Barker's oddball poesy, including "Cosmo the Fairly Accurate Knife Thrower" and "Deja Vu" (worth hearing more than once). For more musical delights, choose a selection by the Mrs. Ackroyd Band—either *Oranges and Lemmings* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1990, prod. Chris Harvey) or *Gnus and Roses* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1994, prod. Chris Harvey). *Oranges* culminates in the multicultural "William Patel Overture." *Gnus* includes "The Schwarzenegging Song" and the Richard Thompson parody "Down with the Sausage Roll" and features the magnificent Norma Waterson singing the adultery lament "My Husband's Got No Porridge in Him" (she's found a blonde sleeping in his bed).

what to buy next: For a taste of Barker's serious side, look for the "various artists" selections *Some Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1992, prod. Chris Harvey) and *The Stones of Callanish* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1989, prod. Jim Sutherland). On both albums, Barker's words are set to traditional and composed music and sung by some of England's best voices, including June Tabor, Roy Bailey, and the Waterson-Carthy family. *Callanish* is a folk opera with lyrics in English and Gaelic.

the rest:

Earwigo ♪♪♪♪ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1987)
An Infinite Number of Occasional Tables ♪♪♪♪ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1991)
Up the Creek without a Poodle ♪♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Ackroyd, 1996)

influences:

Peter Cook, Billy Connolly

Pamela Murray Winters

Barolk Folk

See: Carrie Crompton

Tina Louise Barr

Born in Modesto, CA.

Californian Tina Louise Barr is an immensely talented autoharpist who placed second in the International Autoharp Championships in both 1993 and 1996. Barr cites her music teachers as introducing her to bluegrass and Celtic music. Add some unique rhythms influenced by calypso and vintage rock, and that begins to describe her innovative autoharp playing. Barr and her husband, John Gwinner, a mandolinist and guitarist, perform as "Frettin' Around" and are often joined by two other members who play banjo, fiddle, and guitar. She also performs with the Drifting Gilligans, a group that features Celtic music. She is a frequent and featured performer at festivals and has become well known on the "workshop" circuit as a teacher.

what's available: *Breakin' Tradition* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1996, prod. Tina Louise Barr) is Barr's debut release and is an all instrumental recording, adding an occasional guitar, electric bass, synthesizer, or light percussion (bodhrán, tambourine, claves, etc.) as backup to her featured autoharp. This solo recording is

a nice combination of traditional and contemporary pieces, including two original compositions, "Breakin' out the Bubbly" and "Doggy Doin's." What makes this recording exceptional is the tasteful rhythmic treatment that Tina gives to some of the old standard tunes; it's just enough to pique your interest and keep you listening for more. The last cut, "La Bamba," has become Barr's signature tune and has great energy and infectious rhythms. *Breakin' Tradition* is available from the artist at 1801 H Street, Suite B-5, #225, Modesto, CA 95354.

influences:

Maybelle Carter, the Beach Boys, Bob Wills, Sam Bush, Dave Edmunds

Alan Mager, Karen Mueller

Heidi Cerrigione

The Barra MacNeils

Formed 1986, in Sydney Mines, Cape Breton, Canada.

Sheumas MacNeil, piano, keyboard, vocals; Kyle MacNeil, violin, acoustic & electric guitar, mandolin, vocals; Stewart MacNeil, vocals, accordion, keyboards, whistle, flute, electric guitar; Lucy MacNeil, vocals, bodhrán, Celtic harp, backing vocals, viola, violin.

Growing up together in a home where musicians would casually drop by for a jam session, the Barra MacNeils had it made when it came to a nurturing environment for folk musicians. Each of the four had appeared on TV and radio by the time they were ten, and they were touring during school breaks as they grew up. Each is an outstanding multi-instrumentalist, and they frequently switch roles from one piece to the next. All four also have rich, evocative voices, which blend to create memorable mouth music or modern harmonies. Drawing on their Maritime roots, this quartet has forged ahead into a world of modern visions, giving listeners a shower of styles and sounds on their eight albums. Rapidly switching from traditional folk to jazz, pop, and even punk, this group's sound encompasses myriad styles. It is this lack of a single genre definition that has been the very defining feature of the Barra MacNeils's success. Never seeming satisfied with having grasped one type of music, they keep reaching for others, combining the sounds along the way. This is a group that put out the highly successful and critically acclaimed recording *The Traditional Album*, which showcases traditional music, and immediately followed it up with *The Question*, wherein they question the very roots they had just presented so beautifully. Fusing pop, folk, and world beat, they strive to see where music could take them. Stewart writes much of the music for the group, and has a firm grasp on many musical styles. The group has been the recipient of a variety of awards, including Pop-Rock Artists of the Year in 1996 and winner of the Roots/Traditional Artist Category in 1995, both at the East Coast Music Awards.

what to buy: *The Traditional Album* ♪♪♪♪½ (Iona, 1994) is considered a classic in the traditional music genre. Entirely instrumental, this album shows the Barra MacNeils at their best—with fiery reels and jigs galore. This is a must-have for traditional music fans.

what to buy next: *Until Now* ♪♪♪♪ (1997) showcases much of the material that has made the group famous, with heavy leanings on their traditional Scottish heritage. *The Barra MacNeils* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1986) is the group's first recording, with a rich variety of traditional music beautifully presented.

what to avoid: Fans will either love or hate *The Question* ♪♪ (1995, prod. Nick Griffiths), which lives up to its name by leaving the listener wondering what type of music the Barra MacNeils really play. Bordering on punk, jazz, and world-beat at times, this album shows almost nothing of the traditional roots for which the Barra MacNeils are famous.

the rest:

Rock in the Stream ♪♪♪½ (Polydor/PolyGram, 1989)
TimeFrame ♪♪♪ (Polydor/PolyGram, 1992)
Closer to Paradise ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1993)
Timespan ♪♪♪ (Iona Records, 1996)

influences:

The Rankin Family, Buddy MacMaster

Mouth Music

Jo Hughey Morrison and Neal Walters

Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Formed mid-1970s, in MO.

Cathy Barton (born June 12, 1955, in Fort Benning, GA), dulcimer, banjo, guitar, harp, vocals; Dave Para (born February 6, 1955, in Evergreen Park, IL), guitar, banjo, vocals.

This husband/wife duo have described themselves as "children of the folk revival" who met during the mid-1970s at the Chez, a coffeehouse in central Missouri, and soon began sharing tunes and singing together. Cathy Barton is a recognized master of the frailing banjo and has twice won the Tennessee Old Time Banjo Championship. Her passion for collecting traditional

songs and tunes is also evident in her extensive hammered dulcimer repertoire of fiddle tunes. Dave Para's distinctive guitar style includes flatpick leads and innovative moving bass lines. This versatile duo often includes autoharp, fretted dulcimer, and rhythm instruments (bones, spoons, mouth bow) in their performances, which range from hard-driving string band music to contemplative ballads and airs. Their ease in exchanging lead and harmony vocals make this duo a perfect vocal combination. Their work has taken them to festivals, clubs, concert halls, schools, and recording studios across the United States and on five European tours. Barton and Para take great pride in researching the history of the songs and tunes they collect, passing along much of the information in the extensive liner notes to their recordings and in the wonderful stories they tell their audiences.

what to buy: Barton and Para are joined by their neighbor/songwriter Bob Dyer on two recordings of Civil War Songs from the Western border. The first is *Johnny Whistletrigger* ♪♪♪♪ (Big Canoe Records, 1993, prod. Cathy Barton, Dave Para, Bob Dyer), one of the first albums ever devoted to Civil War music from west of the Mississippi River. Their extensive research is evident in the album's 32-page illustrated booklet, which includes lyrics and details that trace and relate the stories behind the songs, tunes, and recitations. The trio presents a unified collaborative sound with lyrics sung with emotional vigor above impeccable instrumentation of fiddle, banjo, hammered dulcimer, guitar, cello, and bass. This album was named a Notable Recording for 1994 by the American Library Association. The sequel to this recording is *Rebel in the Woods* ♪♪♪♪ (Big Canoe Records, 1995, prod. Cathy Barton, Dave Para, Bob Dyer); here the three artists continue to add a new dimension to the understanding of the Civil War conflict. All of the Barton/Para CDs are available from Folk-Legacy Records, Box 1148, Sharon, CT 06069, including some cassettes on other labels.

what to buy next: *For All the Good People* ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy Records, 1992, prod. Folk-Legacy) is subtitled "A Golden Ring Reunion." Barton and Para are joined by Caroline Paton (mountain dulcimer, vocals), David Paton (hammered dulcimer, concertina), Sandy Paton (guitar, vocals), Ed Trickett (guitar, hammered dulcimer, piano, vocals), and Harry Tuft (guitar, bass, vocals), reviving the spirit of "a gathering of friends for making music." *'Twas on a Night Like This* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy Records, 1989, prod. Folk-Legacy) is a Christmas recording and includes many of the musicians who played on *For All the Good People*, with the addition of Skip Gorman (fiddle), Robin Paton (vocals), and Gordon Bok (narration).

worth searching for: *On a Day Like Today* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy Records, 1986, prod. Folk-Legacy), available on cassette, is one of the finest examples of this duo's work, both instrumentally and vocally. *Ballad of the Boonslick* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1982, prod. Cathy Barton, Dave Para) and *Movin' on Down the River* ♪♪♪ (Biscuit City Records, 1979/self-released, 1985, prod. Cathy Barton, Dave Para) are two earlier recordings well worth adding to your collection. *Reflections on the Carter Family* ♪♪♪ (Take II Productions, 1981, prod. Jay Round, Ron Penix) is an out-of-print vinyl treasure.

influences:

- Taylor McBaine, Kermit Moody, Grandpa and Ramona Jones, Bill Spence
- Dick Harrington and Victoria Young, Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin

Heidi Cerrigione

Basin Brothers

Formed 1982, in Celcilia, LA.

Al Berard, fiddle, vocals; Errol Verret, accordion, vocals; Dwayne Brasseaux, bass; Keith Blanchard, drums, triangle; Tommy Comeaux, guitar, mandola. Past members include: Danny Collet, accordion, vocals.

The Basin Brothers are named after the Atchafalaya Basin where Al Berard was born and raised. His father trapped and crawdad-fished the basin, passing those skills on to his son. Like many younger Cajuns, Berard felt stigmatized by his Cajun upbringing. His outlook changed while touring Canada and having his French singing appreciated by a new audience. The core of the group has remained Berard, Brasseaux, and Blanchard, with former Beausoleil members Errol Verret and Tommy Comeaux joining in more recent years. The Basin Brothers' sound is based around the singing and playing of Berard. His rich accent is like walking into a kitchen where the gumbo has been cooking away. His fiddling rests between the austerity of Balfa traditional fiddling and Michael Doucet without the flights of fancy that only Doucet can pull off. Unlike many Cajun accordionists who "sit" out when they are not playing lead, Verret is constantly commenting and filling in, wrapping his playing around that of Berard.

what to buy: The quality of the musicianship on *Dans la Louisiana* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Basin Brothers) will remind listeners of Beausoleil. This is due in part to the interplay between Berard and Verret and in part to the abundant use of mandolin and acoustic guitar. Berard wrote two waltzes for this

CD that step a little outside the realm of Cajun chord progressions, but fall right into traditional sentiment. His "Saute la barriere" sounds like a polished up version of a song from the 1920s. The second half of the CD is a romp through a set of Cajun standards, with the exception of Verret's "Creole Jam" that seems to fit right in, despite the conga drums and new chords. Still, maybe it's just too much Cajun mandolin. Anyone who has seen Berard and Verret play a dance with just bass and drums will probably want to hear them try and catch that magic on record sometime.

what to buy next: *Let's Get Cajun* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Al Berard) is the first and the most traditional of the Basin Brothers recordings. It includes very traditional 2-steps like "Bayou Pon Pon" and "Bosco Stomp," but also the Fernest Arceneaux zydeco classic "Zydeco Boomer-Rang." Mixed in are originals by Berard like "Tous Les Cadien Content" and "Quoi Faire Tu Ture Mon Chochon " that show him writing in the tradition of Lawrence Walker and Shirley Bergeron.

the rest:
Stayin' Cajun ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
C'est Dans Le Sang Cadjin ♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Aldus Roger, the Balfa Brothers, Lawrence Walker, D.L. Menard

▶▶ Kristi Gulliory, Steve Riley

Jared Snyder

Robin Batteau

See: David Buskin

Battlefield Band

Formed 1969, in Glasgow, Scotland.

Alan Reid, keyboards, guitar, vocals (1969–present); Brian McNeill, fiddle, viola, mandolin, vocals (1969–90); John McCusker, fiddle, vocals (1990–present); John Gahagan, concertina, whistle (1977–78); Jamie McMenemy, cittern, guitar, mandolin, vocals (1977–79); Pat Kilbride, guitar, cittern, vocals (1978); Jenny Clark, dulcimer, guitar, vocals (1978); Ged Foley, guitar, vocals (1980–84); Alistair Russell, guitar, cittern, vocals (1984–97); Davy Steele, guitar, cittern, bodhrán, vocals (1997–present); Duncan McGillivray, bagpipes (1979–83); Dougie Pincock, bagpipes (1984–90); Ian MacDonald, bagpipes (1990–97); Mike Katz, bagpipes (1997–present).

Named for a suburb of Glasgow, the Battlefield Band, along with the Tannahill Weavers and Silly Wizard, was at the very heart of the Scottish folk revival of the last three decades. Hard driving and energetic, the band has built a loyal and impressive audience by fusing traditional Scottish music with elements from jazz and rock 'n' roll. Although their current albums sound traditional when compared with the likes of Shooglenifty or recent Capercaillie, their experiments with synthesizers and pop music were revolutionary for their day. The band's early recordings were more or less traditional, with the sparing use of synthesizer adding a slight modern touch. During the early 1980s, the band developed a larger, more aggressive sound and produced its two defining albums; *Home Is Where the Van Is* and *There's a Buzz* established the band as favorites in both Scotland and the U.S. The albums were marked by modern arrangements using electric keyboards, a brace of traditional songs, a few compositions by band members, and most importantly, great bagpiping and fiddling. After wholesale personnel changes in the mid-'80s, the band developed a more political sound, but kept the energy just as high with the fine *Anthem for the Common Man* and two instrumental albums with harper Alison Kinnaird. By the late 1980s, the band seemed to be losing steam. Although they finally recorded *Home Ground*, a much-needed live album, recordings from this period represent a low point in the band's history and display a distinct lack of drive. The addition of fiddler John McCusker, replacing Brian McNeill, brought some new youthful energy and ideas to the band, and by 1997's *Across the Borders*, the band was once again playing solid Scottish music mixed with outside influences, this time the Irish music of master flute player Seamus Tansey. More wholesale changes in late 1997 mean that the band will once again be forming a new sound, this time with former Ceolbeg members Davey Steele and Mike Katz joining John McCusker and Alan Reid.

what to buy: *Home Is Where the Van Is* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1980, prod. Robin Morton) made the Battlefield Band's reputation; it's a collection of traditional tunes and songs given a jolt through the addition of electric bass, synthesizer, and some imaginative arrangements. Alan MacGillavry's killer bagpiping sent kilts flying, and guitarist Ged Foley's tasteful playing filled in all the gaps. Featuring a strong set of songs, including one original by Brian MacNeil ("The Lads O' the Fair"), the group proved that the tradition could take some updating without losing its soul. The group has never been better than when it featured Alan Reid, MacNeil, Foley, and MacGillavry. *There's a Buzz* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1982, prod. Robin Morton) made two in a row for this great line up. Highlights include Robert Louis Stevenson's "Shining Clear," set to music by Reid, and a sweet set of tunes

beginning with "The Presbyterian Hornpipe." *Anthem for the Common Man* ♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1984, prod. Robin Morton) saw Dougie Pincock pick up the piping mantle and singer Alistair Russell replace Foley. The lyrics became more political, featuring a great cover of Richard Thompson's "The Old Changing Way." Any worries about a loss of energy were dispelled by the opening track "The Four-Minute Warning" featuring the new man, Pincock, more than holding his own on the pipes.

what to buy next: The Battlefield Band is at its best in concert, and *Home Ground* ♪♪♪½ (Temple, 1989, prod. Robin Morton) accurately captures its entertaining stage show. Jammed with more than 70 minutes of music, the album shows the band working through an exuberant set of songs and dance tunes. Particular highlights are the two sets featuring Dougie Pincock's solo piping, and the nine minute tour de force "Band of a Thousand Chances," in which the group combines Scottish classics with Tunes by Wilson Pickett and the Beatles.

what to avoid: *Quiet Days* ♪♪ (Temple, 1992, prod. Robin Morton) is a little too long, has no great songs or great tunes, and features a band looking for direction. *Threads* and *Across the Borders* found them with new life and ideas and are better albums.

the rest:
Battlefield Band ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1977/Temple, 1994)
At the Front ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1978/Temple, 1994)
Music in Trust ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1986)
On the Rise ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1986)
After Hours ♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1987)
Celtic Hotel ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1987)
Music in Trust 2 ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1988)
New Spring ♪♪½ (Temple, 1991)
Opening Moves ♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1993)
Threads ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1995)
Across the Borders ♪♪♪½ (Temple, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Tannahill Weavers, Silly Wizard
▶▶ Shooglenifty, Tartan Amoebas, Run Rig

Tony Ziselberger

Bayou Seco /Bayou Eclectico

Formed 1978, in LA.

Jeanie McLerie Blackmar, fiddle, guitar; Ken Keppeler, fiddle, accordion, harmonica.

Jeanie McLerie began singing in French at age five and took up the ukulele at age eight. For those familiar with the sound of Bayou Seco, that might sound like things haven't changed very much. McLerie and Keppeler have been researching and playing the music of the Southwest—from the Mississippi River to the deserts of Arizona—for 20 years. McLerie got interested in folk music during the 1950s and learned to play Travis-style guitar in time to show a young James Taylor how to do it one summer on Martha's Vineyard. In 1962, she went to France to study at the Sorbonne and began to get really involved with the folk scene. While in France, she met future husband, Sandy Darlington, and the two eked out a living busking the movie theatre queues. In 1964, the couple moved to England to perform in folk clubs there and became acquainted with most of the traditional and revival singers—in fact, Maddy Prior served as their roadie for a time. They returned to the U.S. in 1967 to play the Newport Folk Festival and settled in the Berkeley, California, area. McLerie published *Grow Your Own*, a book on organic gardening that was subsequently picked up by Random House and sold over 180,000 copies. In 1971, they moved to New Mexico, and McLerie and Darlington separated in 1973.

Keppeler, a fourth-generation Southwesterner, came from a musical family; his father played harmonica and was a very good singer. His maternal great-grandfather was a fiddler and pump organ player. He began to play guitar in high school and often hung out at the old Ash Grove where he would hear such people as the Kentucky Colonels, Doc Watson, and Clifton Chenier. In 1978, he met Jeanie in Louisiana and they began a long association with Cajun music, learning directly from a host of renowned Cajun musicians including Michael Doucet, Dennis McGee, Canray Fontenot, and Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin. During the late '70s, McLerie worked with Ann Savoy and Jean Broussard in a group called the Magnolia Sisters and recorded *Music from the Old Timey Hotel* with Franny Leopold. In 1979, she joined Alice Gerrard and Irene Herrmann as the Harmony Sisters and they toured extensively until 1983 when she and Keppeler moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico. As Artists-in-Residence, they visited every nook and cranny of New Mexico to learn music and songs from cowboy, Hispanic, and Navajo sources. Keppeler also learned to make violins and mandolins and subsequently made instruments for Peter Ostroushko and Norman and Nancy Blake.

McLerie and Keppeler have strong ties to traditional musicians in New Mexico, and over the years they met and encouraged Cleofes Ortiz, a traditional Hispanic fiddler, and Max and Antonia Apodaca, traditional musicians whose music they brought to public attention and who taught them many of the tunes

that have since become Bayou Seco staples. Similarly, they discovered the music of the Guachi Fiddlers of the Tohono O'odham people of southern Arizona. Through fiddler Elliott Johnson of Cababi, Arizona, they learned much of the old style music that was rapidly being forgotten. They continue to share the music and dances they were taught by these old masters, touring extensively in Europe and throughout the Southwest from their home in Silver City, New Mexico. McLerie recently started a school of fiddle instruction called "The Fiddling Friends," which focuses on an international repertoire of fiddle styles and emphasizes the sources of the music including contact with traditional musicians. Keppeler continues to make fine violins. All of these experiences and influences have combined to form the Bayou Seco sound, which they describe as "delightfully danceable Chilegumbo with a spicy bite and delicious aftertaste." Bayou Seco recordings are available from Bayou Seco, P.O. Box 4296, Albuquerque, NM 87196-4296.

what to buy: *Following in the Tune Prints* ♪♪♪♪ (UBIK Sound, 1995, prod. Ken Keppeler, Jeanie McLerie, Manny Rettinger) finds Bayou Seco in fine form, presenting a program that the CD subtitles as "old music in the new West . . . desert stomps, Cajun romps, and songs for modern cowgirls and vaqueros." The CD mixes genres shamelessly but allows the group to salute the old masters they've learned from while pursuing their own eclectic, but delightful, musical tastes. The music is not slick but it is most definitely authentic, blending elements of Cajun, Norteno, chicken scratch, and zydeco into a down-home composite sketch of the Southwest. Also check out a couple of great anthologies that have one or more cuts by the group: *Old Time Music on the Air, Vol. 2* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Old Time Music on the Radio) and *The American Fogies, Vol. 1* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ray Alden). These are filled with very generous selections of great music.

what to buy next: The cassette-only *Songs of New Mexico and Beyond* ♪♪♪½ (UBIK Sound, 1991, prod. Ken Keppeler, Jeanie McLerie, Manny Rettinger) is another eclectic batch of Cajun, New Mexican, Navajo, original, and only they know what else. Cross cultural to the max! For a more consistent, i.e., less of a mixed bag, approach, *Memories in Cababi: Tunes of the Tohono O'odham* ♪♪♪½ (UBIK Sound, 1995) (cassette only) is a real treat. The tunes are all delightful and not at all what one might expect.

the rest:
No Borders ♪♪♪½ (UBIK Sound, 1986) (cassette only)
Orquesta Cleofonica ♪♪♪ (UBIK Sound, 1987) (cassette only)
Recuerdos de Rociada ♪♪♪ (UBIK Sound) (cassette only)
Music from the Old Timey Hotel ♪♪♪ (UBIK Sound, 1994)

worth searching for: *Cactus Gumbo and Alligator Enchiladas* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Guitar Productions, 1983, prod. Ken Keppeler, Jeanie McLerie, Paul Rangell, Jimmy Borsdorf) is the one Bayou Seco album that is out of print and unavailable. It's certainly worth grabbing if you come across it.

solo outings:
Harmony Sisters:
Harmony Pie ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1980)
Second Helping ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1983)

influences:
◀◀ The Balfa Brothers, Dennis McGee, Cleofes Ortiz, Elliott Johnson
▶▶ Balfa Toujours, Delta Sisters

see also: *Hazel & Alice*

Neal Walters

Beacon Hillbillies

See: Blood Oranges

Keola Beamer /Keola and Kapono Beamer /Nona Beamer

Born Keolamaikalani Breckenridge Beamer, February 18, 1951, in HI.

One of Hawaii's most popular contemporary musicians, Keola Beamer can trace his island history back to the 15th century. Many of those ancestors were musicians: his great-grandmother, Helen Desha Beamer, was a noted songwriter and performer, and his mother teaches dancing and music and occasionally records. Beamer's available output is perhaps more far-reaching than any other slack-key guitarist's; it incorporates elements of chants and other traditional Hawaiian sounds, and it contains elements of soft Western pop. Through the years he has recorded as a solo artist as well as with his brother Kapono Beamer and his mother, Nona Beamer.

what to buy: The gorgeous *Mauna Kea: White Mountain Journal* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1997, prod. George Winston) is Beamer's finest moment on record, an instrumental album that features him playing electric as well as acoustic guitar. Beamer plays many of the tunes solo, overdubs a few; George Winston occasionally joins on guitar as well. Beamer's arrangements of "Kaula 'ili" and "Hi'ilawe," songs associated with Sonny Chillingworth and Gabby Pahinui, respectively, are both exquisite. *Moe'Uhane Kika (Takes from the Dream Guitar)* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing

Cat, 1995, prod. George Winston) is of similar quality, only here Beamer's the only guitar player, sometimes adding a nylon-string acoustic guitar or electric guitar part.

what to buy next: The rare Dancing Cat release recorded with a full band, *Wooden Boat* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1994, prod. George Winston) has a more contemporary sound than most of the label's other albums. Producer George "Keoki" Winston plays guitar on several tracks, including the duets "Kalena Kai" and "He Aloha no 'O Honolulu (Beloved Is Honolulu)," and piano on the instrumental "no Ke Ano Ahiahi (In the Evening Time)."

what to avoid: Though Keola & Kapono Beamer's *Honolulu City Lights* ♪♪ (Paradise, 1987, prod. Teddy Randazzo) is considered one of the most successful albums ever recorded in Hawaii, it will have more value to tourists and honeymooners than slack-key aficionados. Both it and *Pure Hawaiian Magic* ♪♪ (Paradise, 1991, prod. Tom Moffatt), a second duo album, contain some fine slack-key picking, but the songs and arrangements are saccharine and overly romanticized.

the rest:

Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar in the Real Old Style ♪♪♪ (Music of Polynesia, 1972)

Sweet Maui Moon ♪♪ (Paradise, 1989)

worth searching for: Beamer has published an instructional video, *The Art of Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar* and a book-and-cassette package, *Guitar Playing Hawaiian Style*.

solo outings:

Nona Beamer:

The Golden Lehua Tree ♪♪♪ (Starscape, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Sonny Chillingworth, Gabby Pahinui

▶▶ Ozzie Kotani

Brian Mansfield

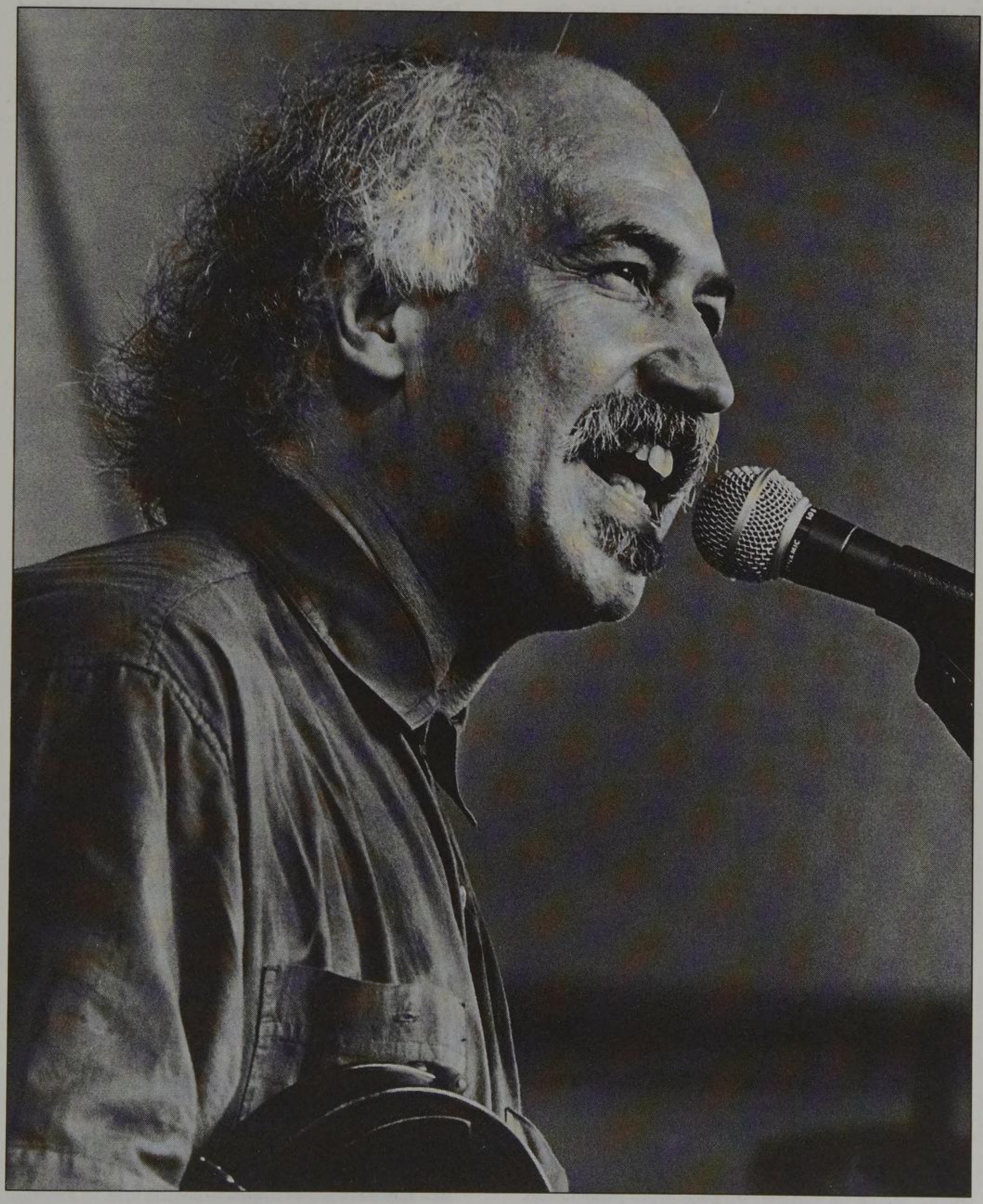
Beausoleil

Formed 1975, in Lafayette, LA.

Michael Doucet, fiddle, vocals; David Doucet, guitar; Billy Ware, percussion; Tommy Alesi, drums (1977–present); Jimmy Breaux, accordion (1988–present); Al Tharp, bass, banjo, fiddle, backing vocals (1990–present); Errol Verret, accordion (1975–87); Tommy Comeaux, bass, mandolin (1975–90); Robert Vignaud, bass (1982–84).

Led by fiddler, singer, and Acadian/Cajun zealot Michael Doucet, Beausoleil is not only Louisiana's premier Cajun band, but during the past 10 years they've also become the best-known regional or "world music" band from North America. When Europeans, for example, think of Cajun music, they inevitably think of Beausoleil. Based in acoustic Cajun music—a fiddle and accordion-led genre that generally follows two forms: the waltz and the two-step—Beausoleil (most of the lyrics are sung in French) has consistently had the vision and instrumental skill to add elements of New Orleans R&B, blues, folk, jazz, and country to their very vital take on traditional French music from Louisiana. A Cajun music, culture, and history enthusiast since he was a teenager, Doucet made a trip to France in 1973 that convinced him of the value of his native culture. He returned to Louisiana determined to play the string music that had come to Louisiana from France via the Acadian people of eastern Canada. Combining musical history and infectious dance music, Beausoleil (named for Acadian resistance leader Joseph Broussard, whose nickname was "Beausoleil") was initially the alter ego of a regionally famous cosmic Cajun band called Coteau. Fronted by Michael Doucet and known locally as "the Cajun Grateful Dead," Coteau lasted until 1977 when it broke up and Beausoleil continued on. The fledgling group recorded its first album for Pate Marconi/EMI in France in 1976. The second disc, *The Spirit of Cajun Music*, was made in the U.S. for Louisiana-based Swallow Records in 1977. The band signed with Arhoolie Records during the early 1980s and in the fashion of that label released a number of traditional music records, one of which, the soundtrack to the film *Belizaire the Cajun*, won a Grammy nomination. Constant touring and a revival of interest in all things Cajun (thanks in large part to New Orleans chef Paul Prudhomme) aided and abetted the band's growing popularity. In 1986 the band members quit their day jobs and committed to music full time. In that same year they released four albums: the *Belizaire the Cajun* soundtrack, *Allons a Lafayette*, *Christmas Bayou*, and *Bayou Boogie*, the last of which was the band's first disc for Rounder Records. *Bayou Boogie* was also the first time the band recorded with electric instruments. At the same time the band was featured several times on *Prairie Home Companion* and was invited to play Carnegie Hall. In 1990 Beausoleil signed with Rhino Records' RNA imprint (which was later changed to Forward Records). Three consecutive Beausoleil albums won Grammy nominations in the Best Contemporary Folk category: 1989's *Bayou Cadillac*, 1991's *Cajun Conja*, and 1993's *La Danse de la Vie*. In 1991 Mary Chapin Carpenter won a

Michael Doucet of Beausoleil **(© Linda Vartoogian)**



Grammy for "Down at the Twist and Shout," a song she'd written about Beausoleil. When she performed the song during the Grammys telecast, the band joined her onstage, a feat they repeated at the 1997 Super Bowl. The band has even come to the attention of the rock community, *Rolling Stone* referring to them as "the best damned dance band you'll ever hear." Having performed at two presidential inaugurations—Jimmy Carter (1977) and Bill Clinton (1993)—Beausoleil continues to tour over 200 nights a year.

what to buy: *Bayou Deluxe: The Best of Michael Doucet & Beausoleil* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1993, prod. various) is probably the best place to jump into Beausoleil's ever-expanding catalog. Upbeat tunes like "Vieux Crowley" mix with slower, more introspective numbers like "Je M'Endors." Drawn from eight different albums and two compilation discs, this collection is a generous slice of the many sides to this traditional music powerhouse.

what to buy next: Choosing one album by a band that has yet to make even a mediocre disc is nearly impossible. *Bayou Cadillac* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Michael Doucet, Ken Gorz, Ken Irwin) gets the nod on the strength of classic Louisiana tunes like "Bon Temps Rouler" and great Doucet originals like "Valse Bebe." Add to that the fact that the band stretches here into a successful "Bo Diddley" and "Iko Iko" and you have one of their best. Again though, this is strictly a matter of taste: *Cajun Conja* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, prod. Al Tharp, Michael Doucet) and *La Danse de la Vie* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1993, prod. John Jennings, Michael Doucet, Beausoleil) are very close seconds.

the rest:

Spirit of Cajun Music a.k.a. *Louisiana Cajun Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1977)
Michael Doucet dit Beausoleil ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1981/1994)
Zydeco Gris Gris ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1985)
Allons a Lafayette & More with Canray Fontenot ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1986)
Christmas Bayou ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1986)
Bayou Boogie ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986)
Belizaire the Cajun ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1986)
Hot Chili Mama ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1988)
Live! From the Left Coast ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Deja Vu ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1990)
Parlez-Nous a Boire ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1991)
L'Echo ♪♪♪♪ (Forward, 1994)
L'Amour ou la Folie ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1997)
The Best of Beausoleil ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1997)
Arc de Triomphe Two Step N/A (Hemisphere/Metro Blue, 1998)

worth searching for: *Vintage Beausoleil* ♪♪♪½ (Music of the World, 1995, prod. Bob Haddad) collects live performances from 1986–87 in New York City. Several are from a rain-delayed Central Park concert where the band is responding to the enthusiasm of the muddy, dedicated crowd. Another disc worth hunting down is *Le Hoogie Boogie* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992), a charming children's record of Cajun music featuring Michael Doucet, his wife Sharon Arms Doucet, and the members of Beausoleil.

solo outings:
Michael Doucet:
Michael Doucet & Cajun Brew ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
Beau Solo ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1990)

influences:
◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Dewey Balfa, Canray Fontenot
▶▶ Filé, Balfa Toujours

Robert Baird

Harry Belafonte

Born March 1, 1927, in New York, NY.

From out of the racial discord that characterized 1956, Harlem-born Harry Belafonte became an unlikely major star when his "Jamaica Farewell" flew up the charts and ignited a calypso craze, to be followed by an even bigger smash, "The Banana Boat Song (Day-O)," a year later. Strikingly handsome and gifted with an expressive, rich tenor, Belafonte scored repeatedly on the singles charts through the end of the '50s, and after the calypso fad waned, the singer proved his real versatility, recording Irish ballads, American folk tunes, prison songs, and of course Christmas classics. Additionally, Belafonte put his star quality to political use, becoming an outspoken civil rights campaigner and a champion for human rights—even taking part in the recording of USA for Africa's "We Are the World" some three decades after his recording debut.

what to buy: Though a sizable portion of his catalog has been removed from circulation, the presence of *All-Time Greatest Hits Vol. 1–3* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1987, prod. Chick Crumpacker) ensures that the essential elements of Belafonte's career remain available to the listening public. Containing more than 50 tracks and spanning two decades (beginning with some early '50s cuts that pre-date his explosion as a vocal superstar), the three-part collection shows the breadth of Belafonte's interpretive powers. It contains all of his calypso hits and proves that Belafonte continued to be a force through the '60s, even after he'd stopped having hit singles.

what to buy next: At the height of his late '50s popularity, Belafonte appeared at Carnegie Hall. His performance is captured on the remarkable *Belafonte at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1959, prod. Bob Bollard). Backed by his spare combo, Belafonte is in top form as he fills the room with "Day-O" and "Jamaica Farewell" and even includes a beautiful reading of "Danny Boy."

the rest:
Calypso ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1956)
Jump Up Calypso ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1961)
Pure Gold ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1975)
All Time Greatest Hits, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1978)
Belafonte Returns to Carnegie (RCA Victor, 1994)
An Evening with Harry Belafonte (PolyGram, 1997)
To Wish You a Merry Christmas (RCA, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Nat King Cole, Lena Horne
▶▶ Miriam Makeba, Al Jarreau, Sting

David Simons

Delia Bell and Bill Grant

Formed 1959, in OK.

Delia Bell, vocals; Bill Grant, vocals.

Working in the tradition of duos Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper and Lulubelle and Scotty Roman, Delia Bell and Bill Grant have sung hard-country duets that made them popular for decades on the bluegrass circuit. The duo formed in 1959, after Bell's husband introduced the two, but they didn't go professional until the late '60s. Grant started his own label and recorded the pair's band, the Kiamichi Mountain Boys, throughout the '70s. The Kiamichi Mountain Boys disbanded around 1980, and Bell took a shot at a solo career, recording one album with Grant for County and another on her own for Warner Bros. In 1984, Bell and Grant began recording for Rounder Records, for which they made three albums.

what to buy: *Dreaming* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Bill Grant, Ken Irwin) takes the best of the three albums the duo recorded for Rounder during the '80s and puts them on one marvelous, 14-track disc. There's only one original ("Louisa"), but with interpretations as good as the duo's versions of George Jones's "Flame in My Heart," Harlan Howard's "The Wall," and Hazel Dickens's "Won't You Come and Sing for Me?," who needs originals?

what to buy next: The Johnson Mountain Boys provided accompaniment for all of Bell and Grant's Rounder albums, but *A Few Dollars More* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986, prod. Ken Irwin, Bill Grant) also featured the talents of brothers Del and Jerry McCoury on guitar and bass, respectively.

the rest:
Cheer of the Homefires ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
Following a Feeling (Rounder, 1988)

worth searching for: Bell wrote "Roses in the Snow," which became the title track for an Emmylou Harris album. Harris returned the favor by producing *Delia Bell* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., prod. Emmylou Harris), a country album that produced two charting singles, "Coyote Song" and "Flame in My Heart." Bell, Grant, and the Kiamichi Mountain Boys recorded nine albums for Grant's Kiamichi Records label during the '70s; all are long out of print.

influences:
◀◀ Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, Carl Story
▶▶ Emmylou Harris

Brian Mansfield

Derek Bell

Born 1935, in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

If one were to assess the short, sixty-something, bespectacled, unprepossessing, and vaguely rumpled Derek Bell by his appearance, you'd guess he was perhaps a professor of some sort—as indeed he is. You'd be less likely to picture him consorting with Mick Jagger, Van Morrison, most of the notable cats in Nashville, or opening for the Pope in Dublin; but that's just the beginning of his resume as a member of the Chieftains, Ireland's musical ambassadors to the world. It may be unique among the world's republics that Ireland's chief symbol—the image that appears on their flag and their currency—is a musical instrument: the harp. Although he was the son of a fiddler, and received a thorough and formal musical education as a youngster, this world-famous harp player didn't start to play the instrument until he was well into his 30s. He played piano and xylophone as a youth and eventually trained on oboe and English horn, graduating from London's Royal College of Music in 1957 and, two years later, earning a degree from Trinity College in Dublin. Despite such deep musical training (or perhaps because of it), and despite the fact that he was captivated by the sound of the Irish harp all his life, Bell's career took him elsewhere, leaving the harp as "a reward for goodness to be played in heaven!" But his

5/2 derek bell

the 1940s

During the decade of World War II, folk music made its way into the public eye to an unprecedented extent and through many distinct routes. Alan Lomax and his imitators used the public airwaves, even armed forces broadcasts, to bring previously obscure folk ballads into the living rooms of America. The Almanac Singers, an unabashedly populist and intellectual group of socially active performers including, among others, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Bess Hawes, and Woody Guthrie, became highly visible performers at political rallies and at concert halls. Moses Asch released records by Guthrie, Lead Belly, and others, and the Lomaxes continued to release the fruits of their field recording efforts of the previous decades. Musicians-turned-actors like Burl Ives and Paul Robeson brought folk music to the theatrical stage, often utilizing songs taken from the public domain. After the war ended, the political spectrum shifted towards the right, and the stage was set for the McCarthy era of the early '50s. Undaunted, Seeger, Lee Hays, and others formed the People's Songs Collective, which, although short-lived, set the stage for later grass roots folk organizations and ultimately gave roots to the first superstars of the folk revival—the Weavers.

Michael Parrish

life-long love for this ancient folk instrument remained unquenched, and one day he borrowed a harp from the North of Ireland Arts Council and started lessons; by 1965 he had joined the BBC in Belfast as solo harper for its Northern Ireland Orchestra. He eventually became Harp Professor at the Belfast Academy, a position he still holds; but the course of his future was secured in 1972, when he joined an aggregate of folk instrumentalists who called themselves the Chieftains. Bell joined the Chieftains just as they were about to record their fourth album, a critical point in their early history. It was the first recording they made together as a full-time, professional ensemble; the lineup had stabilized and everyone had by then left their day jobs. It was also the first evidence on record of founder and musical director Paddy Moloney's ultimate dream for the band: to mold a repertoire of traditional Irish music into a unique, almost chamber-music ensemble. Indeed, such a group would be unthinkable without a harp player, and Derek Bell has been with the celebrated Chieftains ever since.

what to buy: *Carolan's Receipt* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Paddy Moloney) was the first, and may well be the best, of many recordings devoted to the music of Turlough O'Carolan, the eighteenth-century Irish bardic figure and beloved composer of harp tunes. Here Bell plays the more commonly heard harp strung with nylon or gut strings, but also devotes much of the program to the more ancient, wire-strung harp, an instrument with an entirely different timbre and technique. Various members of the Chieftains guest on this delightful album, providing welcome variation with the solo tracks. O'Carolan wrote at a time when the English suppression of Irish culture was relatively relaxed; in those days the indigenous music was popular, as well as the classical music of Italy and the European continent. O'Carolan's music was characterized by a distinctive blending of these two sensibilities, and it's hard to imagine a more perfect modern interpreter than Derek Bell, in whose nimble fingers the music of the academy and the pub converge.

what to avoid: Unfortunately, Bell forgot the winning formula used on his first collection of O'Carolan's music and the second, *Carolan's Favourite* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1989, prod. Paddy Moloney), perhaps in an ill-advised attempt to distinguish itself from the first, buries the tang and spontaneity of the composer's music in an over-gentrified, orchestral sugar-coating. Even the stuff without the Belfast Orchestra, while appealing enough, suffers from the curse of all sophomore outings: it's material that wasn't chosen for the first album.

the rest:
Derek Bell's Musical Ireland ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1989)
Ancient Music for the Irish Harp ♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1996)
Mystic Harp ♪♪♪ (Crystal Clarity, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Sheila Larchet-Cuthbert, Seamus Ennis
▶▶ Patrick Ball, Kim Robertson, Sheila Woods, Maire ni Chathasaigh

see also: *The Chieftains*

Chris Rietz

Vince Bell

Born in Dallas, TX.

That Vince Bell has a career in music, or that he ever recorded an album, is almost beside the point. That he is alive is miracle enough. A promising singer/songwriter who toured Texas one roadhouse at a time, Bell's life was rudely interrupted in 1982 when, on the way home from the studio, he was struck down by a drunk driver. His injuries were so serious that an obituary mistakenly ran in the Austin *American-Statesman*. After learning to walk and talk again, and then learning to play and sing, Bell set about reclaiming his career.

what's available: *Phoenix* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1994, prod. Bob Neuwirth) is an album of small vignettes, full of rough edges and hard truths—not particularly easy to take, especially given Bell's gruff voice. But, as is the case with the songs of John Prine and Randy Newman, Bell's work deserves a close listen. Plus, it's hard to go wrong with a.supporting cast that includes Lyle Lovett, Victoria Williams, John Cale, Stephen Bruton, Mickey Raphael, David Mansfield, and Geoff Muldaur. The highlight is "Woman of the Phoenix," which is perhaps best known in Nanci Griffith's version.

influences:

◀◀ John Prine, Townes Van Zandt, Randy Newman

▶▶ Lyle Lovett, Victoria Williams

Daniel Durchholz

Peter Bellamy

See: Young Tradition

Mac Benford /Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Formed early 1990s, in and around Ithaca, NY.

Mac Benford, banjo, vocals; Marie Burns, mandolin, vocals; John Kirk, fiddle, vocals; John Rossbach, guitar, vocals; Pete Sutherland, fiddle, vocals; Doug Henrie, bass.

Mac Benford is one of the best known of the many younger musicians who were attracted to old time music in the 1960s. He has become a seminal figure in the ensuing "revival" that now spans some 35 to 40 years. Originally a member of the Fat City String Band with Walt Koken and Bob Potts, Benford was a fixture on the Berkeley, California, old time scene in the '60s. The band became the Highwoods String Band and the trio added Jenny Cleland and Doug Dorschug after a move to the Ithaca, New York, area. Highwoods was the band that basically defined the form for many who heard them throughout the '70s. As Benford says, adding "a big beat rhythm section to the tight banjo-fiddles trio . . . was quite unique during those days." The band had a large repertoire of traditional tunes and songs that they learned from old 78s, but, rather than the purist approach of groups like the New Lost City Ramblers, they felt free to combine various styles to create their own special "groove" and blend. Later, after the breakup of Highwoods, he founded the Backwoods Band and that band, which also included Eric and Suzy Thompson, put out a couple of very nice LPs, which are all unfortunately now out of print. Since then, Benford has kept a relatively low profile, making the odd festival performance as a solo act or with ad hoc groups. Nonetheless, his work with Highwoods served to make him a household name in old time music circles. In the '90s he has formed Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars, an old-time string band with a refreshing difference. The lovely Celtic-influenced voice of Marie Burns enhances the band's sound, which otherwise relies heavily on Benford's clawhammer banjo and North Georgia twin fiddles. Most of the members are still involved in other bands and recording projects, notably Marie, who records with sisters Jeannie and Annie in a folky/bluegrass trio, the Burns Sisters.

what's available: *Willow* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Mac Benford) is the group's only CD release to date and clearly shows that Benford has not lost his touch. It's not exactly the rebirth of Highwoods, but it's not bad. The presence of Marie Burns's vocals adds a measure of variety to the straightforward string band sound and the band cruises through a program of mostly standard material.

worth searching for: *Feed Your Babies Onions* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Highwoods String Band) contains 23 of the best live recordings from Highwoods' heyday and is essential listening. The Woodshed All Stars also have one additional release on cassette only, *1/2 Century in C* ♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1991, prod. Mac Benford), which is also worth seeking out.

solo outings:

John Rossbach:

Never Was Plugged ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family, Skillet Lickers, New Lost City Ramblers

▶▶ Freight Hoppers, Dry Branch Fire Squad

see also: *The Burns Sisters, Walt Koken*

Neal Walters and Stephen L. Betts

5/4 *pierre bensusan*

Pierre Bensusan

Born 1958, in Algeria.

In 1975, a 17-year-old Algerian-born Parisian named Pierre Bensusan released *Pres de Paris*, a precocious first album that went on to win that year's prestigious Gran Prix du Disque. His first recordings mirror the influence of Western European (and particularly Irish) traditional music, but Bensusan's musical interests have grown to assimilate the sensibilities of many cultures; more important, he has devoted increasing attention to his already rare skill for composition. By the time his third album, *Musiques*, was issued, he settled upon a non-standard modal tuning for the guitar (the six strings tuned, low to high, to the notes D-A-D-G-A-D), a tuning he has since used exclusively. A passionate player, voracious assimilator, and irrepressible improviser, Pierre Bensusan has developed into a powerhouse instrumentalist without peer in the world of steel-string acoustic guitar. If he's left some of his more traditionally oriented fans behind, he (like Joni Mitchell, Miles Davis, or many artists who seem repeatedly to outgrow their various devotees) doesn't seem to notice. His brilliant, mercurial, unflaggingly lyrical guitar playing is as exciting to listen to as it is hard to pigeonhole.

what to buy: Start with *Solilai* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982, prod. Pierre Bensusan). This was perhaps the first sample of Bensusan in artistic maturity, when a fully developed, impressionistic sense of jazz harmony was informing his compositions. A more focused, "bring-it-along-slowly" feel to his pieces is also in evidence here (as it was to be in all his subsequent work)—you can tell in a half-minute of listening that these tunes weren't just concocted last week.

what to buy next: *Musiques* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980, prod. Pierre Bensusan) presents classic Bensusan with perhaps a more folky sensibility—shorter, less developed pieces and lots of superb originals mixed in with some tasty versions of traditional material. Some obviously improvised pieces (like "Climats Doux et Temperes") give a hint of things to come.

what to avoid: By no means an artistic failure, *Spices* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Pierre Bensusan) is many people's least favorite Pierre Bensusan album. This was his only recording with a band, and it also features his several-year experiment with his "electro-acoustic" guitar, complete with flanger, echo, and other effects pedals. Whether it was the missing intimacy of solo performance, a distaste for the electrified sound, or simply neglect from CBS's promotional machinery (it originally was issued on Columbia, Bensusan's first and only major-label effort), *Spices* languished with lackluster sales.

the rest:
Pres de Paris ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1975)
2 ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977)
Wu Wei ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)

influences:
Davey Graham, Bert Jansch, Martin Carthy
Michael Hedges, Andrew York, El McMeen, Martin Simpson, and virtually every Celtic, British, or New Age fingerstyle guitarist

Chris Rietz

Mary Bergin /Dordan

Born September 13, 1949, in Dublin, Ireland. Dordan formed 1991, in Galway, Ireland.

Mary Bergin, flute, whistle, fiddle; Kathleen Loughnane, harp; Dearbhaill Standun, fiddle, viola; Martina Goggin, vocals, percussion, guitar (1996–present).

Mary Bergin is the undisputed queen of the Irish tin whistle. Her astounding technique and beautiful repertoire have defined tin whistle playing in Irish music for the past 30 years and have set a new standard for the instrument. Born in Dublin, she grew up hearing traditional music both at home and on family vacations in the west of Ireland, where she fell under the spell of legendary musicians like Willie Clancy and Junior Crehan. She began playing as a young girl and soon developed her own unique style, winning the all-Ireland title while in her late teens. After playing briefly with Ceoltoiri Laighean, a group that melded traditional and classical music in the manner of the Chieftains, she moved to Galway, married, and pursued a solo career. Her debut album *Feadoga Stain* was an instant classic, redefining the role of the tin whistle and propelling her to the front of the traditional music scene in Ireland. Since her debut, she has toured as a solo artist, with De Dannan, and with Joe and Antoinette McKenna. She has also recorded a second solo album. In 1991, Bergin, along with harper Kathleen Loughnane and violinist Dearbhill Standun, formed Dordan. Playing a combination of baroque pieces and Irish dance tunes, the group has recorded three albums and toured in Ireland, England, and the U.S. Bergin continues to perform and record both as a solo artist and with Dordan, and can often be found teaching tin whistle at music camps in the U.S. and in Ireland.

what to buy: *Feadoga Stain* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Gael Linn, 1976/Shanachie, 1992, prod. Michael O'hEidhin) is a classic of Irish music and

should be among the first albums purchased by anyone with a serious interest in the tradition. At the time of this album's original release, there had been only a few full-length recordings of tin whistle music released, the instrument being taken somewhat less seriously than its cousins the flute and the uilleann pipes. Bergin's debut album changed forever the whistle's status in Irish music. Driving, lyrical, and tasteful, *Feadoga Stain* set a new standard for tin whistle playing, exploring different keys and pushing the simple instrument to its limits. Mary rips through reels and jigs with awesome grace and precision at a breakneck speed and pulls every bit of soul out of a pair of ancient song airs. Accompanied by De Dannan's Ringo McDonough and Alec Finn, Bergin plays Irish music on this recording with as much power, elegance, and style as anyone before or after.

what to buy next: *Feadoga Stain 2* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Mary Bergin) shows Bergin is still an awesome musician 15 years later. The guest list is a little bigger this time, with appearances by the McKennas and Dordan. The sound is a little fuller as well, with uilleann pipes, guitar, and even bass on a few tracks. The whistle playing, of course, is at the same high standard, with her exquisite taste in tunes and arrangements always on display. *The Night Before . . . A Celtic Christmas* ♪♪♪½ (Narada, 1997, prod. Dordan) is Dordan's third album and their first holiday collection, as well as the first Dordan album to feature vocals. The group's mix of classical and traditional styles works to great effect on Christmas material, remaining tasteful without sinking into safe holiday dullness. Their material, several originals mixed with some traditional Irish holiday music, is well chosen and arranged to allow each of the members to show off their considerable skills (especially on Tommy Coen's reel, "Christmas Eve.") Guests Steve Cooney and Johnny Connolly, on guitar and accordion respectively, provide some extra punch, and the addition of Goggin's warm alto voice adds a new dimension to the group's sound.

what to avoid: *Irish Traditional and Baroque* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1991, prod. Jackie Small) was Dordan's debut album. A pleasant collection that introduced the group's syncretic blend of baroque and traditional music to the world, the record featured some tasty individual playing but never really cut loose. The album features some standard pieces by Handel, Bach, and Purcell, among others, alongside traditional Irish tunes and one piece composed by the group. This was a solid debut album, making explicit the links between the two genres, but it has been overshadowed by the group's two subsequent releases.

worth searching for: *Jigs to the Moon* ♪♪♪½ (Gael Linn, 1994, prod. Dordan) was Dordan's second album and a deeper, more successful exploration of the common ground between baroque and Irish music. The group plays a German chaconne, a sonatina by the Czech composer Dussek, and a whole bunch of Turlough O'Carolan tunes in conjunction with a few traditional waltzes, reels, and jigs. Highlights include a stately version of Jerry Holland's beautiful waltz, "My Cape Breton Home," and a set of polkas drawn from English, Irish, and Austrian sources. Unfortunately, it seems that the band's sound, part Irish, part classical, falls between the marketing cracks in the U.S. Perhaps considered too traditional for the classical market, too reserved for the Irish tunehead crowd, and too serious for the new agers, this album has yet to see release in the United States.

influences:

◀◀ Willie Clancy, Tom McHaile, Seamus Ennis

▶▶ Sean Ryan, Kevin Crawford, Hesperus

Tony Ziselberger

Bergmann Brothers

See: Tina Bergmann

Tina Bergmann

Born February 21, 1971, in Charlevoix, MI.

Hammered dulcimer recording artist Tina Bergmann began performing in 1980 as part of Strings & Things, which also included Diana Bergmann (lap dulcimer) and Monty Bergmann (harmonica). Tina Bergmann's hammered dulcimer style has been heavily influenced by playing for contra dances, described as "rhythmically grounded and excitingly syncopated." She learned to play in the aural tradition and continues to play for contra dances in the Richfield, Ohio area. This dulcimist has been teaching privately since age 12, plus she travels to perform and teach at various folk festivals.

what's available: *The Bergmann Brothers—Fine Artiste* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1997, prod. the Bergmann Brothers) is an excellent recording featuring Tina's hammered dulcimer playing. She is joined by David Rice (guitar, harmonica, and vocals), Bryan Thomas (bass), and Diana Bergmann (banjo uke). The 18 selections are nicely varied, from "Langstrom's Pony," a traditional Irish tune with an African clave pattern accompaniment, to "La Partida," a Venezuelan waltz, to "I Had to Give Up Gym," a 1929 tune in which Tina sings lead. *Shady Grove* ♪♪♪ (Strings & Things, 1994, prod. Tina Bergmann) is an excellent contra dance collection of mostly reels, a few jigs, and a couple of waltzes. The addition of Mark DeLozier (piano) and Jason Hamilton (fiddle) makes this an exciting recording. These two

recordings are available from the artist at 3365 Treelawn Drive, Richfield, OH 44286.

worth searching for: Strings & Things also have two recordings that are now out of print: *Just Because* ♪♪♪ (Strings & Things, 1983, prod. Strings & Things) and *Going to Boston* ♪♪♪ (Strings & Things, 1985, prod. Strings & Things).

influences:

◀◀ Loy Swaggert

▶▶ Steve Schneider, Rick Thum, Kendra Ward-Bence

Heidi Cerrigione

Byron Berline

Born July 6, 1944, in CA.

Fiddler Byron Berline mixes bluegrass, Western swing, old-time, and Texas-style fiddling into his style. He's worked as a regular member of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys, Country Gazette, Sundance, Berline-Crary-Hickman, and that band's successor, California. One of the most in-demand fiddlers in the world, Berline has recorded with Monroe, the Dillards, Vince Gill, Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, the Eagles, and others.

what to buy: Bluegrass, Western swing, country, rock, and a little Cajun mix on *Fiddle & a Song* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Byron Berline), an album worth buying just for "Sally Goodin," on which Bill Monroe and Earl Scruggs play together for the first time since 1948. Old Sundance bandmate Vince Gill sings Monroe's "Rose of Old Kentucky."

what to buy next: *Jumpin' the Strings* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990, prod. Byron Berline), an amazing collection of 21 original fiddle tunes, is a showcase for Berline's writing skills and his mastery of a wide range of fiddle styles.

the rest:

(With Dan Crary and John Hickman) *Night Run* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1984)
(With John Hickman) *Double Trouble* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1986/1995)
(With Dan Crary and John Hickman) *B-C-H* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1987)
(With Dan Crary and John Hickman) *Now They Are Four* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
(With California) *Traveler* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ Country Gazette, Bill Monroe

▶▶ Laurel Canyon Ramblers, Jason Carter, Stuart Duncan

see also: *Dan Crary*

Douglas Fulmer

Berline-Crary-Hickman/BCH

See: Dan Crary, Byron Berline

Dan Bern

Born in Mt. Vernon, IA.

Like most of those anointed "the new Bob Dylan," Dan Bern didn't seek that designation. If anything, he prefers another designation: Messiah. He says so right there in his song, "Jerusalem." In it, he sings about how he wanted to wait awhile before announcing his status, to build up the suspense a little, but it came out anyway, and hey, it's a relief that everybody knows. It's a weight off his shoulders. As his analyst, Dr. Mandelbaum, said it would be. Get the idea that Dan Bern isn't exactly the most morose of songwriters? Oh, he'll deliver a love-gone-wrong song with the best of 'em, but there's always a twist—always a uniquely Bern take on the labors of love, life, and, well, labor. He's got just two discs out, a self-titled release and an EP, *Dog Boy Van*, but both are must-haves for anyone who calls him or herself a fan of iconoclastic, harmonica- and guitar-wielding folkies who point slings and arrows at the ironies of our times while embracing the best traditions of those who came before.

what's available: It's no accident that Plotkin produced *Dan Bern* ♪♪♪♪½ (WORK/Sony, 1997, prod. Chuck Plotkin); he's also known for helming the work of another "new Dylan"—Bruce Springsteen—as well as Bob himself. Clever, witty, and at times sweet and heartfelt, this collection of tunes is highlighted by "Jerusalem," "I'm Not the Guy," "Marilyn," "King of the World" . . . heck, just listen to the whole thing. Bern also earned big raves for *Dog Boy Van* ♪♪♪♪ (WORK/Sony, 1997, prod. Chuck Plotkin). First released in 1996 as a teaser for his full album, this disc was reissued in late '97 by popular demand. It has only six songs, but they're beauts, from the laugh-out-loud sardonicism of "Talkin' Alien Abduction Blues" to the poignant reflectiveness of "Oklahoma" (about the deadly terrorist blast) and the semi-angry, semi-sad ode "Kurt" (about a certain prematurely deceased rock star).

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Loudon Wainwright III, John Prine, John Hiatt, Woody Guthrie, Arlo Guthrie, Bruce Springsteen, Tom Waits, Elvis Costello, Ani DiFranco

Lynne Margolis

Cindy Lee Berryhill

Born in Los Angeles, CA.

Originally running with the post-punk folk crowd that included

Kirk Kelly and Roger Manning, San Diego–based Berryhill was one of the first new acts signed by the reissue kingpin Rhino Records in the late '80s. A precocious teenager, Berryhill grew up with an affection for performing music (she once played in a punk band called the Stoopuds) and documenting her deepest thoughts and strongest opinions in her journal. As a result, her first two albums were driven by attitude and backhanded feminist statements ("Damn, I Wish I Was a Man," "Baby, Should I Have the Baby?") and were overloaded with yippie-skippy, Beat-poetry earmarks. In 1990, frustrated with the commercial indifference to her work, Berryhill temporarily relocated to Taos, New Mexico. There she cleared her mind, delved back into her journal, and reinvented herself; she came up with a broader sound and more playful outlook by following Alejandro Escovedo's chamber-rock lead, enhancing her swooping soprano with a swirling mix of cellos, tympani, violins, vibraphones, and offbeat percussion.

what to buy: *Garage Orchestra* ♪♪♪♪ (Cargo, 1994, prod. Cindy Lee Berryhill, Michael Harris)—boasting such engaging numbers as "I Wonder Why," "Song for Brian" (a love letter to Brian Wilson), and "UFO Suite"—dabbles in avant-garde dissonance but mostly demonstrates the tasteful, textural range that strings can bring to pop music.

what to buy next: *Straight Outta Marysville* ♪♪♪½ (Cargo, 1996, prod. Cindy Lee Berryhill, Michael Harris) finds her striking the perfect balance between the daring textures of *Garage Orchestra* and her earlier folk sound on such quirky tracks as "Just Like Me," "High Jump," and a funky cover of Donovan's "Season of the Witch."

the rest:
Cindy Lee Berryhill ♪♪ (Rhino, 1987)
Naked Movie Star ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1989)

influences:
◀◀ Jack Kerouac, Patti Smith, Jonathan Richman
▶▶ Brenda Kahn, Jane Gillman, Dar Williams

David Okamoto

Lou and Peter Berryman

Formed 1975, in Madison, WI.

Lou Berryman (born January 30, 1947, in Appleton, WI), vocals, accordion; Peter Berryman (born April 7, 1947, in Philadelphia, PA), vocals, 12-string guitar.

The professional accomplishments of Lou and Peter Berryman are numerous, not the least of which is continuing to produce original, highly creative music following their divorce in 1974. The honeymoon is over and both are remarried, but the musical chemistry only gets better with time. The Berrymans offer refreshing observations on the human condition in a style blending folk music with musical comedy. And they manage to translate it all into hilarious songs that have become folk classics, including "Double Yodel," "The F-word Song," "Your State's Name Here," and "Cow Imagination." The humor draws on Lou's gifts as a melody writer, accordion player, and vocal comedienne, as well as Peter's guitar and vocal skills and extraordinary lyric writing. And to match that, they have successfully self-produced and marketed their own record label since 1974 (with the exception of a brief stint in 1982). While some listeners may initially find the Berrymans' vocal style and lyrical content trite, few can resist laughing out loud by the middle of the second song: this stuff grows on you.

what to buy: As Lou and Peter's wit sharpens with age, their tenth and latest CD *Double Yodel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1995, prod. Lou and Peter Berryman) is not surprisingly a peach. Their subjects are extrapolations of some of the preciously mundane topics of everyday life, inspired by recipes ("Orange Cocoa Cake"), house ads ("New Listing"), endless winters ("Pushing Spring"), and, well, even performing music ("Every Week"). Their wordplay is clever throughout, including the beating of a canine metaphor into the ground in "The Dog of Time." And a gentle contrast is provided with "Comes to Mind," a song of child-like wonder. The recording, which features just Lou and Peter without any accompanying musicians, provides a taste of the Berrymans' enchanting concert presence. Witty, innovative, skewed—*Double Yodel* is required listening.

what to buy next: *What, Again?!* ♪♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1993, prod. Lou and Peter Berryman) is a nifty set of re-recordings of Lou and Peter's hits from the vinyl years. "Squalor" is dedicated to the fact that Hostess Twinkies have a shelf life of 27 years. "Play It Again" parodies songs like "Hey Jude" that seem to go on forever despite scant lyrical content. "Classified Rag" is dedicated to an ad seen in a laundromat: "Roommate wanted. Prefer Christian, but will accept non-smoker." "A Chat with Your Mother" (casually "The F-word Song") is described by Pete Seeger as "one of the great American folk songs of the twentieth century." And "Your State's Name Here" generically declares "No sky could be deeper, no water so clear, as back in the meadows of Your State's Name Here." These two delight-

5/8 *big blow and the bushwackers*

fully twisted imaginations continue in full bloom with *Cow Imagination* ♪♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1990, prod. Lou and Peter Berryman). Peter coined the lyrics to "Spring Chicken" on his birthday, insisting the aging process has not yet caught up with him. "Gilda Gray" glamorizes Wisconsin through its famous inventor of the shimmy. "Pass the Pepper" features a long-time couple in a routine dinner conversation—each self absorbed and not listening to the other. "Handyman" is ironically dedicated to all whose ideal mate would be a great fixer-upper. *We Don't Talk about That!* ♪♪♪½ (Cornbelt Records, 1992, prod. Lou and Peter Berryman) presents a solid collection of originals, showcasing the artists' ascent toward their prime. The title track lampoons the baby boomers' fascination with dysfunctional family issues: "I asked my folks the other day what my shrink asked me—am I the only nut on the family tree? They said you go tell that shrink . . . that we're all sane and you became a nut all by yourself." The Berrymans also show wit in handling the male sports ego ("Here's Louie with the Sports") and the standard mid-sized city's answer to urban decay ("A Convention Center"). "Hard Work and Perseverance" presents a joke that Pete Seeger reportedly stole from Carl Sandburg. The liner notes apologize for the necessity of misspelling the lyrics in order to condense them into the confined space of a CD insert.

what to avoid: *No Relation* ♪♪½ (Cornbelt Records, 1980, prod. Lou and Peter Berryman) is currently available in cassette only. Every mediocre collection has one gem—but in this case the precious "Squalor" reappears on their greatest-vinyl-hits collection *What, Again?!* So there's really no reason to pick up *No Relation*, not unless you'd like to risk offending a family member with "Are You Drinkin' with Me Jesus?"

the rest:
Cupid's Trash Truck ♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1981)
So Comfortable ♪♪♪½ (Cornbelt Records, 1984) (cassette only)
February March ♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1986) (cassette only)
Forward Hey ♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1988) (cassette only)
Your State's Name Here ♪♪♪ (Cornbelt Records, 1988) (cassette only)

influences:
◀◀ Memphis Jug Band, Kweskin Jug Band, Pete Seeger, Leadbelly, Tom Waits, Roger Miller, the Beatles
▶▶ Michael Cooney, Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, Claudia Schmidt, the Chenille Sisters, Sally Rogers, Anne Hills, Garrison Keillor

Art Wojtowicz

Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Formed 1993, in Salisbury, MD.

Don Plehn, vocals, accordion, harmonica, trombone, Mister Thing, Funky Diva ektar; Tim Whittemore, vocals, didgeridoo, tuba, recycle bin; Ted Porter, vocals, mandolin, mandola, banjo-mandolin, crumhorn, dahkla, pennywhistle, flute, gobichand, melodica; Ted Watkin, vocals and voice effects, tenor sax, harmonica, musical saw, steel drum, flopophone, percussion, bones, rain stick, jingle beads, chicken shake, steel drum; Mick Haensler, doumbek, congas, percussion, bodhrán.

Some spell it didgeridoo, some spell it didjiridu. It's that long tube that drones and clicks, and for a long time in the U.S. it's been confined mostly to Australian restaurant ads. Maryland's Big Blow and the Bushwackers use the ancient Australian instrument in clever, eclectic arrangements. They straddle the line between serious music and novelty act, but ambitious efforts like their Celtic album suggest they're more than just a sideshow.

what's available: *Habagoula* ♪♪♪ (Wedgie, 1995) contains mostly original songs and tunes played on a variety of instruments (including something called a Funky Diva ektar). *Off Kilter: A Celtic Outerlude* ♪♪♪½ (Wedgie, 1997, prod. Ted Porter) is a collection of English and Celtic songs and tunes with inventive, didge-based arrangements. The didge works surprisingly well in Celtic settings; it's not that different from a bagpipe drone. "Jug of Punch" is a highlight.

influences:
◀◀ The Billys, the Chieftains, They Might Be Giants

Pamela Murray Winters

Theodore "Theo" Bikel

Born March 2, 1924, in Vienna, Austria.

With a treasure-trove of folksongs and a mastery of 11 languages, Theodore "Theo" Bikel was one of the originators of "world music." A world-renowned actor, Bikel made his deep voice and benevolent bear-like presence felt in such classic films as *The African Queen, Moulin Rouge, A Day to Remember, The Pride and Passion,* and *The Defiant Ones,* for which he was nominated for an Academy award as best supporting actor in 1958. The following year he had the lead role in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music.* The cast album, released by Columbia, sold millions of copies. One of folk music's most eclectic performers, Bikel signed with Elektra in the mid-1950s and recorded such thematic albums as *From Bondage to Free-*

dom, *Yiddish Theater and Folk Songs*, *Songs of the Russian Gypsy*, and *Folk Songs from Just about Everywhere*. Bikel's debut solo concert at New York's Town Hall on October 5, 1958 was subsequently released as *Bravo Bikel*. A native of Austria, Bikel moved with his family to Palestine in 1938. After learning to speak English in hopes of becoming a linguist, and working on a collective farm, he became involved with the Habimah Theater in Tel Aviv and helped to organize the Tel Aviv Chamber Theater in 1943. He continued to refine his acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London and made his professional debut in a European production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Moving to New York, in 1955, he continued to find memorable roles in movies and plays through the 1960s and 1970s, touring with such shows as *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, *The Rothschilds*, *The Good Doctor*, and *Zorba*. The president of Actors Equity from 1973 to 1982, Bikel was appointed to the National Council for the Arts in 1977.

what to buy: Bikel's performance as Baron Von Trapp on the cast album *The Sound of Music* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1960) is one reason why Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical was one of the most successful shows in Broadway's history.

what to buy next: *Best of Theodore Bikel* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1962) includes cuts from Bikel's earlier albums and showcases his full-bodied vocals and diverse repertoire.

the rest:
Actor's Holiday ♪♪ (Elektra, 1956)
Folk Songs from Just about Everywhere ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1959)
Bravo Bikel ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1959)
From Bondage to Freedom ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1961)
On Tour ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1962)
Folksinger's Choice ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1964)
Yiddish Theater & Folk Songs ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1965/Bainbridge, 1991)
Folk Songs of Israel ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966)
Songs of the Russian Gypsy ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1967)
New Day ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1969)

influences:
◀◀ Leadbelly, Burl Ives, Pete Seeger
▶▶ Oscar Brand, Will Ackerman

Craig Harris

The Bing Brothers

Formed 1975, in Huntington, WV.

Mike Bing, mandolin, vocals; Tim Bing, old-time banjo, vocals; Dave Bing, fiddle, vocals (1975–1996); Greg Gibson, bass (1975–1994); Joey Broughman, guitar (1975–1978); Joe Roberts, bluegrass banjo (1975–1978); Pat Mullarky, guitar (1978–1981); Dan Wilson, bluegrass banjo (1977–1978); John Blisard, bass, old-time banjo (1994–1996); Roger Cooper, fiddle (1996–present); Danny Arthur, guitar, vocals (1981–1997).

The Bing Brothers originally consisted of the brothers—Mike, Tim, and Dave—and friends Greg Gibson, Joey Broughman, and Joe Roberts. They played regularly at several Huntington venues, such as the Circle Grill, and established themselves as one of West Virginia's finest traditional bands. As the years passed, some band members dropped out and were replaced by other friends who shared their love of traditional music with a bluegrass flair. They toured in Canada in 1979 and in Ireland in 1994. Although they live in different parts of the state, they remain active playing local concerts and teaching at various music camps. In 1997 they organized and conducted a new music camp at Snowshoe Resort in Pocahontas County, dedicated to the traditional music of West Virginia.

what's available: The band's only CD to date is *Just for the Sake of It* ♪♪♪♪ (JMP Productions, 1993, prod. Jim Martin). At the time of this recording, the band consisted of the three Bing brothers, Greg Gibson, and Danny Arthur. Despite the lack at that time of a bluegrass banjo player, the characteristic Bing Brothers sound—traditional string-band music with shades of bluegrass—comes across loud and clear. This comes partly from the mandolin, as on "Sugar in the Gourd," and partly from the tight vocal harmonies, as on "Cruel Willie." These guys are all superb musicians, and the sound of the band is clean and tight. On "Birdie," learned from the playing of Ohio fiddler Jim Wheeler, Dave's fiddle is smooth and fluid, Mike's mandolin is precise and letter-perfect, and the banjo, guitar, and bass are as steady as the proverbial rock. Tim Bing's banjo playing has a crispness to it that makes you think he's playing with finger picks—he's not, it's clawhammer (a style that employs the thumb and one or more fingers), and it's as good as you're likely to hear. The well-known West Virginia piece "Big Scioty" is done here in a version that ought to be used as a model for aspiring old-time musicians. This band plays high-energy, hard-driving pieces and slower ones equally well. For an old-time band to have stayed together for this long, and through this many personnel changes, is unusual; and to have retained their orientation and characteristic sound as well as they have is truly remarkable. As with all JMP recordings, the sound quality is excellent. This disc might be hard to find in record stores but is available from JMP Productions, PO Box 152, St. Albans, WV 25177.

influences:

- Sherman Hammons, Burl Hammons, Jim Wheeler, Junior Ruggles, Boo Boo Ramey
- Skeeter and the Skidmarks

see also: *Dave Bing*

Dave Shombert

Dave Bing

Born May 5, 1955, in Huntington, WV.

Dave Bing is a native West Virginia musician who grew up immersed in the traditional music of that state. He started playing guitar at age 6 and by his late teens had added the fiddle and banjo. With brothers Mike and Tim he spent many days and weeks with the legendary Hammons family, particularly Sherman and Burl Hammons. The three brothers and a couple of friends formed an old-time string band, the Bing Brothers, in 1975. Their popularity spread quickly from Huntington to the rest of West Virginia, then to the rest of the country. Along the way, Dave's fiddling developed under the influence of other West Virginia fiddlers such as Glen Smith and George Steele. Now retired from the Bing Brothers band, Dave lives a rural life with his wife and daughters in Roane County. Well known for his patient teaching style with beginning fiddlers, he is a regular at music camps and workshops throughout West Virginia.

what's available: The CD *Dave Bing* ♪♪♪♪♪ (JMP Records, 1997, prod. Jim Martin) is a compilation of material issued previously on two cassettes, *Family and Friends* and *Fiddlin' Solo*, both also produced by Jim Martin. You get a lot of music on this disc—29 tunes totaling more than 70 minutes—but it isn't just a Dave Bing recording. The recording *Family and Friends* was so named because it consists of Dave Bing's sweet fiddling with the able assistance of family members (brothers Mike and Tim play mandolin and banjo, respectively), and several musician friends. These include Robin Kessinger (guitar), Alan Freeman (mountain dulcimer), Diane Jones (banjo), and several others. The *Fiddlin' Solo* tape was just that, and Dave has many tunes in his repertoire that are best as solos. An example of that, and one of the highlights of this disc, is the Hammons family tune "Star of Bethlehem," a hauntingly beautiful slow air. This is mountain music born of mountain life—a mix of beauty, sadness, mystery, and a few other emotions. All of that feeling comes through in Dave's playing, especially on this particular tune. There are several old-time standards on this disc, and they're rejuvenated by the Dave Bing touch; "Sandy River Belles" and "June Apple" stand out. The disc also includes West Virginia poet Kirk Judd reciting some of his poems with musical accompaniment. Kirk, a longtime family friend of the Bings, also spent much time with the Hammons family, and two of the poems are about Sherman Hammons. Sherman is long gone, and his way of life is fading fast; this combination of poetry and music gives a glimpse of it to those of us who missed it. If you want to hear one of the best in West Virginia traditional music, this disc is for you. It might be hard to find in music stores, but it can be ordered from JMP Productions, PO Box 152, St. Albans, WV 25177.

worth searching for: You can also hear Bing's fiddling, along with a couple of other Mountain State musicians, on a cassette release by banjo player Ron Mullenex, *Sugar in My Coffee* ♪♪♪♪ (JMP Records, 1997, prod. Jim Martin). Ron is also a West Virginia native who grew up with the traditional music of the state. Primarily known as a banjo player, he plays a few solo pieces on this tape and is joined by Dave Bing, fiddler Gerry Milnes, and guitarist/banjo player Mark Payne. These four also play as the band named Gandydancer, but this tape focuses on Mullenex. One of the highlights is Bing and Mullenex playing a decidedly different version of the well-worn "Turkey in the Straw."

influences:

- Sherman Hammons, Burl Hammons, Jim Wheeler, Junior Ruggles, George Steele
- Roger Cooper and too many aspiring old-time fiddlers to count

see also: *The Bing Brothers*

Dave Shombert

Tony Bird

Born February 18, 1945, in Malawi, Africa.

The traditional music and environmental setting of southern Africa has been combined with western influences by Malawi-born white African Tony Bird. His songs have successfully alternated between exposés of African racism and celebrations of a childhood spent amongst monkeys and mango trees. Recorded while he was still living in Africa, Bird's first two albums, *Tony Bird* and *Bird of Paradise*, predated Paul Simon's more commercial attempts at incorporating Africa's music by more than a decade. Despite a 16-year struggle with muscular paralysis, Bird, who moved to New York in 1979, has continued to perform in folk music coffeehouses throughout the world. His 1991 album, *Sorry Africa*, featured musicians from Simon's *Grace-*

land sessions. Bird has been working on a follow-up recording, *Precious Africa*, for more than four years. Initially intended as an acoustic project, the album has expanded into a full-band recording with background vocals furnished by Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

what to buy: *Sorry Africa* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Morris Goldberg, Tony Bird) is one of the all-time classic albums, capturing the scenic vision and lifestyle of Bird's homeland. With musicians from Paul Simon's *Graceland* sessions blending African and Western musical influences, Bird recalls the struggles and joys of his youth. A personal view of racism is hauntingly expressed in the ballad, "Ahalone Incident," which tells of being stranded at night in a Black township in South Africa, while the title track is an apology for apathy. "Mango Time" and "Rift Valley" offer more optimistic recollections of the dark continent.

what to buy next: Predating Paul Simon's *Graceland* by a decade, *Bird of Paradise* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1978, prod. Tony Bird) looks back fondly at the Africa of Bird's youth with tunes including "Zambezi Zimbabwe," "There's a Bright Dawn," "The Cape of Flowers," and "The Mynah Birds." "Black Brother" is a chilling indictment of apartheid.

the rest:
Tony Bird ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974)

influences:
◀◀ Hugh Masakela, Johnny Clegg
▶▶ Paul Simon

Craig Harris

editor's choice
13 celtic fiddle albums

Michael Coleman, *Michael Coleman* (Gael Linn)
Kevin Burke, *If the Cap Fits* (Mulligan)
John Doherty, *The Floating Bow* (Claddagh)
Frankie Gavin, *Frankie Gavin & Alec Finn* (Shanachie)
Liz Carroll, *Liz Carroll* (Green Linnet)
Tommy Peoples, *The Iron Man* (Shanachie)
John Carty, *John Carty* (Shanachie)
James Kelly, *Traditional Irish Music* (Capelhouse)
Martin Hayes, *Under the Moon* (Green Linnet)
Various Artists, *My Love Is in America—The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival* (Green Linnet)
Various Artists, *Milestone at the Garden* (Rounder)
Bonnie Rideout, *Kindred Spirits* (Maggie's Music)
Alasdair Fraser, *The Driven Bow* (Culburnie)

Joni Bishop

Born in NC.

Nashville-based folksinger Joni Bishop came to folk only after a career in country failed. She briefly had a country deal with CBS Records and she recorded a Billy Sherrill–produced single that charted, but just barely. She remained in Nashville after her record deal fell apart, becoming a regular in the town's songwriter clubs. She later won a New Folk Award at the Kerrville Folk Festival. The daughter of Latvian immigrants, Bishop speaks four languages and often tours Europe, where her albums *Everyday Miracles* and *Endless Threads* were released before she signed with Utah-based BWE Entertainment in 1996.

what to buy: Bishop likes to take individual details and weave them together into a larger, more universal picture. That's the theme of nearly every song on *Threads* ♪♪♪ (BWE, 1997, prod. Joni Bishop), which can be summed up with one line from the title track: "Will the pieces make a pattern when you gather up all those threads?" More often than not, the answer is yes.

what to buy next: Recorded independently in 1995 and released by BWE a year later in the U.S., *Everyday Miracles* ♪♪♪ (BWE, 1995/1996, prod. Joni Bishop) doesn't have quite the full country band sound that *Threads* does, but a four-piece band that includes violinist Tammy Rogers and former Lone Justice drummer Don Heffington does a good job fleshing out Bishop's tunes.

the rest:
Endless Christmas ♪♪ (BWE, 1995/1996)

influences:
◀◀ Crow Johnson

Brian Mansfield

Black 47

Formed 1989, in New York, NY.

Larry Kirwan, guitar, keyboards, percussion, lead vocals; Chris Byrne, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, bodhrán, vocals; Fred Parcells, trombone, tin whistle, vocals; Geoffrey Blythe, saxaphone, clarinet; Thomas Hamlin, drums, percussion; Andrew Goodsight, bass (1995–present); Kevin Jenkins, bass (1993–1995), David Conrad, bass (1985–1993).

Black 47 is an Irish-American band combining the attitude of the Big Apple with the pride of Ireland. Essentially an extremely rowdy bar band in the best sense, Black 47 is so named for the peak year of the Irish famine during the nineteenth century. Larry Kirwan, erstwhile playwright hailing from the Emerald Island, and Chris Byrne, a New York City cop with a passion for Irish traditional, rap, and punk music, shared several pints at the hole-in-the-wall Paddy Reilly's while complaining about the dismal state of modern music. At some point that evening, Black 47 was born, and soon thereafter Paddy Reilly's became the band's home. Kirwin and company's reputation for original music and a confrontational attitude soon attracted a loyal following in the city. Kirwin's songs, crowded with lyrics and ecstatic horn arrangements, tend toward the rousing anthem as the band wails like a Memphis soul band trapped in the body of an Irish folk singer. The band's first recording was a self-produced independent release that was basically sold by hand as the band toured Irish hot spots around the country, always landing back at Paddy's. After catching the band one evening, Ric Ocasek volunteered to polish that first album, and *Fire of Freedom* was completed in a mere three weeks. The CD caught the attention of the New York media, and soon the band found itself a rising star, while still fulfilling its dates at Paddy's. Jerry Harrison arrived for production duty on the second album, and appearances on *The Tonight Show* and other national media soon led to more widespread recognition. Still a regular at Paddy's, Black 47 recently released their third major label album.

what to buy: The first release is the essential Black 47 album. *Fire of Freedom* ♪♪♪ (SBK Records, 1992, prod. Ric Ocasek, Larry Kirwin) is Celtic to its core, while still strongly suggesting the band's American roots. Songs range from the swing of "Funky Ceili" to the rabble rousing pint raising of "James Connelly." While the production seems a bit crowded and thin, the band's exuberant personality is well captured. The independent label version of this album, eponymously titled, contains a slightly different song list. An EP version of the SBK album also is available, with a selection of songs from both versions of the first release.

what to buy next: *Green Suede Shoes* ♪♪♪ (SBK Records, 1996, prod. Larry Kirwin) returns to the band's pub roots, supplying a sweaty, passionate sound supporting the usual free-the-Irish-or-we'll-really-bang-on-the-bodhrán anthems (e.g. "Bobby Sands MP").

the rest:

Home of the Brave ♪♪ (SBK Records, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ The Pogues, Enemy Orchard, Them, Bruce Springsteen, Booker T. & the MG's

▶▶ Goats Don't Shave

Martin Connors

The Black Family /Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Formed 1965, in Dublin, Ireland.

Mary Black, vocals; Shay Black, vocals, guitar, piano, synthesizer; Michael Black, vocals, tenor banjo, guitar; Martin Black, vocals, fiddle, bouzouki, tenor banjo; Frances Black, vocals.

Hailing from Dublin, the Black Family ranks with the "Clannad/Enya" Brennans on the scale of Ireland's most successful musical clans. As kids, Mary, Shay, Martin, and Michael Black absorbed music from their household. Their father was a fiddle player from Rathlin Island off the coast of Antrim, and their mother was a Dublin-born singer of traditional and music hall songs. Although both parents were amateur musicians, they played and sang with passion, and they passed that passion on to their children. In their teen years, the four Black siblings played together around Dublin, but their family act was broken up in 1977, when Mary went professional with the group Terrace. Terrace later changed their name to General Humbert, and recorded two albums that are now out of print. Mary Black's career took her from General Humbert to De Danann, one of Ireland's top traditional bands, in 1983. In 1986, after several albums with De Danann, she left the band. As she embarked on an extremely successful solo career, Mary also took the opportunity to revive the family group, with an album and a tour. For this version of the Black Family, Mary's youngest sibling, Frances, also participated. By 1989, Mary Black's solo career was moving fast: she was a household name in Ireland, and too busy to play with the family group. The Black Family continued as a quartet: Shay, Michael, Martin, and Frances,

who recorded the second Black Family album with harmony vocals and production assistance from Mary. Frances's initial success with the Black Family led her to a gig with the traditional folk group, Arcady, a track on the best-selling compilation, *A Woman's Heart*, and ultimately to her own successful solo career. By 1995, she, too, was a household name in Ireland, with big-selling albums and sold-out tours under her belt. Still, both she and Mary found time to contribute harmony vocals to the 1995 album of Shay, Michael, and Martin Black, the trio that remained of the Black Family. These days, Michael and Shay Black live in the San Francisco area while their three siblings remain in Ireland. The family rarely gets a chance to sing together anymore, though all five siblings did come together for a reunion concert at Milwaukee's famed Irish Fest in the summer of 1997, to raise money to restore the house on Rathlin island where their father was born.

what to buy: *The Black Family* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dara, 1986, prod. Declan Sinnott) was the group's debut, and it is a truly terrific album. It features a variety of different songs, from ballads to Bob Dylan, from sea chanteys to sweet love songs, and from political commentary to Victorian music-hall silliness. The songs on which Mary takes lead vocals show why she's the most famous singer of the lot; "James Connolly" and "Will Ye Gang, Love" are exactly the kind of achy-breaky songs she excels at, and she nails both of them beautifully. Frances's songs are cast in a similar vein, sad and full of longing. The men, on the other hand, sing energetic sea chanteys and music-hall songs along with a few sad numbers like Michael's "Broom of the Cowdenknowes." Musical accompaniment is provided by the Black brothers, as well as by members of Mary's touring band.

what to buy next: *What a Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Dara, 1995, prod. Maire Breatnach) is the first recording credited to the trio of Shay, Michael, and Martin Black. It's about a fifty-fifty mix of traditional material and contemporary songs by Jez Lowe, Ron Kavana, Kieran Goss, Bob Franke, and other writers. As an added attraction, their mother Patty sings lead on one silly music-hall ditty, in which a young woman's boyfriend dumps her for her widowed mother; the song's title is the bitter observation, "Now I Have to Call Him Father." A lot of the traditional songs, in fact, are anonymous pieces of amusing doggerel from the Victorian music-hall stage, performed with audible good humor by the Blacks. The contemporary songs deal with Ireland's past and present, but also with the universal theme of love: long-distance love, true love, and the fear of losing love. The Black boys' sharp nasal voices suit most of these songs quite well, especially the working-class tough-guy tunes "Down Our Street," "London Danny," and "The Recruiting Sergeant." The instrumental backing is by the Blacks, with Maire Breatnach on fiddle, Mairtin O'Connor on accordion, Noel Eccles on percussion, and others. The singing and arrangements are full of ebullient energy, making this a fun listen. *Time for Touching Home* ♪♪♪ (Dara, 1989, prod. Declan Sinnott, Mary Black) was recorded by the quartet of Shay, Michael, Martin, and Frances, with harmony vocals and production assistance by Mary. It features a panoply of contemporary folk from Irish, North American, and British songwriters, including Nanci Griffith, Jimmy McCarthy, Jez Lowe, Leon Rosselson, Stan Rogers, and Dougie MacClean. In this it marks a shift away from older traditional material, but also includes a few old sea chanteys and a version of "Peat Bog Soldiers" from the Irish tradition. The backing ensemble includes such prominent Irish traditional musicians as Maire Breatnach (fiddle) and Peter Brown (uilleann pipes), along with the Black brothers and members of Mary's band. All the arrangements are tastefully done, and the voices, as always, shine.

influences:

◀◀ Nanci Griffith, Jez Lowe, Ron Kavana

▶▶ Mary Black, Frances Black

see also: *Mary Black, Arcady*

Steve Winick

Frances Black

See: Arcady

Mary Black

Born May 22, 1955, in Ireland.

Singing in an emotionally rich soprano brogue, Mary Black is one of the preeminent Irish vocalists. A member of General Humbert in the 1970s and De Danann in the 1980s, and a soloist since, Black has successfully bridged the musical traditions of her native country and the lyrical poetics of modern singer-songwriters. Black grew up surrounded by music. Her father, who hailed from a small island off the northern coast of Ireland, played fiddle, while her mother sang in the music halls of Dublin. Taught to sing folk songs at the age of eight by a brother, she sang with her four siblings in small taverns in Dublin. After recording two albums with the tradition-rooted Irish band General Humbert, Black recorded a self-titled debut album in 1982. Produced by Declan Sinnott, the album reached number four on the Irish music charts. Joining one of Ireland's most successful bands, De Danann, she performed in the

United States and sang (along with Maura O'Connell) with the band for three years, recording several albums, including *Anthem*, winner of an award for "Irish album of 1983." Black balanced her collaborations with De Danann with her own work. She released the solo albums *Collected* and *Without the Fanfare* in 1984 and 1985. Shortly after being named "Irish entertainer of 1986," she left the band to concentrate on her own career. Her solo album, *By the Time It Gets Dark*, attained multi-platinum status and she was voted "Ireland's best female artist of 1987 and 1988." Her album *No Frontiers* remained on the Irish top 30 charts for more than a year, while *Babes in the Woods* spent six months on the United States Adult Alternative charts in 1989. In 1993 *The Holy Ground* was voted "Best Irish album of the year" and Black expanded her following with several cuts on the million-selling showcase of female Celtic singers, *A Woman's Heart*. In the spring of 1995 Black joined Joan Baez at the Bottom Line to record duet versions of "Ring Them Bells" and "Song for Ireland" for Baez's album *Ring Them Bells*. Black also helped produce and sing back-up on several albums recorded by the Black Family.

what to buy: On *Babes in the Woods* ♪♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1991, prod. Declan Sennott), Black turns songs by Richard Thompson ("Dimming of the Day"), Joni Mitchell ("Urge for Going"), and Noel Brazil ("Golden Mile," "Might As Well Be a Slave," and the title track) into very personal statements.

what to buy next: *Collected* ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1984, prod. Declan Sinnott) spotlights Black's ability to make traditional Irish tunes, including "She Moved through the Fair," sound contemporary.

the rest:
(With General Humbert) *Dolphin* ♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1975)
(With General Humbert) *II* ♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1978)
Mary Black ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1982)
Without the Fanfare ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1985)
By the Time It Gets Dark ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1987)
No Frontiers ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1989)
The Holy Ground ♪♪♪ (Gifthorse, 1993)
Circus ♪♪♪ (Grapevine, 1995)
Looking Back ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1995)
Shine ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Sandy Denny, Billie Holiday, Bonnie Raitt
▶▶ Maura O'Connell, Triona Ni Domhnaill, Nanci Griffith

see also: *De Danann, the Black Family*

Craig Harris

Blackie and the Rodeo Kings

See: Stephen Fearing

Becky Blackley

Born June 10, 1947, in Long Island, NY.

According to *FRETS Magazine*, "Becky Blackley has been as closely identified with the autoharp as Julia Child with French cooking." Her interest in the performing arts started at age five when she made her television debut as a member of the "peanut gallery" on the *Howdy Doody Show.* In 1980 she founded *The Autoharpoholic* magazine, the first international autoharp publication, and subsequently published *The Autoharp Book,* the only comprehensive history of the first 100 years of the instrument. Her teaching and publishing credits have made her, along with Maybelle Carter, Bryan Bowers, and Mike Seeger, one of the instrument's seminal champions and a major reason for what *Bluegrass Unlimited* calls "the newfound respectability of the autoharp." She was inducted into the Autoharp Hall of Fame in 1996.

what's available: *Gathering the Harvest* ♪♪♪♪ (San Bruno, 1995, prod. David Maloney, Becky Blackley) is Blackley's only CD release to date, but it is an excellent—and at 60 minutes long, very generous—mixture of contemporary songs by the likes of Hazel Dickens, Hugh Moffat, Lori Holland, Dolly Parton, and Jimmy Buffett, combined with a sampling of traditional and original material. Producer David Maloney adds guitar and vocals and there are guest appearances by musicians such as Sally Van Meter on dobro—but Blackley's autoharp playing is out front.

worth searching for: *The Flower of Loudoun County* ♪♪♪ (San Bruno, 1986, prod. Becky Blackley), available only on LP, is Blackley's first album; it spotlights her fine autoharp playing and is available from i.a.d. productions, P.O. Box 504, Brisbane, CA 94005.

influences:
◀◀ Maybelle Carter, Mike Seeger, Harvey Reid
▶▶ Julie Davis, Karen Mueller

Neal Walters

Norman Blake /Norman & Nancy Blake /Norman Blake & Tony Rice

Born March 10, 1938, in Chattanooga, TN.

Norman Blake is a singer-songwriter who also happens to be

a talented multi-instrumentalist. Blake plays mandolin, mandola, fiddle, viola, and dobro, but he is especially well known for his prowess as a flat-picking acoustic guitarist in the Doc Watson vein. He began playing guitar at the age of 11, and by the time he was 16, he was performing with the Dixieland Drifters, who appeared on radio stations in Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tennessee, and on television in Rome, Georgia. In 1960, Blake got a steady gig as a member of June Carter's touring band. That same year he also played dobro and mandolin for Hylo Brown on the WWVA Wheeling Jamboree in West Virginia before moving to Nashville. After a brief stint in the military between 1961 and 1963, Blake became friends with country music legend Johnny Cash and subsequently became the Man in Black's guitar picker of choice in dozens of his recordings. The two musicians hit it off extremely well, and in 1969, Blake landed a job as Cash's house band guitarist on the singer's weekly television series on ABC. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Blake also became a much sought-after session musician, and his trademark flatpicking adorned recordings by Bob Dylan (*Nashville Skyline*), Kris Kristofferson, John Hartford (the classic *Aereo Plain*), and Joan Baez (the 1970 hit single "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down"). In 1971, Blake returned to his bluegrass roots and became John Hartford's road and studio guitarist. The following year he teamed up with a host of Nashville notables to lend support to the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band in the recording of their landmark triple album project, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*. In 1974 Blake embarked on a solo career with the recording of *Back Home in Sulphur Springs*. Subsequent solo recordings on the Rounder, Flying Fish, and Shanachie labels continued to showcase his flair for lightning-fast flatpicking coupled with syncopated rhythms. Through the years, Blake has also recorded a number of albums with his wife, Nancy, who is also an accomplished multi-instrumentalist and a master of the cello, mandolin, guitar, bass, fiddle, and accordion.

what to buy: *Whiskey before Breakfast* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976, prod. Norman Blake) is really a duo album that features guitarist Charlie Collins.

what to buy next: *The Norman and Nancy Blake Compact Disc* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986, prod. Norman Blake) teams the super picker with his wife Nancy on cello and mandolin. Blake and Tony Rice's *Blake & Rice* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Norman Blake) is a guitar player's delight, as Blake exchanges runs, fills, and riffs with Rice, another super picker from the Doc Watson/Clarence White school.

the rest:
Back Home in Sulphur Springs ♪♪ (Rounder, 1974/1995)
Full Moon on the Farm ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1981)
Original Underground Music from the Mysterious South ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1983)
Nashville Blues ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
Lighthouse on the Shore ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985)
Slow Train through Georgia ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
(With Nancy Blake) *Natasha's Waltz* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
(With Nancy Blake) *Blind Dog* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
(With Tony Rice) *Norman Blake and Tony Rice 2* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
Fields of November ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
(With Nancy Blake) *Just Gimme Somethin' I'm Used To* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992)
(With Nancy Blake) *While Passing along This Way* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994)
Chattanooga Sugar Babe ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Doc Watson
▶▶ Vince Gill, Steve Wariner

Rick Petreycik

The Blasters

See: Dave Alvin

Blind Blake

Born Arthur Phelps, 1890s, in Jacksonville, FL. Died 1930s.

Though little is known of his life and death, Blind Blake was one of the leading exponents of the ragtime-influenced dance music that gained wide popularity along the Southeastern seaboard states in the 1920s and 1930s. In stark contrast to the dense and driving rhythms that characterize Delta blues, Blake played in a relaxed, fingerpicking style. For most numbers, he employed a syncopated accompaniment with his thumb on the bass strings while fingering complex figures on the treble strings. Aspects of his inimitable technique influenced Blind Boy Fuller, the Rev. Gary Davis, Buddy Moss, and others of the Piedmont blues school. He began his recording career in August 1926 and became one of Paramount's best-selling artists, turning out 80 titles over a mere six-year period. His adept picking is showcased in such tunes as "Blind Arthur's Breakdown," "Scoodle Loo Doo," "Southern Rag," and "Righteous Blues," the latter a particularly adroit example of his intuitive grasp of harmony. Always an adaptable player, Blake proved his competence in a number of stylistic contexts—he recorded as an accompanist with vaudeville artists such as Ma Rainey,

6/6 *ralph blizard*

Papa Charlie Jackson, and Leola B. Wilson, and made some classic piano-guitar duet recordings, most notably the superb "Hastings Street." Blake even cut a handful of jazz-flavored sides with clarinetist Johnny Dodds, including "Southbound Rag," "Hot Potatoes," and "C.C. Pill Blues," each an awe-inspiring masterpiece. While much of his popularity can be credited to his instrumental prowess, Blake's penchant for outrageous and occasionally risqué lyrics ("Too Tight," "Notoriety Woman Blues," "Righteous Blues") also helps to account for his high sales figures. Indeed, few musicians have been able to duplicate the multifarious scope of Blake's success.

what to buy: For an exceptional sampler showcasing the breadth of Blake's musical legacy, one can do no better than *The Master of Ragtime Guitar: Essential Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Indigo Records, 1996). "He's in the Jailhouse Now" and "That Will Never Happen No More" hail from his repertoire of songs rooted in the vaudeville tradition, while "Early Morning Blues" and "Cold Hearted Mama" are proof of his authority in the blues arena. The fabulous recording made with pianist Charlie Spand, "Hastings Street," is included, along with three from the 1928 jazz session with Johnny Dodds and Jimmy Bertrand. There are plenty of incendiary finger-picking workouts on this disc, including "Diddie Wa Diddie," "Blind Arthur's Breakdown," "Come on Boys Let's Do That Messin' Around," "Skeedle Loo Doo," and "Police Dog Blues." *Ragtime Guitar's Foremost Fingerpicker* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1990, prod. Nick Perls) duplicates his best guitar rags, though on several numbers he is featured in a supporting role with various vaudeville singers. Missing is his glorious debut recording of "West Coast Blues," though the presence of the riotous and politically incorrect "Righteous Blues" more than makes up for the omission.

what to buy next: For a comprehensive look at Blake's recorded output, pick up *Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, Vols. 1–4* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. Johnny Parth). While not for the casual fan, Blake's music is engaging enough to sustain itself over four discs. Consider this *the* primer for any serious student of fingerstyle guitar.

what to avoid: Although there is much to enjoy on *Blind Blake: The Accompanist* ♪♪♪ (Wolf, prod. Hannes Folterbauer), one must tolerate the rather awful singing of Daniel Brown as well as dubs from some well-worn 78s. The novelty dialogue between Blake and Charlie Jackson, "Papa Charlie and Blind Blake Talk about It, Parts 1 & 2," while interesting, becomes tiresome with repeated listenings.

the rest:
The Best of Blind Blake ♪♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1995)
The Best of Blind Blake ♪♪♪♪ (Wolf, 1995)

influences:
- Nineteenth-century black dance music, minstrel/medicine shows, jazz ensembles
- Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy, Leon Redbone, Ry Cooder

D. Thomas Moon

Ralph Blizard /Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Born December 5, 1918, in Kingsport, TN. New Southern Ramblers formed 1982.

Ralph Blizard, fiddle, vocals; Phil Jamison, guitar, bass; John Herrmann, banjo, bass; Gordy Hinners, banjo; John Lilly, bass, guitar, mandolin.

Ralph Blizard formed his current band in 1982, fiddling in a style he refers to as "Appalachian Mountain Longbow." While in high school Blizard played with his band, the Southern Ramblers, on radio stations throughout Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia, then left the music business for 25 years to work at the Eastman/Kodak Company. Upon retirement he re-formed the Ramblers and toured the country, participating in numerous festivals and workshops and promoting the group's distinct brand of traditional Appalachian music.

what to buy: *Southern Ramble* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Phil Jamison, Gordy Hinners) is a delightful mix of traditional tunes and a few originals by Blizard and other band members.

the rest:
Blizard Train ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1989) (cassette only)

influences:
- The Carter Family, Doc Addington
- The Freight Hoppers, Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Stephen L. Betts

Rory Block

Born Aurora Block, November 6, 1949, in Princeton, NJ.

Though she tried recording disco and R&B songs in the 1970s, Block found her muse in the Rev. Gary Davis, Son House, and Robert Johnson in 1981 and has rarely strayed beyond acoustic

blues ever since. She's an excellent guitarist and interpreter who loves to faithfully reproduce well-known classics like Skip James's "Devil Got My Woman" and unearth obscure gems like Mattie Delaney's "Tallahatchie Blues." Many compare Block to Bonnie Raitt, which is apt in so far as they're both women who play the blues. But Block seems perfectly comfortable staying underneath the pop radar screen, and most of her influences recorded in the 1920s and 1930s. Block's father owned a sandal shop in Greenwich Village, so when she was growing up in the 1960s, she got to meet such folkies as Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. She was more inspired, though, by the visits from Son House, "Mississippi" John Hurt, and Fred McDowell, who were in town for blues festivals.

what to buy: *High Heeled Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Rory Block, John Sebastian) kick-started her blues career, and you can almost hear Block's sense of relief that she can play country blues covers instead of the pop slop in which she used to dabble. *Tornado* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) is slightly more pop-oriented, but Block's growing songwriting skills produce the country-blues gem "Gone Woman Blues," inspired by O.J. Simpson's murdered wife, Nicole Brown.

what to buy next: Blues history buffs will enjoy *Gone Woman Blues: The Country Blues Collection* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995), with its three Robert Johnson covers (including the stark "Hellhound on My Trail") and songs by Charlie Patton, Skip James, Blind Willie McTell, and many others.

what to avoid: *The Early Tapes 1975/1976* ♪♪ (Alacazam!, 1989, prod. Rory Block) are interesting, but Block still hadn't discovered her ultimate inner muse.

the rest:
Rhinestones and Steel Strings ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1983/1990)
Best Blues & Originals ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
House of Hearts ♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Blue Horizon ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
I've Got a Rock in My Sock! ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Mama's Blues ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Ain't I a Woman ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
Angel of Mercy (Rounder, 1994)
Best Blues & Originals, Vol. 2 (Munich, 1994)
When a Woman Gets the Blues ♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
Turning Point (Munich, 1995)

worth searching for: Block's children's record, *Color Me Wild* ♪♪♪ (Alacazam!, 1990), is fun and fresh and full of non-condescending blues humor.

influences:
◀◀ Son House, Robert Johnson, Tommy Johnson, Charley Patton, Rev. Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Stefan Grossman

Steve Knopper

Blood Oranges /Cheri Knight /Wooden Leg /Beacon Hillbillies

Formed 1987, in Boston, MA.

Cheri Knight, guitar, vocals; Jimmy Ryan, vocals, mandolin; Mark Spencer, guitar.

Combining the efforts of three significantly talented musicians, the Blood Oranges were somewhat like the Buffalo Springfield of alternative country music, releasing only a couple of albums that were a few years ahead of their time but served as a proving ground for its members' future projects. By the mid 1990s, "alternative country" had became an over-used buzz word, but the Blood Oranges had created an intriguing, inventive, and eminently listenable hybrid of rock, bluegrass, country, punk, and pop from the decade's outset. By 1995, however, side projects began to pull band members in different directions; though they've never formally called it quits, and indeed have hinted at the possibility of future Blood Oranges records, all three have kept themselves plenty busy during the last couple years. Jimmy Ryan continued working with a more specifically bluegrass-oriented act called the Beacon Hillbillies and recorded an album of his own (with considerable help from Mark Spencer) under the name Wooden Leg. He's also toured with Catie Curtis. Cheri Knight's solo debut attracted major-label interest, and Spencer became a guitarist-for-hire of considerable note with the likes of Freedy Johnston, Lisa Loeb, and Kelly Willis, as well as furthering his career as a producer out of his own home studio.

what to buy: *The Crying Tree* ♪♪♪♪ (East Side Digital, 1994, prod. Eric "Roscoe" Ambel) is the apex of the Blood Oranges' output, a confident, inspired collection of instantly catchy rockers, darkly haunting ballads, and bluegrassy stompers. Knight's solo debut, *The Knitter* ♪♪♪½ (ESD, 1996, prod. Eric "Roscoe" Ambel), proved she was more than capable of carrying the load on her own, focusing on the more song-oriented side of the Oranges' material and including such should-be hits and classics as "Light in the Road" and "Last Barn Dance."

what to buy next: *Corn River* ♪♪♪ (ESD, 1990, prod. Paul Kolderie, Blood Oranges), the band's debut, is a bit more tenta-

6/8 *luka bloom*

the 1950s

As the postwar decade began, *Sing Out!* magazine emerged from the house organ of the People's Songs Collective. The Weavers, comprising Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, Lee Hays, and Fred Hellerman, were the toast of the pop charts with a vibrant form of folk music that blended the traditional repertoire with a strong contemporary political conscience. A couple of years later, the group was in disarray as they became targets of the McCarthy hearings and their bookings and recording contracts dried up. The middle '50s were lean times for folk music per se, although artists like Harry Belafonte and Burl Ives (who tarnished his folkie credibility by turning in a list of names to the House Un-American Activities Committee) kept a toned-down version of this music in the public eye. By the latter half of the decade, the Weavers had recouped their audience, and the folk revival began to build steam with the "striped shirt" brigade, consisting of groups like the Kingston Trio, the Limeliters, and the Smothers Brothers, crossing over from the coffeehouse circuit to the mainstream. When the Kingston Trio hit the top of the pop charts with their somewhat homogenized rendition of the murder ballad "Tom Dooley," the genre again became, almost overnight, a significant economic factor in the popular music industry. The fifties were also an important decade for traditional music recordings, with many of the fruits of Alan and John Lomax's field expeditions seeing release for the first time, and the appearance, in 1952, of Folkways' landmark *Anthology of American Folk Music*.

Michael Parrish

tive then *The Crying Tree* but proves the Oranges were onto something quite early in their career; the disc also introduced songwriter Jim McGinniss's classic ballad "Thief." *Wooden Leg* ♪♪♪ (ESD, 1996, prod. Mark Spencer), in effect a Ryan solo disc, is less immediately catchy than Knight's albums but has its own allure in more of a quirky string-band vein.

the rest:
Lone Green Valley ♪♪♪ (EP) (ESD, 1992)

solo outings:
Cheri Knight:
Northeast Kingdom ♪♪♪½ (E Squared, 1998)

Beacon Hillbillies:
Duffield Station ♪♪½ (ESD, 1992)
More Songs of Love and Murder ♪♪½ (ESD, 1994)
A Better Place ♪♪½ (ESD, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Jason & the Scorchers, Rank & File, the Clash, Patsy Cline
▶▶ Marty Stuart, Buckets, Angry Johnny & the Killbillies

Peter Blackstock

Luka Bloom

Born Barry Moore, May 23, 1955, in Newbridge, County Kildare, Ireland.

Brother of Irish minstrel Christy Moore, Barry Moore began his career in the pubs of Dublin before moving to Washington, D.C., in 1987. There he became Luka Bloom and a favorite on the Eastern Seaboard club circuit, perfecting an intense, explosive rhythmic guitar attack and a mix of introspective and socially aware folk-rock. His style owes as much to the romanticism and mysticism of his Irish roots as it does to traditional folk balladeers like Woody Guthrie and modern folksters such as Joan Armatrading and Joni Mitchell. Although Bloom is a charismatic, riveting live performer, his recordings have increasingly emphasized somber melodies and reflective lyrics that only suggest the power he brings on stage. "Life is not a sterile business," he says, explaining his love of performing. "Life is blood and guts and shit and heartbreak, and it's fucked up, and it's a mess. I think you can articulate that better sweating in a club with a wooden instrument in your hand."

what to buy: Although Bloom's debut album is stirring, his second, *The Acoustic Motorbike* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Paul Barrett) is more immediately engaging. Recorded in Ireland with musical assists by brother Christy and the Hothouse Flowers, the album peaks with the passionate Celtic rap of L.L. Cool J's "I Need Love" and the strumming charm of the title song.

what to buy next: Bloom came to national note with *Riverside* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1990, prod. Jeffrey Wood) for good reason: it's a striking first album, notable for its earnestness, melodies, and Irish soul. "You Couldn't Have Come at a Better Time" and "Delirious" immediately grab the listener, while the remainder

of the album stands up to repeated listening. Contributors include Irish American fiddle whiz Eileen Ivers and Liam 'O Maonlai on bodhrán.

the rest:
Turf ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Boomtown Rats, the Cowboy Junkies, Joan Armatrading, Suzanne Vega, Michelle Shocked, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Tracy Chapman, Hothouse Flowers, Sinéad O'Connor

Martin Connors

Michael Bloomfield

Born July 28, 1944, in Chicago, IL. Died February 15, 1981, in San Francisco, CA.

Born into an enormously wealthy Chicago family, Michael Bloomfield helped push the electric guitar into the forefront of the rock and blues revolution of the 1960s. Bloomfield immersed himself in Chicago's blues scene as a teenager and endeared himself to the older players with his sincerity, his passionate support of the music, and his enthusiastic ability to quickly learn what they taught him. His charisma, powerful attack, and lyrical style, which he learned from Albert King, Muddy Waters, and others, while not commercially successful, was highly influential. He backed James Cotton and joined Paul Butterfield's hard-nosed blues unit in time for the group's seminal appearance at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965. That same year his explosive guitar work kicked Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* into the stratosphere. Bloomfield's contributions to the Butterfield Band were immense, especially the modal-scaled "East-West," but he left in 1967 to form the Electric Flag. He lasted for one album before making *Super Session* with Stephen Stills and Al Kooper and *The Live Adventures of Michael Bloomfield and Al Kooper*, both of which greatly raised his reputation. After the much-admired Flag, Bloomfield's career settled into a much quieter mode. He toured the country as a solo act, often dividing his shows between acoustic guitar and piano songs that displayed his encyclopedic knowledge of blues and American traditional music; in his home town of San Francisco he performed electric blues with a band that often included friend Mark Naftalin on keyboards. He recorded a number of albums, wrote soundtrack music for low-budget films (*The Trip, You Are What You Eat, Steelyard Blues*), and wrote the nonfiction book *Me and Big Joe* (1980) that chronicled his relationship with bluesman Joe Lee "Big Joe" Williams. Bloomfield was both a lifelong insomniac, a condition for which he had an open-ended perscription for sleeping pills, and an occasional abuser of alcohol. His apparently accidental death in 1981 is attributed to these factors.

what to buy: In general, Bloomfield was only as good as his surroundings dictated, so it's not a surprise his best work is in ensemble situations. Start with *The Lost Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1964/Rhino, 1995, prod. Paul Rothchild) and *East-West* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966, prod. Paul Rothchild, Mark Abramson, Barry Friedman), his early recordings with the Paul Butterfield Band, and follow that with *Super Session* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Al Kooper) and *The Live Adventures of Michael Bloomfield and Al Kooper* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969, prod. Al Kooper). The Electric Flag, with its hard-bitten horn section, provided a nice backdrop for Bloomfield's charms. Check out *Old Glory, the Best of Electric Flag* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1995) and *A Long Time Coming* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1968/1988, prod. John Court).

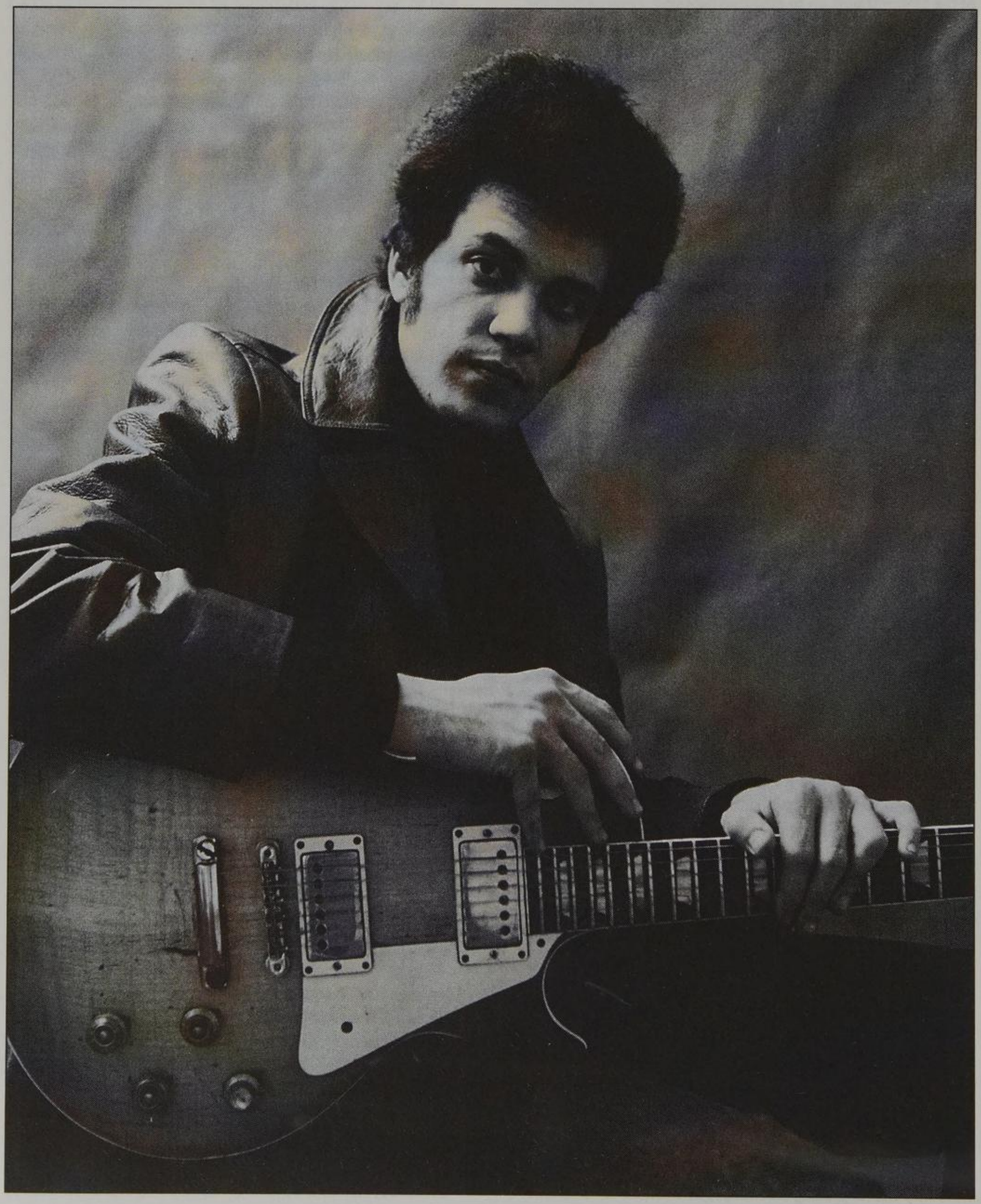
what to buy next: Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1965, prod. Bob Johnston), is an excellent example of his sideman abilities, especially on the blues numbers. While none is truly great, *Don't Say That I Ain't Your Man! Essential Blues 1964–69* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia/Legacy, 1994, prod. various), *It's Not Killing Me* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1969), and *Living in the Fast Lane* ♪♪♪½ (Waterhouse, 1981, prod. Norman Dayron) offer flashes of brilliance.

what to avoid: *Triumvirate* ♪♪ (Columbia, 1973/1989) is a jam with Dr. John and John Hammond that just doesn't catch the fire it should have.

the rest:
Try It Before You Buy It ♪♪½ (CBS, 1975)
Between the Hard Place & the Ground ♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1979)
The Best of Michael Bloomfield ♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1987)
I'm with You Always ♪♪♪ (Demon, 1987)
American Hero ♪♪♪ (Thunderbolt, 1991)
Blues, Gospel and Ragtime Guitar Instrumentals ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)
The Gospel of Blues ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1994)
The Root of Blues ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1994)
Rx for the Blues ♪♪½ (Eclipse, 1996)
Gospel of Truth ♪♪♪♪ (Thunderbolt, 1997)

worth searching for: Never miss a chance to see *Festival*, an obscure, long-out-of-print film on the Newport fest in the early 1960s. It includes part of the infamous 1965 Butterfield Band workshop, an interview with a bushy-tailed Bloomfield about

70 *michael bloomfield*



his love for the blues, and plenty of other worthwhile performances by famous bluesers of that era.

influences:

◀◀ B.B. King, Albert King, Muddy Waters, Elmore James, Son House, T-Bone Walker

▶▶ Peter Green, Bob Dylan, the Band, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Chicago, Black Crowes, Buddy Miles

Leland Rucker

Blowzabella

Formed 1978, at the London College of Furniture, London, England. Disbanded c. 1990.

The original group consisted of Jon Swayne, bagpipes, woodwinds; Bill O'Toole, bagpipes, woodwinds; Sam Palmer, hurdy-gurdy; Dave Armitage, melodeon, percussion. The final lineup consisted of Andy Cutting, melodeons, percussion; Nigel Eaton, hurdy-gurdies, 'cello, percussion; Jo Freya, vocals, saxophone, clarinet; Paul James, soprano saxophone, bagpipes, rauschfeife; Ian Luff, guitars, cittern; Jon Swayne, saxophones, bagpipes.

A far cry from the typical folk music produced in England, Blowzabella's distinctive sound is carried on the base of a drone. Using bagpipes and hurdy-gurdy to establish this core, the group explores the driving and almost primitive sound to its fullest through the interweaving of dance melodies over the drones. The result is hypnotic and extremely unusual. Sounding almost as much Middle Eastern as English, the group pulls on a variety of traditional roots for the basis of its music, including Eastern European, English, and Irish influences. The original group, a bunch of musical instrument craftsmen, set out to combine traditional dance melodies with the use of the drone, which it accomplished with great success. The later incarnations of the band explored this further through the use of original material and further harmonic sounds. Although the sound of the band remained easily recognizable and distinctive throughout its years, the growth and maturity of the music in later years reflects a sophistication not associated with the original line-up.

what's available: Blowzabella's only album currently out on an American label, *Vanilla* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1990, prod. Paul James), represents Blowzabella at its best. After years of exploring dance music, this exciting album shows how far the group had come in its 12 years. Exciting and highly danceable, the group explores more complex harmonies in its instrumental work and displays strong emotion in song through vocalist Jo Freya. The result is a more varied, highly textured album, still highlighting the Blowzabella trademark of drone-based music.

worth searching for: *Compilation* ♪♪♪ (Osmosys, 1995) chronicles the history of the band, featuring two or three cuts from each of their six original albums. This album gives a good feel for the group's consistency of sound, and the liner notes provide a history of the band and its albums. *A Richer Dust* ♪♪♪ (Osmosys, 1988) includes "Wars of the Roses Suite," which was written on a grant from a local arts council to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Stoke Field. This piece marks a major turning point for the band, where confidence in its own material soared, and it began to explore more concert-like music rather than strictly dance material.

influences:

◀◀ John Kirkpatrick, Ashley Hutchings, Roger Nicholson

▶▶ Tanteeka

Jo Hughey Morrison

Blue Highway

Formed 1994, in Johnson City, TN.

Shawn Lane, fiddle, mandolin, vocals; Wayne Taylor, bass, vocals; Tim Stafford, guitar, vocals; Rob Ickes, dobro, vocals; Jason Burleson, banjo, mandolin.

Arguably the most impressive new bluegrass band of the 1990s, Blue Highway had a breakthrough year in 1996, winning awards from the International Bluegrass Music Association for Best Emerging Artist and Album of the Year. (Rob Ickes also won solo honors for Dobro Player of the Year.) Organized by five youthful musicians (with experience in the bands of Alison Krauss, Doyle Lawson, and Ricky Skaggs) who wanted to perform mostly original material in a democratic setting, Blue Highway is blessed with three outstanding lead singers (Taylor, Lane, and Stafford), several good songwriters, an approach that's modern yet rooted in traditional bluegrass. Theirs is a captivating sound that's unlike any other band in bluegrass.

what's available: *It's a Long, Long Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1995, prod. Blue Highway), the band's award-winning debut, spent several months at the top of the national bluegrass charts, spawning three Top 10 singles, "In the Gravel Yard," "Lonesome Pine," and the title song. Other highlights include Wayne Tay-

Michael Bloomfield **(© Peter Ampft/Ken Settle)**

lor's historical saga "Before the Cold Wind Blows" and Tim Stafford's "Farmer's Blues." *Wind to the West* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1996, prod. Blue Highway) builds on the band's strong debut with seven good new songs, a Merle Haggard cover, and a foray into a more country sound on "I Can Stand the Truth." Exceptional performances on a pair of old gospel songs, "Two Coats" and "God Moves in a Windstorm," demonstrate the band's feel for traditional material. With songs like "Gettin' Over You" and the Civil War tale "Walked All the Way Home," the group's third album, *Midnight Storm* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1998, prod. Blue Highway), left little doubt that Blue Highway was one of the great young bluegrass groups of the '90s.

influences:

◀◀ Nashville Bluegrass Band, Alison Krauss, Doyle Lawson

▶▶ Rarely Herd

Jon Hartley Fox and Brian Mansfield

Blue Sky Boys

Formed in Hickory, NC.

Bill Bolick, vocals; Earl Bolick, vocals.

Bill and Earl Bolick's singing style—close harmony coupled with simple guitar accompaniment—influenced dozens of duet acts through the years, including the Louvins, the Delmores, and even the Everly Brothers. In 1936 Bill and Earl (who chose a name—the Blue Sky Boys—that didn't include "Brothers" to set themselves apart from other brother duets) were working on radio station WGST in Atlanta, when they first recorded for Victor. After serving in World War II they resumed their career, continuing to record for RCA, until they disbanded in 1951. By 1963, however, the Blue Sky Boys were back together, propelled by the old-time/folk revival then sweeping the country. Their last recordings were made for the Starday label in 1975.

what to buy: *The Blue Sky Boys* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ken Irwin), taken from the Bolicks' 1975 Starday sessions, is a great place to start. Forty years into their career the Blue Sky Boys' harmony is still awe-inspiring.

what to buy next: *In Concert, 1964* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Bill Bolick, Ken Irwin) includes several of the duo's best-known songs, as well as a few they'd never recorded before. Another feature is Earl's portrayal of hayseed comic character Uncle Josh, a regular part of their early radio shows.

the rest:

On Radio, Volume One ♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1993)
On Radio, Volume Two ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1993)
The Sunny Side of Life ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)
Farm and Fun Time Favorites, Volume One ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1994)
Farm and Fun Time Favorites, Volume Two ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1994)
Treasury of Rare Song Gems ♪♪♪♪ (Starday, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Bradley Kincaid, Mac & Bob

▶▶ The Louvin Brothers, the Whitstein Brothers

Stephen L. Betts

The Bluegrass Cardinals

Formed 1974, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1997.

Don Parmley, banjo (1974–96); David Parmley, guitar (1974–93); Bill Bryson, bass; Randy Graham, mandolin; Herschel Sizemore, mandolin; John Davis, bass; Warren Blair, fiddle; Norman Wright, mandolin; Larry Stephenson, mandolin; Ernie Sykes, bass; Tim Smith, fiddle; Ronnie Bowman, bass; Greg Luck, guitar; Keith Pyrtle, guitar; Lester Deaton, bass; others.

Banjo player Don Parmley performed with several Los Angeles–area bluegrass bands, including the Hillmen (with Vern Gosdin and Chris Hillman), before forming the traditional-style Bluegrass Cardinals with son David in 1974. David left the band in 1993 to (unsuccessfully) pursue a career in country music; he eventually formed the bluegrass band David Parmley, Scott Vestal and Continental Divide. The Cardinals disbanded in January 1997 with Don Parmley's retirement.

what's available: *The Bluegrass Cardinals* ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1997), the group's debut, originally released on Sierra, is the only Bluegrass Cardinals album currently available on CD.

worth searching for: Harder to find but also worth a listen are *Welcome to Virginia* (Rounder, 1977), *Livin' in the Good Old Days* (CMH, 1978), and *Sunday Mornin' Singin'* (CMH, 1980).

influences:

◀◀ The Hillmen

▶▶ David Parmley, Scott Vestal & Continental Divide

Douglas Fulmer

Hugh Blumenfeld

Born October 11, 1958, in Jamaica, NY.

Poetic lyrics, sensitive vocals, and melodic fingerstyle acoustic guitar playing has made Jamaica, New York–born and Connecti-

eric bogle 7/3

cut-based singer-songwriter Hugh Blumenfeld one of the spearheads of the Greenwich Village folk music scene of the 1990s. With a master's degree in creative writing from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. in poetics from New York University, Blumenfeld may be one of contemporary folk music's most literate purveyors. An associate editor of *Fast Folk Musical Magazine* (1986–91, 1996–97) and a former professor of poetry and songwriting at NYU, Bard College, and Eastern Connecticut State University, Blumenfeld didn't turn to music full-time until 1994. His well-crafted songs, however, have been attracting attention since his recording debut, which coincided with the first anniversary edition of *Fast Folk* in February 1983. Blumenfeld is a three-time finalist at the songwriter competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas.

what to buy: *Barehanded* ♪♪♪ (Grace Avenue, 1991/1-800-Prime-CD, 1992, prod. David Seitz) set the standards for his future work. Accompanying himself on acoustic guitar and backed by Mark Dann on bass, Blumenfeld set his songs to sparse but warm settings. The opening tune, "Break Stones," is marked by unique syncopated rhythms. "America Redux" is a condemnation of political hypocrisy, while "A Wedding Song" is an ode to the joys of romantic love.

what to buy next: Blumenfeld's first album, *The Strong in Spirit* ♪♪½ (Grace Avenue, 1988/1-800-Prime-CD, 1994, prod. David Seitz) is an overview of his earliest work and includes several tunes previously recorded for *Fast Folk*. The album features musical accompaniment by Mark Dann (second guitar, bass guitar, and synthesizer), Kenny Kosek (fiddle), and Marshal Rosenberg (percussion); it also presents the vocal harmonies of Lucy Kaplansky, Josh Joffen, Nikki Matheson, Richard Meyer, and Judith Zweiman. *Mozart's Money* ♪♪♪ (1-800-Prime-CD, 1997, prod. David Seitz) is a further step in Blumenfeld's musical evolution with songs such as "Waiting for the Good Humor Man" reflecting his poetic view of modern society.

worth searching for: In addition to three albums on his own (*The Strong in Spirit*, *Barehanded*, and *Mozart's Money*), Blumenfeld has been featured on 12 issues of *Fast Folk* and on Christine Lavin's compilation *On a Winter's Night*. Live versions of his tunes have been included on the *30th Anniversary Album*, produced by Columbia University's folk music coffeehouse, the Postcrypt, and on *Folk Next Door*, recorded during a 1992 concert produced by Hartford, Connecticut, radio station WWUH. His song "Brothers" appears in the songbook *The Best of Contemporary Folk*, published by Cherry Hill Music.

influences:

⏪ Jack Hardy, Steve Forbert, Rod MacDonald, Cliff Eberhardt, Richard Meyer

⏩ Five Chinese Brothers, Richard Shindell, Richard Julian

Craig Harris

Dock Boggs

Born Moran Lee Boggs, February 7, 1898, in West Norton, VA. Died February 7, 1971.

Singer and banjo player Dock Boggs's modest recorded legacy—a total of 66 sides—is as rugged and austere as the Clinch Mountains where he began working in the coal mines at age 12. Rooted in both the African American blues and Anglo-Celtic ballad traditions, Boggs's 1927 and 1929 recordings for the Brunswick and Lonesome Ace labels stand as a testimony to endurance amid adversity comparable to that expressed in Bascom Lunsford's monumental "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground." Despite the undeniable power of his recordings, at the insistence of his wife, Boggs laid his banjo aside for 35 years until musician-folklorist Mike Seeger persuaded him to record again during the 1960s. Those sides, recorded for Folkways between 1963 and 1968—and currently out-of-print—don't match Boggs's commercial recordings from the late '20s; they nonetheless confirm his stature as an American original.

what's available: *Country Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Revenant, 1998, prod. John Fahey, Dean Blackwood) contains 17 commercial recordings from the late 1920s that established Boggs as Appalachia's answer to delta blues singer Robert Johnson. In a raw nasal whine, Boggs sings of violence, hardship, and lovesickness less as tragedy than as incontrovertible facts of life. The resilience and, at times, defiance, in his voice is as eerie as it is astounding.

influences:

⏪ Jim White, Homer Crawford, Sara Martin

⏩ New Lost City Ramblers, Bob Dylan, Holy Modal Rounders

Bill Friskics-Warren

Eric Bogle

September 23, 1944, in Peebles, Scotland.

Scotsman Bogle emigrated to Australia in 1969 and settled in Canberra, where he found work as an accountant. In his spare time he frequented local clubs and folk venues, soon realizing that he had enough talent to play his own songs in front of an

7/4 *boiled buzzards*

audience. Inspired by the sight of a military parade, he wrote his most famous composition, "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda" in 1972. This song is an anti-war folk masterpiece and has been recorded by artists such as June Tabor, the Clancy Brothers, the Men They Couldn't Hang, and the Pogues. Packing in the day job by 1980, Bogle turned to music full-time, hitting the road and traveling throughout Australia. Meeting John Munro, another Scottish lad and a brilliant guitarist and mandolinist, was fortuitous—the two proved to be a good match and they toured the United Kingdom. Adding bassist Brent Miller turned the duo into a trio and made for a fuller, richer soundtrack to Bogle's piercing lyrics. By 1983 Bogle's first album, *Now I'm Easy*, turned up gold, and the three musicians headed out for an international tour. Bogle standards like "Leaving Nancy," "No Man's Land (The Green Fields of France)," "Now I'm Easy," and "Nobody's Moggy Now" made quite an impression on other artists and soon Mary Black, Donovan, De Dannan, the Dubliners, Stan Rogers, and even Rod McKuen were covering Bogle tunes. In 1986 Bogle was honored by the Australian Federal Government with a Peace Medal, given for his involvement to promote peace and racial harmony through his music. He was also awarded in 1991 the title of "Folk Performer of the Year" at the Australian Entertainment MC Awards. In the last few years Bogle has released two albums that have sold especially well in Australia, *The Emigrant and the Exile* and *Small Miracles*. Now a resident of a town near Adelaide, Bogle continues to tour almost non-stop, with recent travels to Europe and America completed. A prodigious songwriter and performer, Bogle has made more than 15 albums on labels such as Larrikin, Rounder, Greentrax, Autogram, and Alcazar. In addition, there are two Eric Bogle songbooks and a performance video out on the market for Bogleheads. (An Eric Bogle Homepage has been set up by his friends. To find out more about Bogle and his music, you can contact http://www.windbourne.com.)

what to buy: Two Bogle compilation albums demonstrate the amazing scope of his compositions and his evolution into a first-class songwriter: *The Eric Bogle Songbook* ♪♪♪½ (Greentrax, 1989, prod. various) and *The Eric Bogle Songbook, Vol. 2* ♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1994, prod. various). Two other good ones to start with are *Something of Value* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1988, prod. John Schumann) and *Mirrors* ♪♪♪♪ (Larrikin, 1993, prod. Andy McGloin). Both present Bogle as a master lyricist with a good ear for melody.

what to buy next: Two early Bogle albums—*Scraps of Paper* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish/Rounder, 1981, prod. Eric Bogle, Chris Nicholson) and *Voices in the Wilderness* ♪♪♪½ (Alcazar, 1991, prod. Andy McGloin)—showcase his penchant for controversial songwriting. You also can't go wrong with *When the Wind Blows* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish/Rounder, 1985) and *Singing the Spirit Home* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish/Rounder, 1987). His two most recent collections, *The Emigrant and the Exile* ♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1996, prod. Brian McNeill) and *Small Miracles* ♪♪♪ (Larrikin/Greentrax, 1997, prod. Ian Blake), are also recommended listening. To find out how Eric Bogle wins over his audience on stage, check out *I Wrote This Wee Song* ♪♪♪½ (Greentrax, 1994, prod. Andy McGloin, Eric Bogle), a live concert recording of Bogle's best numbers.

worth searching for: Three albums that Bogle made for Autogram Records are worth the hunt if you have lots of patience: *Down Under* ♪♪ (Autogram, 1982), *In Person* ♪♪ (Autogram, 1982), and *Pure* ♪½ (Autogram, 1982). Many of Bogle's albums are available through Greentrax (greentrax@aol.com), Rounder (info@rounder.com), and Larrikin (larrikin@geko.net.au). An excellent source of Bogle music in the U.S. is Tayberry Music (mtice@cetlink.net and http://tayberry.com).

influences:

◀◀ Dick Gaughan, Archie Fisher, Ewan MacColl, Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton

▶▶ Tony Bird, Archie Roach, Billy Bragg

TJ McGrath

Boiled Buzzards

Formed 1988, in Cleveland, OH.

Dan Levenson, banjo, fiddle, vocals; Ruth Kass, bass; Joe Collins, guitar; Dave Rice, harmonica (1988–90); Annie Trimble, guitar, vocals (1990–present); Chris Wig, fiddle (1991–92); Mark Tamsula, fiddle (1993–96); Liz Stephens, fiddle (1997–present).

The Buzzards' original lineup was banjo, bass, harmonica, fiddle, and guitar. In the band's first year, however, their fiddler left; so, when no one else seemed to fit with the style and direction the Buzzards were taking, it was decided they would work as a four piece unit with the harmonica taking the fiddler's part (as in the tradition of Dr. Humphry Bate). Over the years there have been a few more lineup changes. Although they still perform as a band, Dan Levenson has been doing most of his recent work as a solo act. Dan also released his first solo CD in 1997 called *Light of the Moon*. Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and now living in Wolverine, Michigan, Dan was voted one of the top 10 clawhammer banjo players by *Banjo Newsletter* readers. *Bluegrass Unlimited* calls his playing "melodic, meticulous and uncluttered."

what to buy: *Early Bird Special* ♪♪♪ (Buzzard Productions, 1994, prod. Dan Levenson) is a good, representative collection of the Boiled Buzzards' output as a whole. It's worth more than just the chuckle you'll get from your friends when they ask you what band you're listening to.

what to buy next: *Fine Dining* ♪♪♪ (Buzzard Productions, 1991, prod. Dan Levenson) nicely showcases the band when it relied on the harmonica (rather than the fiddle) as the lead instrument.

the rest:
Salt and Grease ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1990)
Eat at Joe's ♪♪♪ (Buzzard Productions, 1992)

solo outings:
Dan Levenson:
Light of the Moon ♪♪♪ (Buzzard Productions, 1997)

Dan Levenson & Kim Murley:
New Frontier ♪♪½ (Blue Rose, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Highwoods String Band, Kevin Enoch, Tommy Jarrell
▶▶ Jake Krack, Freight Hoppers

Steve Gardner

Boiled in Lead

Formed 1983, in Minneapolis, MN.

Drew Miller, bass; Robin Adnan Anders, drums, percussion (1989–present); Josef Kessler, violin (1994–present); Adam Stemple, guitar, vocals (1994–present); Jane Dauphin, guitar, vocals (1983–86); Dave Stenshoel, fiddle, mandolin, mandocaster, saxophone (1983–91); Mitch Griffin, drums (1983–86); Todd Menton, guitar, vocals, tin whistle, saxophone (1986–91).

From the very first sound on their first album—a bloodcurdling primal scream—Boiled in Lead has followed a unique and eclectic path. They stretch both elements of the folk-rock mixture to their limit, and are comfortable performing feedback-laden slabs of noise, sensitive acoustic renditions of traditional music from around the globe, and all styles in between. They're also one of the few contemporary bands to appear in a fantasy novel (Emma Bull's 1987 *War for the Oaks*). Boiled in Lead are the most important folk-rock band to appear since the 1970s, and are required listening for anyone interested in this genre.

what to buy: *Orb* ♪♪♪♪½ (Omnium, 1991, prod. Hijaz "Hank" Mustapha) is the band's finest hour. The traditional material comes from sources as diverse as Serbia and Thailand (as well as the more usual American and Irish fare), while Todd Menton's originals range from the frantic absurdity of "Tape Decks All over Hell" to the moving irony of "Brave Bombardier." The whole album is bursting with energy, and the natural, un-hyped production lets the songs breathe. *From the Ladle to the Grave* ♪♪♪♪½ (Atomic Theory, 1989, prod. Boiled in Lead, Willie Murphy) features the same lineup as *Orb*, and most of the same virtues; it's a bit less diverse and a bit more raucous, and would be the best choice for those who like plenty of rock in their folk-rock.

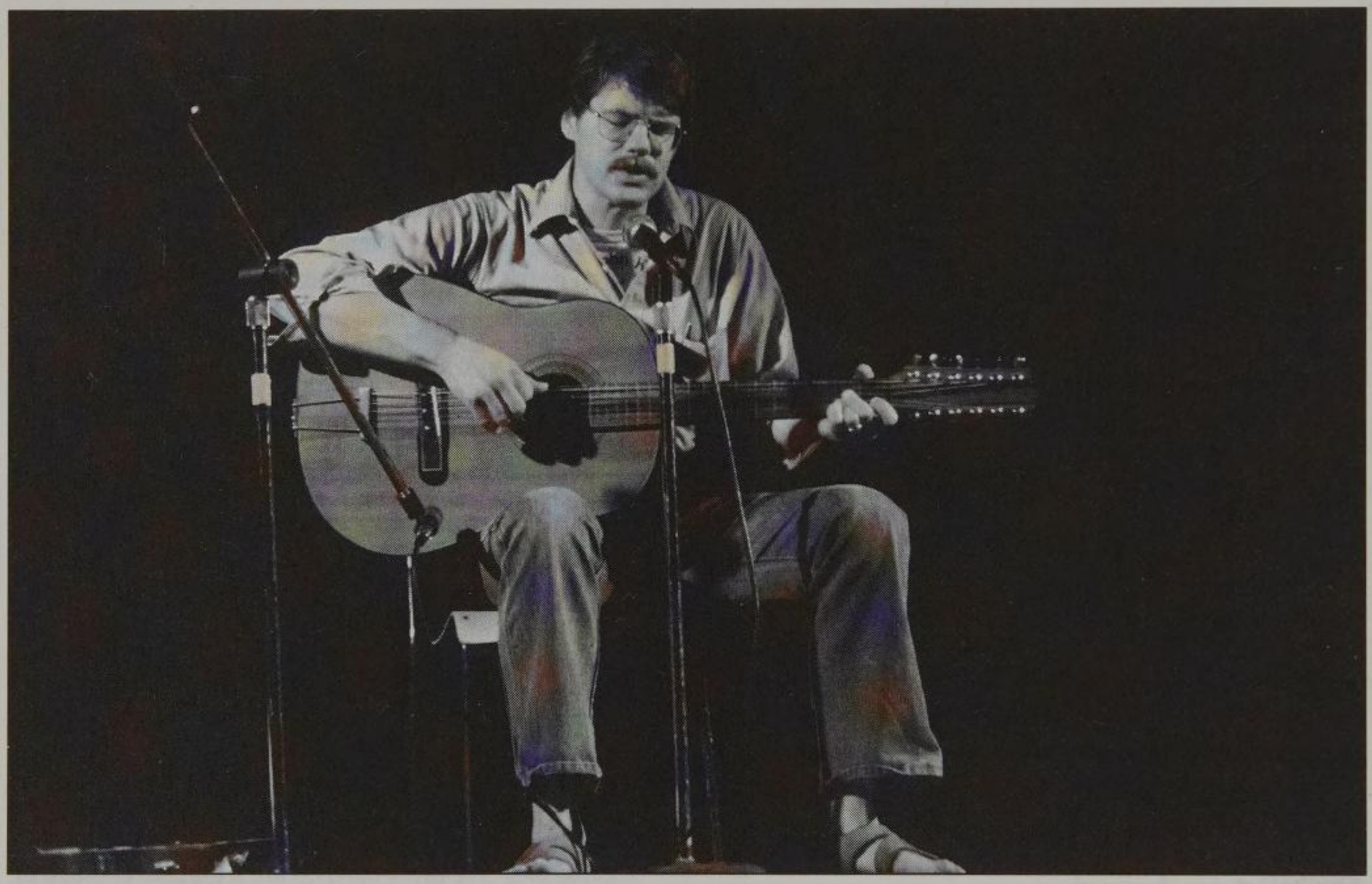
what to buy next: Stenshoel and Menton were replaced by Kessler and Stemple for *Antler Dance* ♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1994, prod. Frank London). Stemple's heavy metal tendencies make this the hardest-rocking Boiled in Lead album to date, but don't quite make up for losing Menton's deranged charm. Nevertheless, *Antler Dance* is packed with goodies, from the barn-burning "Sugarfoot Congress" to the hilarious cover of Boney M's "Rah Rah Rasputin." Boiled in Lead converts will definitely want to check out *Old Lead* ♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1985/1987, prod. Boiled in Lead, Amos Box), a compilation of the band's first two albums featuring Jane Dauphin and Mitch Griffin. While less technically adept than their later releases, and concentrating mostly on Celtic material, Boiled in Lead's energy and inventiveness are manifest even at this early stage, and hearing them destroy "The Gypsy Rover" is worth the price of the CD by itself.

what to avoid: Just when you think it might be time for '70s-style concept albums to make a comeback, along comes *Songs from the Gypsy* ♪♪ (Omnium, 1995, prod. Adam Stemple) to change your mind. While Boiled in Lead performs admirably, Stemple's writing isn't strong enough to pull off this song cycle based on a fantasy novel by Stephen Brust and Megan Lindholm.

worth searching for: Boiled in Lead have put out several rarities over the years, including a series of demo and live cassettes—*Boiled Alive* ♪♪♪, *A&E* ♪♪♪, and *Boiled Alive '92* ♪♪♪. All are of spotty sound quality but feature material not found on their official releases. In addition, the 7" single *Fück the Circus* ♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1994, prod. Frank London) explains why they hate clowns and mimes, and reveals their secret influence: Flipper (the band, that is, not the dolphin).

influences:
◀◀ Fairport Convention, Hickory Wind, People's International Silver String Band
▶▶ Cordelia's Dad, Tempest

Tim Walters



Gordon Bok **(© Robert J. Huffman/Field Mark Publications)**

Gordon Bok

Born October 31, 1939, in PA.

The musical traditions of the sea are preserved by Maine-based singer-songwriter Gordon Bok. With his deep resonating voice and fingerstyle approach to six- and 12-string acoustic guitars, Bok provides a musical voice for the sailors and great sailing vessels of the past. His full-bodied 12-string acoustic guitar sound is in the tradition stemming from the music of Leadbelly, through Pete Seeger, and up to Leo Kottke. Bok was inspired by his mother, who played folk songs on nylon-string guitar, and his father, who preferred jazz and classical music, to learn guitar at age nine. A summer job on boats, after graduating from high school, led to his meeting a fiddle player and sailor who encouraged him to sing. Traveling to larger East Coast cities during the winter to work as a carpenter, Bok discovered a thriving folk music scene. Performing in folk music clubs and coffeehouses, he quickly attracted attention with his musical skills and large repertoire of sea songs. Bok, however, has been a reluctant musical presence, preferring to stay in his rural Maine workshop, where he spends hours working on wood sculptures. It took five years of prodding by Noel Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul and Mary before he agreed to have Stookey produce his debut album. In addition to working as a soloist, Bok has periodically performed and recorded in a trio that includes Ann Muir and Ed Trickett.

what to buy: With his album *A Rogue's Gallery of Songs for 12-String* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1983), Bok used the double six-stringed instrument as a dynamic setting for his deep, emotional, baritone vocals. Despite the traditional sound of the album, Bok's material represents a wide range of influences, including jazz saxophonist Sonny Rollins ("St. Thomas"), Australian songwriter Henry Lawson ("On the Wallaby"), and American folk music ("Duncan and Brady").

what to buy next: A series of disturbing dreams inspired Bok to compose, in the ancient style of cante-fables, a non-rhyming

style of balladry. His latest such effort was *The Play of Lady Odivere* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1989).

the rest:
A Tune for November ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1970)
Peter Kagan and the Wind ♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1971)
(With Ann Mayo Muir) *Bay of Fundy* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1975)
Time and the Flying Snow ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1977)
Seal Djiril's Hymn ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1978)
Jeremy Brown and Jeannie Teal ♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1981)
Clear Away in the Morning ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1983)
Fashioned in the Clay ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy,1985)
(With Ruth Brown) *Cold as a Dog and the Wind Northwest* ♪♪ (Timberhead, 1986)
Ensemble ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1988)
Another Land Made of Water ♪♪♪ (Timberland, 1994)
Return to the Land ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1994)
North Wind's Clearing ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1995)
Schooner's ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1995)
(With Cindy Kallet) *Neighbors* ♪♪♪ (Timberland, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Louis Killen, Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston, Leadbelly

▶▶ Cormac McCarthy, Stan Rogers, Garnet Rogers, Scott Alarik, Schooner Fare, Devonsquare

see also: *Bok, Muir & Trickett*

Craig Harris

Bok, Muir & Trickett

Formed 1969, in Vermont.

Gordon Bok (born October 31, 1939, Philadelphia, PA), guitar, vocals; Ann Mayo Muir (born June 30, 1937, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI), flute, harp, vocals; Ed Trickett (born April 14, 1941, Uniontown, PA), hammered dulcimer, guitar, vocals.

Ann Muir met Gordon Bok while performing in Vermont in 1961. In 1962, she met Ed Trickett at Trinity College in Connecticut, where he was a student and her husband worked in the admissions office. Muir decided to bring Bok and Trickett together the only way possible at the time, by urging them to exchange tapes of their music. Bok had been working as a sailor off the Northeast coast, and Trickett was headed toward Ohio, Colorado, and California for doctorate and post-doctorate work. In 1969, Trickett returned to Connecticut, and the trio was born. Today they tour together once or twice a year. Although the three perform together, they don't really play as a trio; instead, each takes a turn as the lead with the other two in supporting roles—in this way each retains his or her individual musical identity. They each have solo projects, mostly produced and distributed by Connecticut's Folk-Legacy Records; Bok runs his own Timberhead label. Their songs, representing a mixture of both traditional and contemporary folk chestnuts as well as meticulously written originals, are sung with refined, inviting harmonies. The repertoire varies from child ballads to sea chanteys to stories of everyday folk to drovers. From Camden, Maine, Bok is a poet, woodcarver, instrument builder, songwriter, and former professional sailor. He draws much of his material from his sea-going experiences, and, with his rich, distinctive bass/baritone voice, Bok is a commanding and stirring performer; he also plays guitar, cellamba, and "Bok-whistle," a six-hole whistle of his own creation. Muir, who lives in France, was raised with a love of all music, and her contralto voice does justice to every song she touches. An artist, potter, actress, and musician, she has performed throughout the United States, Great Britain, and Europe. Muir plays guitar, classical baritone ukulele, whistle, flute, and harp. Trickett, who plays guitar, hammered dulcimer, and piano, brings a tenor voice to the trio. He is a psychology professor and writer, as well as a collector of fine songs.

what to buy: Anyone starting their collection of Bok, Muir & Trickett releases should start with two: *Bok, Muir & Trickett: The First 15 Years, Vol. I* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1992, prod. Sandy Paton) and *Bok, Muir & Trickett: The First 15 Years, Vol. II* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1992, prod. Sandy Paton). The CDs contain cuts from the trio's first seven albums. Between both CDs, there are 31 songs—Folk-Legacy likes to pack their albums full. They contain many of the group's better-known tracks, from Bok's hopeful and stirring "Turning Toward the Morning," to nautical songs like Archie Fisher's "The Final Trawl," the traditional "The Golden Vanity," or Dale Marxen's silly and entertaining tale, "Waltzing with Bears."

what to buy next: *And So Will We Yet* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1990, prod. Sandy Paton) is a 69-minute collection marked by magnificent, driving harmonies, with mostly contemporary songs of loss, bitter loneliness, traveling, love, and the sea. The trio shares the limelight, as they do on other releases, and play ably on guitar, hammered dulcimer, cellamba, and flute. True to the folk tradition, many of these songs—some rousing, some haunting—have been remade in their own style. Most are simple and singable. A repartee between a determined piglet and its realistic mother, "Tails and Trotters," is the only comical song on the disc. Trickett sings a lovely version of Stan Rogers's "Lock-keeper." Bok's baritone is formidable throughout, particularly in the sea chantey "The Loss of the Bay Rupert" and the

7/8 *polly bolton*

traditional whaling song from New Zealand, "Soon May the Wellerman Come."

the rest:
The Ways of Man ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1978)
A Winter over Stone ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1980)
All Shall Be Well Again ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1983)
Turning Toward the Morning ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1984)
Fashioned in the Clay ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1985)
Minneapolis Concert ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1987)
Language of the Heart ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1994)

solo outings:
Ann Mayo Muir:
So Goes My Heart ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1985)

Ed Trickett:
The Telling Takes Me Home ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1972)
Gently Down the Stream of Time ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1977)
People Like You ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1982)

influences:
◀◀ Peter, Paul & Mary, Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, Howie Mitchell

▶▶ Schooner Fare

see also: *Gordon Bok*

Stephen Ide, Craig Harris, and Neal Walters

Polly Bolton

Born April 27, 1950.

Polly Bolton's passionate, jazzy vocal style (she's a real belter when she wants to be) sets her apart from most British femme folk singers. Bolton began singing in the 1960s and in 1970 joined Dando Shaft, a Pentangle-like folk-jazz group with whom she recorded three albums. In 1973, she moved to the United States and for several years worked with various soul and jazz bands. Moving back to England in 1976, she joined Bert Jansch's Conundrum in 1978 and toured North America and Europe. In 1979, Bolton joined a jazz-rock unit, About Time. Bolton dropped out of the music business in 1980 to concentrate on her plant nursery, but re-surfaced in 1986 when Ashley Hutchings asked her to sing on the sessions for his theme album, *By Gloucester Docks I Sat Down and Wept*. She also toured with the Albion Band and sang on their 1988 release, *I Got New Shoes*. That year Hutchings produced Bolton's only solo album to date, *No Going Back*, which contains an incredible range of material, from out-and-out pop-rock like "When I Get Home" to a completely straight *a capella* reading of "The Silver Swan." Bolton also toured and recorded with the Ashley Hutchings All Stars. For her next project, *Woodbine and Ivy*, Bolton teamed up with John Shepherd (piano, keyboards) and Steve Dunachie (fiddle, viola), a pair of sympathetic musicians she's collaborated with on several subsequent recordings. Bolton's latest recording was the 1997 cassette single "The Child of Loss." The song was written by Jennifer Cutting, who also accompanied Bolton on piano. A portion of the proceeds from cassette sales will benefit the Motherless Daughters organization.

what's available: Get *Woodbine and Ivy* ♪♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1990, prod. Polly Bolton) as soon as possible. Not only does it feature excellent (but rather different) versions of popular ballads like "Sovay," "Bonnie Light Horseman," and "The Blacksmith," but it was only released on cassette and as of this writing not many copies are left. *Songs from a Cold Open Field* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1991, prod. Polly Bolton) includes a surprisingly rockin' rendition of "Gypsie Laddie" credited to the Polly Bolton Band (Bolton, Shepherd, Dunachie, with several guests). *Loveliest of Trees* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1996, prod. Polly Bolton) is a theme album consisting of original music set to lyrics of poems by A.E. Housman from his book *A Shropshire Lad*. Actor Nigel Hawthorne contributed readings of several poems to this recording.

worth searching for: If you want to hear Polly Bolton as a pop-rock singer, listen to "When I Get Home" on *No Going Back* ♪♪♪♪½ (Making Waves, 1989, prod. Ashley Hutchings). Also included in this eclectic collection is a lovely voice/keyboards interpretation of "The Drowned Lover," which anticipated the chamber folk-jazz sound Bolton further developed with Dunachie and Shepherd in the 1990s.

influences:
◀◀ Sandy Denny, Fairport Convention, Pentangle, Joni Mitchell, Linda Thompson

▶▶ Sally Barker, Christine Collister, the Poozies, the New St. George (U.S.), Cassandra Wilson

Ken Roseman

Karla Bonoff

Born December 27, 1951, in Los Angeles, CA.

A singer-songwriter who came to prominence when Linda Ronstadt chose three of her songs to perform on her 1976 album *Hasten Down the Wind*, Bonoff has had a solo career marked by consistently good material but precious little public acclaim. As a performer, Bonoff—who first hit the stage with the singer-

songwriter collective Bryndle (which included Kenny Edwards, Andrew Gold, and Wendy Waldman)—displays considerable charm and intellect, if not overpowering expressiveness. In other words, it's clear why her chief success has been as a songwriter. Still, her albums have their moments, and looking back on them now—particularly the first three—they recall a time during the late '70s when an "El Lay" singer/songwriter was something to be. Songs from that first trio of albums were covered by Nicolette Larson, Bonnie Raitt, Maria Muldaur, Kim Carnes, and Judy Collins, among others. In recent years, Bonoff has turned her eye toward Nashville; Wynonna scored a country smash with "Tell Me Why" and Bonoff has written for and performed on albums by Reba McEntire, Kathy Mattea, and Wynonna, among others. That makes perfect sense, given that Bonoff's brand of West Coast pop is what passes for Nashville country these days. What goes around comes around.

what to buy: *Karla Bonoff* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977, prod. Kenny Edwards) reprises versions of the Ronstadt-covered "Someone to Lay Down Beside Me," "Lose Again," and "If He's Ever Near." But the surprise here is that, in taking those three, Ronstadt didn't exhaust Bonoff's supply of good songs; the album also features the lovely waltz "Home," the lightly rocking numbers "I Can't Hold On" and "Isn't It Always Love," and the yearning "Falling Star."

what to buy next: *New World* ♪♪♪½ (Gold Castle, 1988/MusicMasters, 1995, prod. Mark Goldenberg) predated the adult-contemporary format by enough to keep it from getting the attention it deserves. Goldenberg's too-rich production aside, the album contains Bonoff's best batch of songs since her debut, including "All My Life"—which Ronstadt and Aaron Neville turned into a Grammy-winning hit. Her off-shoot group, Bryndle, which re-formed in 1993, finally put out an album in 1995. Written in almost total collaboration, the album sounds like it could be the result of an old-fashioned guitar pull. All four members trade lead vocals and contribute honeyed harmonies.

what to avoid: *Restless Nights* ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979, prod. Kenny Edwards) is pleasant but is carried more by its two covers—the Searchers' "When You Walk in the Room" and the traditional "The Water Is Wide"—than by Bonoff's originals.

the rest:
Wild Heart of the Young ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982)

worth searching for: The soundtrack for the TV series *thirtysomething* ♪♪½ (Geffen, 1991, prod. various) features Bonoff's performance of "The Water Is Wide."

editor's choice
12 cape breton albums

The Rankin Family, *The Rankin Family* (Rankins)

Natalie MacMaster, *Fit As a Fiddle* (NM)

Ashley MacIsaac, *How Are You Today?* (A&M)

The Barra MacNeils, *The Traditional Album* (PolyGram)

Buddy MacMaster, *Judique on the Floor* (SeaScape)

Doug MacPhee, *Master of the Keyboards* (NQD)

Natalie MacMaster, *4 on the Floor* (Astro Custom)

Natalie MacMaster, *Road to the Isle* (Astro Custom)

Buddy MacMaster, *Glencoe Hall* (BM)

The Rankin Family, *North Country* (EMI)

Doug MacPhee, *Road to Tulloch* (MacPhee)

Ashley MacIsaac, *Close to the Floor* (Independent)

solo outings:
Bryndle:
Bryndle ♪♪♪½ (MusicMasters, 1995)

influences:
⏪ Stone Poneys, Laura Nyro, Wendy Waldman

⏩ Kathy Mattea, Wynonna, Trisha Yearwood

Daniel Durchholz

Roy Book Binder

Born Roy Bookbinder, October 5, 1943, in New York, NY.

A long-time acoustic guitar master, Roy Book Binder mixes Piedmont blues, folk, country, and hillbilly with an affable performing style that has traveled many miles over three decades. Turned onto blues while in the service in the 1960s, he traded being chauffeur for the Rev. Gary Davis to learn the secrets of the master before beginning his own recording career. He has

boone creek

lived, literally, on the road since making a mobile home his primary residence in 1976.

what to buy: *Travelin' Man* ♪♪♪♪ (Adelphi, 1970/Genes, 1997, prod. Gene Rosenthal) is still the book on Book Binder, as he soaks up influences and turns them into his own folk/blues, including Pink Anderson's title track and Davis's "Delia," in Book Binder's ever-pleasant solo style. For a band experience, try the rockabilly-tinged *The Hillbilly Blues Cats* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992).

what to buy next: *Bookeroo!* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Jerry Douglas) includes "Gonna Get Myself a Motorhome" with the tasty backing of Douglas's dobro, percussionist Kenny Malone, and bassist Edgar Meyer.

the rest:
Goin' Back to Tampa ♪♪ (Rounder, 1979)
Live Book: Don't Start Me Talkin' ♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Polk City Ramble N/A (Rounder, 1998)

influences:

- Pink Anderson, Rev. Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Bo Carter, Blind Boy Fuller, Blind Willie McTell, Blind Blake

Leland Rucker

Boone Creek

Formed 1977 in Kentucky.

Ricky Skaggs, mandolin, fiddle, guitar, lead vocals; Jerry Douglas, dobro, vocals; Terry Baucom, banjo, fiddle, vocals; Wes Golding, guitar, lead and harmony vocals; Steve Bryant, bass, bass vocals.

Ricky Skaggs's last bluegrass band before he went into country music was together only briefly but had an influence that reached beyond its limited recorded output, as Skaggs, Douglas, and Baucom went on to success individually and with other bands. Boone Creek mixed modern treatment of bluegrass standards with Golding's originals.

what to buy: Sugar Hill re-released the formerly out-of-print *One Way Track* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1977/1991) with three bonus live tracks added to the 10 original songs. Skaggs's bluesy lead vocals are strong and the four-part harmony on "Daniel Prayed" and "Little Community Church" is devastating. The fine vocal work is supported by intricate and imaginative picking, including Skaggs's fiery fiddling on "Sally Goodin."

worth searching for: *Boone Creek* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977, prod. Boone Creek) is quite good, too, but harder to find.

influences:

- J.D. Crowe & the New South, Country Gentlemen
- Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, IIIrd Tyme Out, Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder

see also: *Ricky Skaggs, Jerry Douglas*

Douglas Fulmer

Laura Boosinger

Born December 27, 1957.

Laura Boosinger studied Southern Appalachian music at Warren Wilson College under the tutelage of old-time banjo player David Holt, with whom she has also performed. She has also performed with the Painless Band, the Luke Smathers Band, Timmy Abell, and a host of other musicians from around the Asheville, North Carolina, area. Boosinger lives in Asheville, where she performs in concert, does children's programs, and teaches at old-time music camps.

what to buy: Boosinger's first CD, *My Carolina Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Upstream Records, 1990, prod. Steven Heller), is a nice mix of well-known songs like "Under the Weeping Willow" and a few that aren't heard often enough, such as Cousin Emmy's "Pretty Little Miss out in the Garden." All the songs have musical accompaniment, usually by Boosinger's clean, crisp clawhammer banjo playing. Holt's influence is evident; her timing is rock-steady, and she plays with the same eloquent phrasing. Her voice is as clear as the proverbial bell, with an unstrained, effortless quality that is particularly moving on "I Will Arise." On some songs she uses a guitar or lap dulcimer for accompaniment. The latter instrument works particularly well with "What'll We Do with the Baby-O." Boosinger is ably assisted throughout by Raymond McLain (guitar, mandolin, fiddle, and vocals), Mark Schatz (acoustic bass), Steven Heller (guitar and vocals), and Holt (harmonica). Mark Schatz makes "Under the Weeping Willow" stand out by playing bowed acoustic bass. All in all, this is a fine recording by a bunch of fine musicians. It might be hard to find in record stores, but it can be ordered from Boosinger at 400 Beaverdam Road, Asheville, NC 28804.

what to buy next: Boosinger's most recent CD is *Sing It Yourself* ♪♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1996, prod. Laura Boosinger, Mark Howard). You won't have any excuse for not singing it yourself—all of the words are provided in the liner notes. Most of the selections are well known, like "Sourwood Mountain," "Groundhog," even "Skip to My Lou." This isn't necessarily a presentation of kids' music, but most of the songs would go

well in a kids' concert and Boosinger probably uses them for that. This would be a good disc for parents who wanted to get their kids singing some folk songs.

influences:

◀◀ Luke Smathers, Quay Smathers, Carroll Best, David Holt, Byard Ray, Sheila Adams

▶▶ Numerous old-time banjo players

Dave Shombert

The Bothy Band

Formed February 1975, in Dublin, Ireland. Disbanded August 1979, in Ballysadare, County Sligo, Ireland.

Dónal Lunny, bouzouki, guitar, bodhrán, synthesizer, vocals; Paddy Glackin, fiddle (1975); Paddy Keenan, uilleann pipes, whistles; Matt Molloy, flute, whistles; Mícheál Ó Domhnaill, guitar, vocals; Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, vocals, clavinet, harmonium, electric piano; Tommy Peoples, fiddle (1975–76); Kevin Burke, fiddle (1976–79).

When Dónal Lunny left Planxty and formed his record company, Mulligan, he also began to work with a select group of musicians, Matt Molloy (flute), Paddy Keenan (pipes), and Paddy Glackin (fiddle), who had been performing with Tony MacMahon (accordion) for radio broadcasts. The five were joined soon afterwards by siblings Mícheál Ó Domhnaill (guitar, vocals) and Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill (vocals, clavinet), whose songs from the Donegal sean-nós tradition had brought them recognition with the band Skara Brae. They had recorded with Lunny, Molloy, and Donegal fiddle player Tommy Peoples on Mick Hanly's 1974 *Celtic Folkweave*, and Tríona had also played and recorded with Molloy, Peoples, piper Peter Browne, and singer Liam Weldon in 1973 under the name Sixteen Ninety-One. The initial band, called Seachtar ("seven" in Gaelic), was short-lived, Tony MacMahon soon being forced to leave because of his work as a TV and radio producer. With a new name, the Bothy Band, the six remaining musicians made their debut at Trinity College, Dublin, on February 2, 1975. Only a few months later, Glackin was replaced by Donegal fiddle player Tommy Peoples, with whom the band made its first recording, simply called *The Bothy Band 1975*. The impact of that recording was tremendous, and many of the tunes and songs on it became instant classics, played and replayed to this day at sessions in Ireland and beyond. After Kevin Burke replaced Peoples as the band's fiddle player, the Bothy Band recorded two equally memorable studio albums in 1976 and 1977, then released a live recording made in Paris in 1978. By then, the strain of constant touring and financial mismanagement had taken its toll, and band members were starting to pursue other projects. The band made its final appearance at the Ballysadare festival in August 1979. While hopes of a reunion have not materialized so far, all former members of the band have continued to be major creative forces in the Irish traditional music scene and beyond.

what to buy: From the very first chord strummed by Lunny and Ó Domhnaill, with Keenan's drones adding their low buzz before he and Molloy launch into "The Kesh Jig," to the last echoes of the reel "The Sailor's Bonnet," *The Bothy Band 1975* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1975/Green Linnet, 1983, prod. Dónal Lunny, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill) is a monumental album that set the scene for much of what has happened since in the world of Irish traditional music. The sound quality may not be quite as good as what listeners might expect today, the lead instruments may be slightly out of tune on a couple of tracks, still this is the quintessential Bothy Band recording. Peoples's razor-sharp, urgent fiddle playing gave the band unmatched raw sound and energy, while Lunny and Ó Domhnaill's inventive chord progressions and tightly matched accompaniment patterns propelled the music forward. Last but not least, the Ó Domhnaills' thrilling songs in English and Gaelic perfectly balanced the band's instrumental virtuosity. *Old Hag You Have Killed Me* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet, 1982, prod. Dónal Lunny, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill) is the band's mature album. With Kevin Burke's flowing and bluesy Sligo and Clare–tinged fiddle playing replacing Peoples's hard-edged sound in the mix, the band may have lost some of its grittiness but none of its energy. The production is first-rate and one gets a sense that the band is graduating from its experimental phase and taking charge of its sound. At any rate, they achieve a near perfect balance between breathtaking instrumentals, like the fiddle-driven "Farewell to Erin" or the dramatic "Michael Gorman's," and striking vocal tracks, like the piece of Scottish mouth music "Fionnghuala" and Ní Dhomhnaill's lilting "16 Come Next Sunday." The group's third album, *Out of the Wind into the Sun* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mulligan, 1977/Green Linnet, 1985, prod. Dónal Lunny, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill), while still packing a punch, did not quite achieve that same balance. Although they are classics, Ní Dhomhnaill's songs (she is the only vocalist on this one) are all pretty much in the same vein. On the other hand, the band's instrumentals are as powerful as ever, especially the reel marathon "Rip the Calico," Kevin Burke's setting of the classic pipe tune "The Hag at the Churn," and the amazing closing set of slides. By the time the live album *Afterhours* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mulligan, 1978/Green Linnet, 1984, prod. the Bothy Band) was

phil boulding

recorded in Paris, the band was reportedly falling apart, a victim of the pressures of the road. Yet, the performance is as good as one might hope for—and there are even a few surprises, like some songs that did not appear on any of the band's studio albums, particularly "The Death of Queen Jane" and "The Heathery Hills of Yarrow."

what to buy next: *The Best of the Bothy Band* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988) is an appealing collection of 12 tracks taken from the band's four original albums. When rumors started circulating about new Bothy Band recordings about to be released, they generated a considerable amount of anticipation. As it turns out, the 16 tracks on *Live in Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (Windsong, 1994/Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Pete Dauncey) were selected from two BBC-sponsored concerts that took place in 1976 and 1978. Although perhaps not as impressive as *Afterhours*, the album has its moments. The first batch of tracks is somewhat curious because sitting in for Paddy Keenan is piper Peter Browne, formerly associated with some of the "Bothies" in the band Sixteen Ninety-One. Browne is not nearly the piper Keenan is, but his presence may be the cause of changes in the instrumental medleys that will keep the listeners attentive. Keenan's pipe solo, from the 1978 concert, may also sound odd but will make sense to anyone who has met this moody genius or heard him perform. There is still plenty of exciting music throughout, as the crowd's reactions during the closing "Rip the Calico" medley will attest.

worth searching for: As obscure albums go, one could hardly beat the two Breton-produced LPs mixing tracks by Sixteen Ninety-One with recordings by the Castle Ceili Band of Dublin. On *Irish Music* ♪♪♪½ (Escalibur, c. 1973) and *Chants et Danses d'Irlande* ♪♪♪½ (Folk Loisirs, c. 1973), which were combined on the more recent CD release *Irish Traditional Pub Music* (Arfolk), Bothy Band fans can hear the emergence of some of the ideas that shaped the band's sound a few years later. A prototype version of the famous "Green Groves" track has Molloy's flute introducing the tune, soon joined by Tommy Peoples's fiery fiddling, with Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill's now classic clavinet accompaniment taking it up a notch on "Flowers of Red Hill." While the mix is often rough, there are some nice surprises, particularly with Tríona's songs, which include the unaccompanied "Rinne Me Smaointeadh Im Intinn" and a version of "The Banks of Claudy," which her brother recorded with Mick Hanly on the LP *Celtic Folkweave* ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1974, prod. Dónal Lunny). There is also hope that the Ó Domhnaills' work on *Skara Brae* ♪♪♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1971/Shanachie, 1983) will eventually reappear on CD, but for now one must search the used LP bins for it.

influences:

◀◀ Ceoltóirí Cualann, Sweeney's Men, Planxty, Skara Brae, Sixteen Ninety-One, Seachtar

▶▶ Touchstone, Moving Hearts, Nightnoise, the Dónal Lunny Group, Altan, Dervish

see also: *Kevin Burke, Nightnoise*

Philippe Varlet

Phil Boulding

See: Magical Strings

Bob Bovee and Gail Heil

Formed 1980s, in Minnesota.

Bob Bovee, guitar, harmonica, autoharp, vocals; Gail Heil, fiddle, banjo.

Bob Bovee and Gail Heil live in Houston County, Minnesota. Houston County is a rural area in Minnesota sometimes called "Bluff Country." The rolling hills and wide open natural spaces found there are a strong influence on the type of music they make together. They sing and play the old country and western songs that were popular in the days of 78s and field recordings. They play for lots of dances, barbecues, private parties, nursing homes, and community events . . . as they say, "grassroots stuff."

what to buy: *Rural Route 2* ♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1996, prod. Bob Bovee, Gail Heil) is an 18-song CD that brings old-time country music into the 1990s without many significant updates. The liner notes mention that this couple took the "rural route" many years ago, with their home (at Rural Route 2) and in their music. For fans of the more traditional forms of western and cowboy music, you will be pleased to hear this CD. This is not the cowboy music of the neatly groomed singing stars of the silver screen, complete with orchestral backing. No, this is more along the lines of what you might hear if you were out on the actual trail sitting around an actual campfire and listening to an actual cowboy . . . and his saddle pal.

the rest:

Behind the Times ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1986) (cassette only)
Come Over to See Me Sometime ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1991) (cassette only)

solo outings:

Bob Bovee:

Pop Wagner and Bob Bovee ♪♪½ (Train on the Island, 1977) (cassette only)
Come All You Waddies ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1988) (cassette only)

influences:

Almeda Riddle, New Lost City Ramblers, G.B. Grayson

Skip Gorman, Ann and Phil Case, Liz Masterson and Sean Blackburn

Steve Gardner

Robin Huw Bowen

Born June 7, 1957, in Liverpool, U.K.

Robin Huw Bowen is on a mission to reinvigorate the tradition of the triple harp in Wales. The triple harp is a very unusual type of harp, in that it has three rows of strings, instead of the standard single row. The triple harp is the only truly chromatic harp available, and brings a whole new repertoire to the instrument. When the Welsh discovered the triple harp in the sixteenth century, they adopted it as their national instrument. This nationwide interest helped maintain the tradition of harping in Wales long past the time when the tradition had flagged in the neighboring Celtic countries. So, while Irish and Scottish harping traditions were all but lost, the Welsh maintained a living tradition with their harp, keeping the music always alive. Although the Welsh eventually turned to the pedal harp instead, there were a few proponents of the triple harp that kept this living legacy alive. This included the gypsy harpers, and later a few dedicated individuals who learned from the last of the gypsies. Bowen studied the work of several of those last dedicated souls. In his quest, he has developed an amazing virtuosity, surpassed by none. His mastery of his instrument, his love of his ancestral roots, and his passion to revive the triple harp of his country have allowed him to give a special gift to the harping community, namely a wealth of knowledge about and music for the triple harp. In 1987 he published a book of some 200 Welsh hornpipes, which he collected, edited, and arranged for the triple harp. His in-depth understanding of the Welsh form of theme and variation is demonstrated in his arrangements. He has toured the world on his mission, introducing the magic of the triple harp to assorted audiences. Bowen is known as a solo performer whose concerts demonstrate his amazing dexterity and his enthralling story-telling.

what to buy: In general, Bowen shines in live performance in a way that doesn't quite translate to recording. On *Greet the Harp* ♪♪♪♪ (Sain, 1988), Bowen is joined by a few other musicians on fiddle, banjo, and guitar. This adds a depth and variety to this recording that is lacking on all his other solo recording efforts. This is Bowen's first recording, and unquestionably his best. His sparkling rendition of "The Bells of Aberdyfi" shines, and his arrangement of "Ruddlan Marsh/Cuckoo's Nest" is vibrant. There are fun collections of both jigs and polkas. All around, this is a high-quality, enjoyable collection of tunes.

what to buy next: Bowen's other solo outings lack the vivacity he brings to the stage and the variety he brought to his first album with the addition of other musicians. He also has an unfortunate habit of repeating material between albums. He combines much of his choicest solo material on *Harp Music of Wales* ♪♪♪ (Saydisc Records, 1995, prod. Gef Lucena). A wide scope of Welsh music is represented here, from the well-known "Ash Grove" and "All through the Night" to gypsy tunes such as "Polca Saiforella." Along with the assortment of traditional tunes, two modern Welsh compositions are included: "Sailing Home," a beautiful, wistful air, and "The Thread of Life," an amazingly seductive tune clearly written for the harp. *The Sweet Harp of My Land* ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. Steve Howard, Dai Shell) has a few special gems on it, including "The Swan Song."

what to avoid: Unless you find you are a particular aficionado of Welsh gypsy music, *Hunting the Hedgehog* ♪♪ (Firebird, 1994, prod. Steve Howard) is likely to sound very repetitive by the 3rd or 4th listen. There is no break in the toe-tapping gypsy offering. The music is brilliantly performed, however, with unbelievable speed and accuracy.

worth searching for: Bowen's group outings have all been strong performances. Particularly wonderful is Cusan Tan's *Kiss of Fire* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fflach, 1992/Firebird, 1994), a rich example of what current-day Wales has to offer. Here Bowen teams up with Ann Morgan Jones and Sue Jones Davies to create new and invigorating Welsh music in the traditional vein. Lush open vocals, deep resonant cello, and soaring flute lines accompany Bowen's exquisite harp. Check out Mabsant's *Through the Wire* ♪♪♪ (Sain, 1987) if you'd like to hear Welsh music with a modern twist. Combining triple harp with vocals, guitar, synthesizers, and other modern instruments, this group explores a variety of musical styles with a political slant.

solo outings:

Cusan Tan:

Esgair—The Ridge ♪♪♪½ (Sain, 1995)

influences:

Alan Stivell, Nansi Richards, Ar Log

Siwsann George

Jo Hughey Morrison

bryan bowers

Bryan Bowers

Born August 18, 1940, in VA.

The musical potential of the autoharp was greatly expanded by the playing of Bryan Bowers. Accompanying his earth-toughened baritone with melodic five-finger playing of the multi-stringed instrument, Bowers has used the Carter Family–popularized instrument as the setting for his interpretations of traditional folk songs and humorous originals. A native of rural Virginia farm country, Bowers came to music naturally. As a child, he heard chants in the fields and watched dancers as they walked up the railroad line laying down the track. His first exposure to the string band tradition was at a Catholic Church where a string band played old time dance music and Czechoslovakian fiddle tunes. Although he first heard an autoharp played by a teacher in school, Bowers remained unimpressed until he heard a performance by a professional musician much later. While he had previously studied guitar, slide guitar, dulcimer, and mandocello, Bowers found his natural musical voice after buying an autoharp and spending months learning to play. Bowers developed his unique technique in order to get a denser sound and a louder volume level as a street singer. Beginning his professional musical career in Washington, D.C., Bowers's first gig was a six-month engagement as opening act for a then-unknown Emmylou Harris. His first break came when he was befriended by Mike Seeger of the New Lost City Ramblers. With Seeger's endorsement, he was able to secure a spot at the Chicago Folk Festival. When he received three major reviews in Chicago newspapers, his future was secured. Bowers's music was introduced to bluegrass audiences by the Dillards, who brought him with them when they performed at festivals. Washington, D.C.-based duo Bill and Taffy Danoff brought Bowers's tune "Berklee Women" to John Denver, who changed it from a ballad to a rocker and featured it on three albums including a *Greatest Hits* collection. Bowers has lived in Seattle, Washington, since 1975.

what to buy: On *By Heart* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985), Bryan's autoharp playing and gruffy baritone vocals are accompanied by members of the New Grass Revival (Sam Bush and John Cowan) and the Seldom Scene (Mike Auldridge, John Duffy, Tom Gray, Phil Rosenthal, and Ben Eldridge). In addition to unique versions of traditional folk songs ("Shady Grove" and "Ezekiel") and traditional-sounding tunes by Tommy Thompson of the Red Clay Ramblers, the album includes the memorable tongue-in-jowl ditty "Zen Gospel Singing."

what to buy next: On his debut album, *The View from Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1979, prod. Bryan Bowers), Bowers sets his songs to the accompaniment of bluegrass bands the Seldom Scene and the New Grass Revival as well as to that of the late folk-pop instrumentalist Steve Goodman. The result is a memorable blend of the string band tradition and the country music-in-overdrive sounds of bluegrass.

the rest:
Home, Home, on the Road ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1980)
For You ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ The Carter Family, Bill Monroe, the New Lost City Ramblers, Mike Seeger
▶▶ John McCutcheon

Craig Harris

Boys from Indiana

Formed 1973, in Sunman, IN. Disbanded 1994.

Aubrey Holt, guitar, vocals; Tom Holt, mandolin, bass, guitar, vocals; Jerry Holt, bass vocals; Paul Mullins, fiddle (1973–79); Noah Crase, banjo (1973–79); Harley Gabbard, dobro; Sam Jeffries, fiddle; Tony Holt, bass; Jamie Johnson, mandolin; Cabe Conley, banjo; others.

Formed around the nucleus of brothers Aubrey, Tom, and Jerry Holt, the Boys from Indiana were a fixture on the bluegrass festival circuit for two decades. The band came together after Aubrey Holt failed to establish himself as a songwriter in Nashville. They were known for structuring their shows around a theme, such as "The Pioneers of Bluegrass." They disbanded in 1994 after brothers Tom and Jerry left the group.

what's available: *Touchin Home* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1992, prod. Aubrey Holt, Buddy Spicher) contains 12 songs, including eight originals and the Buck Owens/Don Rich instrumental "Cajun Fiddle." This is a relaxed album with the instrumental work usually backing up the vocals rather than being in the forefront.

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs
▶▶ Traditional Grass

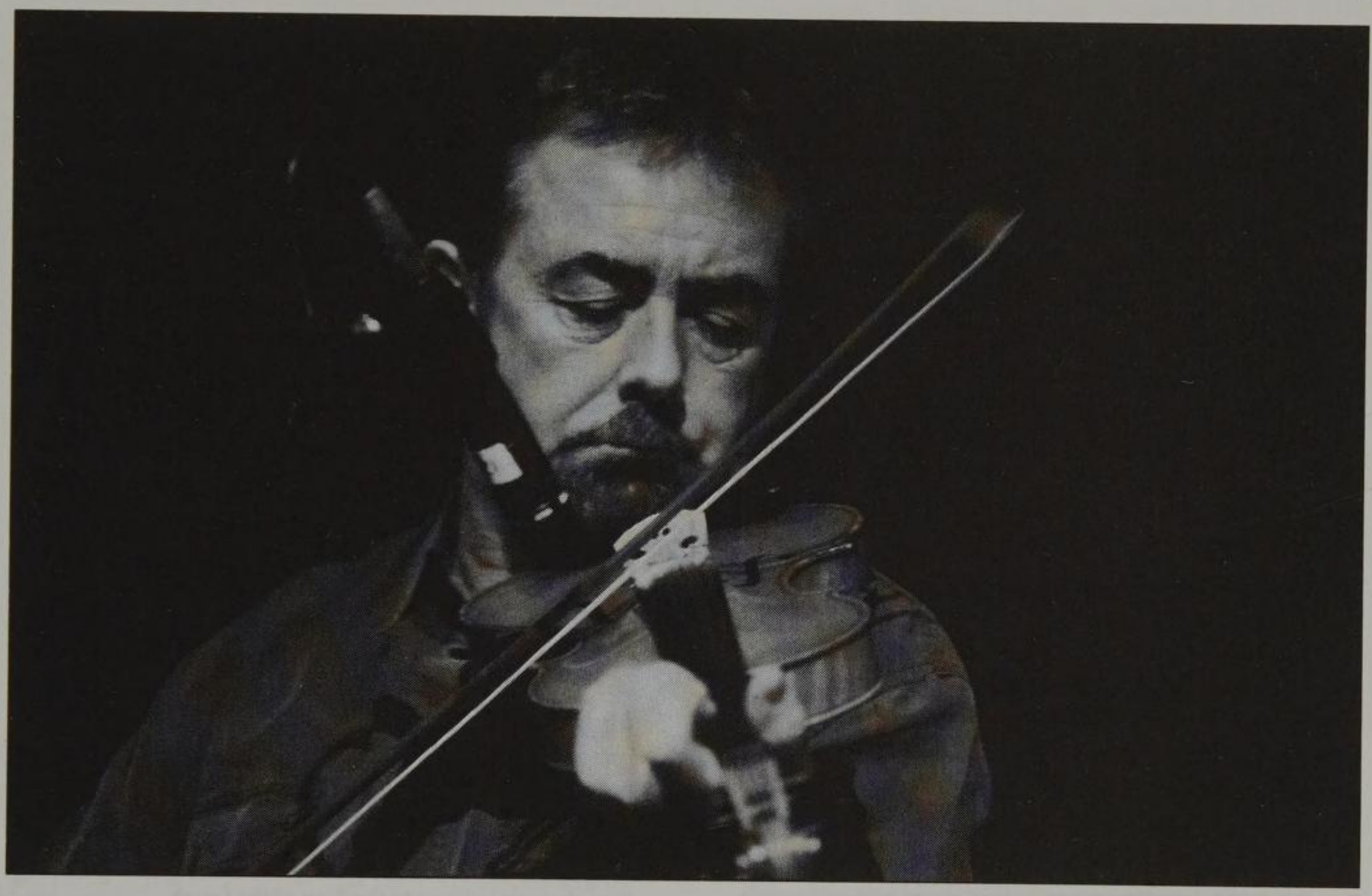
Douglas Fulmer

Boys of the Lough

Formed 1967, in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Aly Bain, fiddle; Cathal McConnell, flute, tin whistle, vocals; Dave Richardson, mandolin, cittern, English concertina, button accordion;

boys of the lough



Aly Bain of Boys of the Lough **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Christy O'Leary, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, mouth-organ, vocals; Chris Newman, guitar; John Coakley, piano, guitar; Robin Morton, vocal, Anglo concertina, bodhrán. Past members include: Dick Gaughan, guitar, vocals; Tich Richardson, guitar; Mike Whellans, vocals, guitar; Tommy Gunn.

The Boys of the Lough formed in Belfast as a trio of Northern Irish musicians: Cathal McConnell and Tommy Gunn, both of County Fermanagh, and Robin Morton from County Armagh. That line-up fell apart quite quickly, and the Boys of the Lough ceased to exist for a short period, but McConnell and Morton continued to perform as a duo. At the 1969 Falkirk folk festival, the duo met Shetland fiddler Aly Bain and singer/guitarist Mike Whellans, who were playing on the Scottish folk circuit. They played a set together at the festival and left with the hope of teaming up again. Their opportunity came in 1971, and soon thereafter the band was officially re-formed, this time as a hybrid Irish/Scottish band. Dick Gaughan of Glasgow replaced Whellans in 1972, when the band was most of the way through recording its first LP. Interestingly, they scrapped the original takes and re-did all the tracks to include Gaughan, which suggests a "lost" Boys of the Lough album somewhere, waiting to be issued—though it probably never will be. Gaughan was replaced after two years and one LP by Dave Richardson of Northumberland, completing the group's "internationalization" by the addition of its first Englishman. The four-piece line-up of McConnell, Bain, Richardson, and Morton lasted for six years, touring widely in Europe and America and releasing six albums. Robin Morton left in 1979 to found Scotland's Temple Records. He was replaced by Dave Richardson's brother, Tich, on guitar. This line-up survived until 1983, when Tich Richardson was killed in a car accident. Although they recorded three albums, none of them is currently in print. After two years of recuperation, the band came together again in 1985, with new members Christy O'Leary and John Coakley. That line-up survived 10 years, until Coakley was replaced by jazzy English guitarist Chris Newman in 1995. The latest news from the Boys of the Lough is that both O'Leary and Newman have left the band due

8 6 boys of the lough

to contractual disputes. No replacements have been named as of this writing.

what to buy: The title track on *Farewell and Remember Me* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1987 prod. Peter Harris, Boys of the Lough), a sad emigration song sung by McConnell, is only one highlight of the Boys of the Lough's best available CD. Mostly an album of Irish music, this features two songs each from McConnell and O'Leary, the best being O'Leary's rendition of the Gaelic ballad "An Spailpin Fanach." It also contains a set of music played on a historically fascinating set of uilleann pipes, made by Taylor of Philadelphia in about 1890, and later owned by the piper William Hanafin. The rest of the album is as solid a set of Irish and Scottish dance music as you'll find.

what to buy next: *To Welcome Paddy Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Peter Harris, Boys of the Lough) is only a slight step down from *Farewell and Remember Me*. The first album since the devastating car accident that killed Richardson, it reflects the new band's predominantly Irish makeup with lots of material from Ireland. Mostly a terrific album of jigs, reels, and hornpipes, this also features two songs, of which the title track is the most affecting. *Sweet Rural Shade* (Shanachie, 1988, prod. Boys of the Lough, Peter Harris) is very much in the mold of the previous two albums by this lineup: mostly traditional Irish music, mostly strong, textured arrangements of dance music, with impeccable musicianship on fiddle, flute, pipes, mandolins, and other instruments. It also has a couple of songs for good measure. *Live at Passim* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1975, prod. Boys of the Lough) captures an early version of the band, complete with Robin Morton, and is the only CD release to feature Morton's singing and sense of humor. One of his songs here, a humorous ballad/recitation/vaudeville act, is a hilarious account about trying to care for an uncooperative baby. Other highlights of this CD include a set of Shetland fiddle tunes (including perennial favorite "The Day Dawn,") a "piece," or descriptive tone-poem, from the piping tradition, and some lovely songs sung by McConnell. The group's other live effort currently available on CD is *Live at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪½ (Sage Arts, 1992, prod. Boys of the Lough, Peter Harris, Matthew Sutton). Although it was recorded in 1988, 14 years after *Live at Passim*, the group includes another version of "Flower of Magherally," which has changed remarkably little since its earlier incarnation. This album captures a good but short Boys of the Lough concert, one at which they played support to Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys. Perhaps to highlight the connections between their own music and Monroe's, they performed a high proportion of Scottish music, almost none of it from Bain's native Shetland. Jigs, reels, and polkas galore fill up this album; it has only two songs besides "Flower of Magherally," one of which is a very silly untitled song introducing the band, written and sung by emcee Garrison Keillor. *A Midwinter Night's Dream* ♪♪♪ (Blix Street, 1994, prod. Boys of the Lough) is the Boys of the Lough's Christmas album. With driving rhythms from guest guitarist Chris Newman and guest pianist Henning Sommero, the four-piece group of O'Leary, Bain, McConnell, and Richardson performs a lot of beautiful dance music from Ireland and Shetland. They also sing two carols and a heartbreaking ballad. Interesting twists include some Swedish tunes and one tune that is said to have come from Yaki Eskimos. Bain's strong fiddling, a preponderance of Shetland tunes (including the well-known "Da Day Dawn," "Christmas Day in the Morning," "The Papa Stour Sword Dance," "Da Trowie Burn," and "Da Fields of Foula," all of which have appeared on previous Boys of the Lough albums), and a long section in the notes about "Yule in Shetland" make this an album focused on Bain's native islands. Released in the U.K. as *The Day Dawn*.

what to avoid: *Good Friends—Good Music* ♪♪ (Philo, 1977) isn't really a Boys of the Lough CD. It's really "members of the Boys of the Lough play in duets and trios with friends who are not in the band." While this can be diverting, and isn't by any means bad, it isn't what most people will want to hear when they sit down to listen to the Boys of the Lough.

the rest:
The Fair Hills of Ireland ♪♪♪ (Sage Arts, 1992)

worth searching for: Two albums, *Lochaber No More* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1976, prod. Boys of the Lough) and *The Piper's Broken Finger* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1976, prod. Boys of the Lough), are both available on cassette but not CD. The band's very first album, *The Boys of the Lough* ♪♪♪♪♪ (prod. Boys of the Lough), features Dick Gaughan, later to become one of the great voices of the Scottish folk scene. His renditions of several ballads are unforgettable, and are very much worth buying if you can find an old LP copy; it was available on LP in the U.S. for many years from Shanachie Records.

solo outings:
Aly Bain:
Aly Bain & Friends (Greentrax, 1994)
Lonely Bird (Green Linnet, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ The Chieftains, Tom Anderson
▶▶ Craobh Rua

Steve Winick

Carrie Bradley

See: Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Paul Brady

Born May 19, 1947, in Strabane, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland.

Few singer/songwriters steeped in traditional music have seen their songs reach such a broad audience as Paul Brady has. After studying Gaelic at University College Dublin, he played in various local bands and took an interest in traditional Irish music. Expanding on his early talents as a guitarist and organist, Brady took up mandolin, bouzouki, and 12-string, and during the mid-'70s was a member of the folky Johnstons and the more traditional and internationally acclaimed Planxty, the first modern Irish band to expose a young mass audience to traditional Irish music. Although Planxty split up for the first time in 1975, Brady and fellow member Andy Irvine continued to record together. The acoustic *Andy Irvine/Paul Brady* was recorded in 1976, though not released in the United States until 1981, on Green Linnet. Brady recorded his first solo album, *Welcome Here Kind Stranger* in 1978 and then shifted gears to embrace a more electric sound. While 1981's brilliant *Hard Station* rocked harder than Brady had before, his evocative, intelligent songwriting and inviting, edgy voice retained the passion of his quieter work. *Hard Station* contains "Crazy Dreams," his breakthrough song that turned into a major hit in Ireland, and the lead track, "Busted Loose," which became the first of his songs to be covered by better-known artists, in this case, Dave Edmunds. During the '80s and '90s, Brady has continued to record powerful albums, but his songs' widest exposure has generally come from other voices. Tina Turner has gone to the Brady well more than once, and included the raucous "Steel Claw" on her *Private Dancer* album. Brady penned the title track of Bonnie Raitt's multi-platinum *Luck of the Draw*, which also includes his "Not the Only One." Santana, Maura O'Connell, and country singer Bryan White are just a few of the other artists who've recorded his songs. But not only is Brady a world-class songwriter, he's also a musician's musician, having appeared as a singer and/or instrumentalist on albums by Mark Knopfler, Rosanne Cash, Mary Chapin Carpenter, the Chieftains, and Raitt, to name a few.

what to buy: Recorded in Dublin during the spring of 1981, *Hard Station* ♪♪♪♪½ (21 Records/PolyGram, 1981, prod. Hugh Murphy, Paul Brady) is essential in its bridging of folky melodies, rocking arrangements, and passion-drenched lyrics, often about struggle and disillusion. "Nothing but the Same Old Story" is the masterpiece among masterpieces on this album, a song about leaving one's homeland but never fulfilling the promise of a better life. A jarring song about longing and prejudice fit inside a wonderfully catchy melody, this song sums up Brady's multi-layered perceptions and brilliance as well as any, but on *Hard Station*, it's only the tip of the iceberg.

what to buy next: *Songs and Crazy Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Fontana, 1992, prod. Hugh Murphy, Paul Brady, Ian Maidman, Nigel Gray, Phil Palmer, Neil Dorfsman) compiles four of *Hard Station*'s best songs along with a decent sampling of some of Brady's better work from various other releases during the '80s, including the gorgeous ballad "Helpless Heart," a song later covered by country good-boy Bryan White.

the rest:

Andy Irvine/Paul Brady ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1976/1981)
Welcome Here Kind Stranger ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1978/93)
Trick or Treat ♪♪♪½ (Fontana, 1991)
Spirits Colliding ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1995)

worth searching for: Recorded live at the Half Moon Putney in London on the evening of April 6, 1984, *Full Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Demon, 1984, prod. Paul Brady, Phil Palmer) brings Brady and band right into your living room for an energized romp through eight of his best songs, including "Hard Station," "Steel Claw," "Helpless Heart," and "Busted Loose." Recorded at a time when Brady's songs were being covered with a vengeance, *Full Moon* finds the singer stretching out with playful abandon. Time spent digging for this out-of-print gem will be rewarded. *True for You* ♪♪♪½ (21 Records/Atco, 1986, prod. Neil Dorfsman, Paul Brady) is treasured for its inclusion of the original versions of "Steel Claw" and "Not the Only One," which aren't available on either *Hard Station* or *Songs and Crazy Dreams*. Easier to find is *Live for Ireland* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1988, prod. Avril MacRory), the recorded document of a multi-artist live "self-aid" concert to benefit and call attention to Ireland's huge unemployment problem. Brady contributes "The Island," a powerful song about learning from and transcending the mistakes of the past. Other performers on this collection include Van Morrison, the Pogues, the Chieftains, Elvis Costello, Clannad, and U2.

influences:

◀◀ Van Morrison, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Mark Knopfler, Bruce Cockburn, Richard Thompson

see also: *The Johnstons, Planxty*

David Sokol

Billy Bragg

Born December 20, 1957, in Essex, England.

The sight of this brash Brit busking with an electric guitar and speakers mounted on his backpack was an irresistible image in 1983. His fiery mixture of the Clash's energy and Woody Guthrie's political fervor was an equally irresistible image. Since he often performs solo, Bragg could be dismissed as just another angry folk singer, but underneath the sometimes laborious left-wing rhetoric is a startling command of pop music that made his better albums a fascinating tug-of-war between message and melody. His best known song, "A New England," was turned into a British radio hit by Kirsty MacColl and was recently ransacked by American punk-pop act Too Much Joy.

what to buy: *Back to Basics* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1987, prod. Kenny Jones) compiles his first three British releases—*Life's a Riot with Spy Vs. Spy*, *Brewing Up*, and *Between the Wars*—and offers the most cohesive look at Bragg's earlier, gruff appeal. *Talking with the Taxman about Poetry* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1986, prod. Kenny Jones, John Porter) reflects a marked jump in maturity as a songwriter ("Levi Stubbs' Tears," "Greetings to the New Brunette") and the start of a warmer, more-fleshed out sound that reaches fruition on *Don't Try This at Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1991, prod. Grant Showbiz). The latter includes his prettiest, most reflective material, and the song "You Woke Up My Neighborhood" sports backing from members of R.E.M.

what to buy next: *Workers Playtime* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1988, prod. Joe Boyd) is Bragg's first attempt to integrate a band sound with help from noted British folk producer Boyd. Such infectious tunes as "Life with the Lions," "She's Got a New Spell," and "Waiting for the Great Leap Forwards" foreshadow what he will achieve on "Don't Try This at Home."

what to avoid: *The Internationale* ♪ (Elektra, 1990, prod. Wiggy, Grant Showbiz) is a turgid EP that finds Bragg on his socialist soapbox offering heavy-handed adaptations of protest anthems dating back to the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century.

the rest:
Help Save the Youth of America ♪♪♪ EP (Elektra, 1988)
William Bloke ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1996)
Bloke on Bloke ♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1997)

worth searching for: *Let Them Eat Bingo* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1990), the debut album by Beats International, finds guest vocalist Bragg mustering up a convincing falsetto on the Philly soul-flavored "Won't Talk about It."

influences:
The Clash, Woody Guthrie, Elvis Costello
Hammell on Trial, John Wesley Harding

David Okamoto

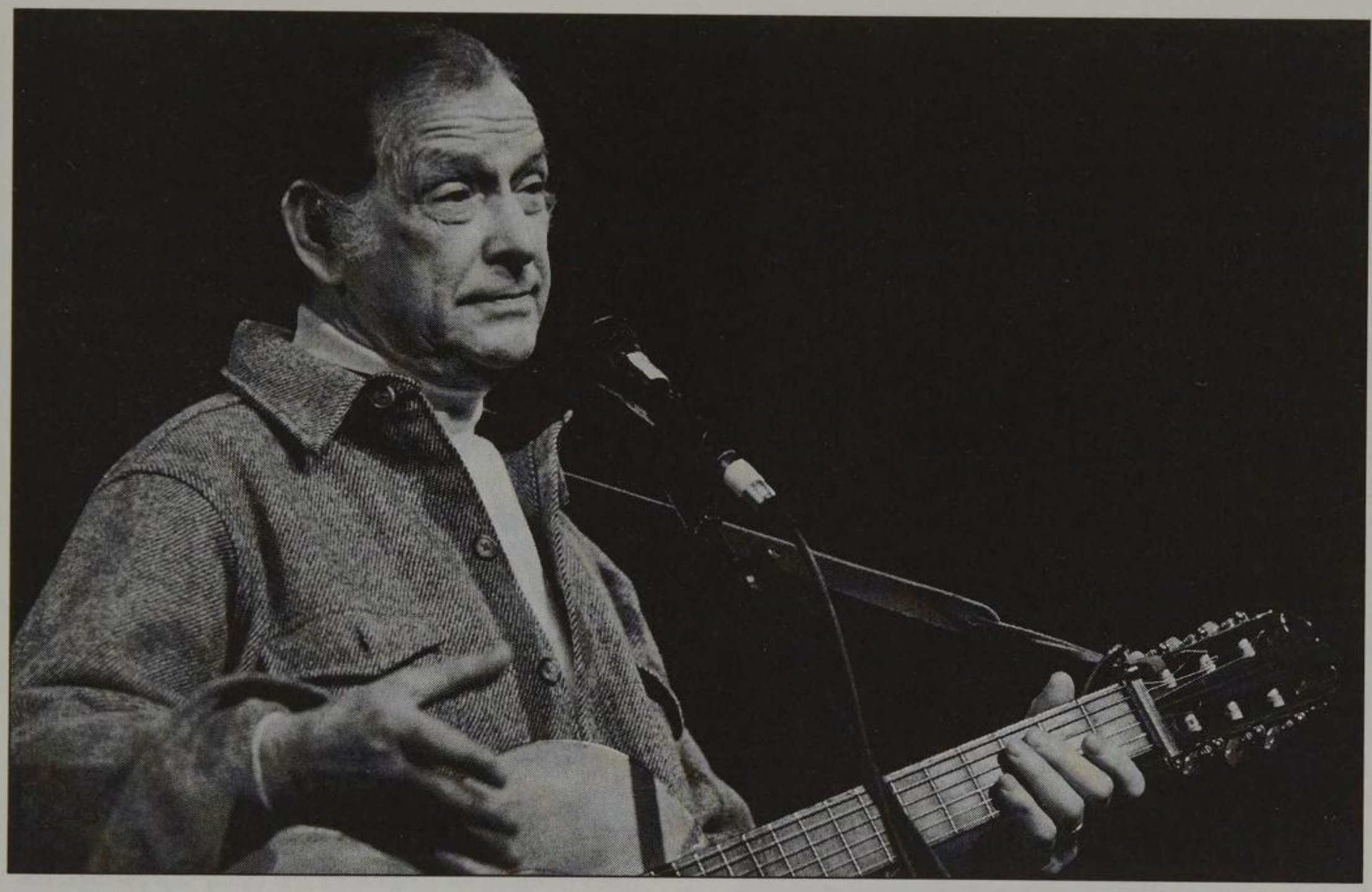
Oscar Brand

Born February 7, 1920, in Winnipeg, Canada.

Oscar Brand has been a major influence on the evolution of American folk music for more than a half century. The host of a weekly radio show, *The World of Folk Music*, on New York Public radio station WNYC, Brand has provided a forum for everyone from Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly to Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. In addition to over 100 albums of his mostly satirical "bawdy" songs, Brand has written numerous scripts and scores for television as well as off-Broadway and Broadway shows. His first book, *Singing Holidays*, was published in 1957 and his second book, *The Ballad Mongers*, remains an important historical exploration of early American folk music.

Born on a Canadian wheat farm, Brand moved with his family to Minneapolis and Chicago before settling in New York. During the Depression, he traveled the United States and sought work as a farm hand. After earning an undergraduate degree in abnormal psychology from Brooklyn College, he served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Discharged in 1945, he toured for a few months as a singer in the *Herb Shriner Show*. In 1945, Brand was hired as coordinator of folk music at WNYC and as the host of a weekly radio show, *Folksong Festival*, that was broadcast throughout Europe by the United States Information Service. Brand's current show, *The World of Folk Music*, was launched in 1966. Brand maintained a busy schedule throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. A member of the board of directors for the Newport Folk Festival, he hosted and served as music director for televisions shows including NBC-TV's *Exploring Show* and *The First Look* in the United States, and *Let's Sing Out* and *Brand New Scene* in Canada.

what to buy: With the release of *I Love Cats* ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1994), Brand showed that he had lost none of the humor that made his albums of "bawdy" songs so memorable in the 1950s and '60s. Accompanying himself on acoustic guitar and joined by John Pickow (vocals, synthesizer, banjo), John Foley (vocals, guitar, bass), Jean Ritchie (vocals), and Steve Guglielmo (sax, clarinet, strings), Brand sings 11 original songs that pay musi-



Oscar Brand **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

cal tribute to felines including "Cat-alist," "Them Doggoned Cats," "Cat Rap," and "The Great Big Little Cat Show."

what to buy next: On *Folk Songs for Fun* ♪♪♪ (Decca, 1962), Brand and folksinging quartet the Tarriers emphasize the joys of folk music with their interpretations of traditional songs including "Cotton-Eyed Joe," "Sweet Betsy from Pike," and "The Big Rock Candy Mountain."

the rest:

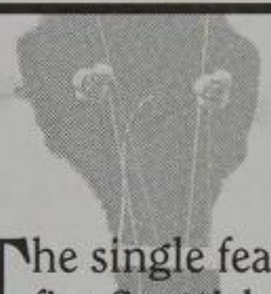
Bawdy Songs and Backroom Ballads ♪♪♪ (Audio Fidelity, 1956)
Wild Blue Yonder ♪♪ (Elektra, 1959)
Every Inch a Sailor ♪♪ (Elektra, 1960)
Out of the Blue ♪♪ (Elektra, 1960)
Boating Songs ♪♪ (Elektra, 1960)
Tell It to the Marines ♪♪ (Elektra, 1960)
All Time Hootenanny Folk Favorites ♪♪ (Decca, 1960)
Sports Car Songs for Big Wheels ♪♪ (Elektra, 1960)
Bawdy Western Songs ♪♪♪ (Audio Fidelity, 1960)
Bawdy Songs Go to College ♪♪♪ (Audio Fidelity, 1961)
Up in the Air ♪♪ (Elektra, 1961)
Election Songs of the U.S. ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1961)
Songs for Adults ♪♪ (ABC, 1961)
(With the Backroom Boys) *Sing Along Bawdy Songs & Backroom Ballads* ♪♪♪ (Audio Fidelity, 1962)
Snow Job for Skiers ♪♪ (Elektra, 1963)
Songs Fore Golfers ♪♪ (Elektra, 1963)
For Doctors Only ♪♪ (Elektra, 1963)
(With Dave Sear and Eric Weissberg) *Rollicking Sea Shanties* ♪♪ (Audio Fidelity, 1966)
Oscar Brand and Jean Ritchie ♪♪♪ (Archives of Folk and Jazz Music, 1967)
The Americans and Songs of Our Country ♪♪ (Pickwick, 1974)
Billy the Kid in Song and Story ♪♪ (Caedmon, 1977)
Pie in the Sky ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1996)
Get a Dog ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Burl Ives, Leadbelly

▶▶ Bob Dylan, Steve Goodman, Arlo Guthrie

Craig Harris



scottish fiddle styles

The single feature that most clearly identifies Scottish fiddling is the use of the Scots snap, a pair of notes, the first of which is short and the second of which is long. This dotted rhythm, and its opposite, give Scottish strathspeys and marches a bouncy or spiky feeling. Reels and jigs, however, are played more evenly. Scottish fiddling can be thought of as folk music, but it is not strictly so. In eighteenth-century Scotland, fiddling was not limited to rural peasants, but had its place in the ballrooms and drawing rooms of high society as well. The bulk of the well over 15,000 known (published) fiddle tunes were composed in that "golden age." Scottish fiddle tunes have always been transmitted both by aural tradition and written sources.

Of the regional styles, the Northeast has been predominant in the twentieth century. It shows a strong classical influence. Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) fiddling is thought to have preserved the Gaelic flavor of the old Highland style. It has a dance-oriented, driving rhythm. The modern West Highland style is smoother, and influenced greatly by bagpiping. The fiddle music of the Shetland islands was at one time more Scandinavian than Scottish, and this aspect of the style has been revived, although Scottish tunes are still played.

Instruments that have been used to accompany the fiddle over the years include the harpsichord, cello, pump organ, spoons and bones, piano, accordion, and guitar.

Kate Dunlay

Brave Combo

Formed 1979, in Denton, TX.

Carl Finch, vocals, accordion, guitar; Bubba Hernandez, bass, vocals; Jeffrey Barnes, saxophone, clarinet, percussion.

A self-described "nuclear polka" band, Brave Combo is often shortchanged as a novelty act since its frenetic live shows zigzag from stampede-inducing romps through "Who Stole the Kishka" and "The Happy Wanderer" all the way to a surf version of "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning." But over the years the Combo—a revolving six-piece band built around the nucleus of Finch, Hernandez, and Barnes—has evolved into a versatile outfit capable of being both faithful and funky: they've developed a startling command of traditional folk music from Greece, Israel, and Mexico while retaining the infectious, dance-frenzy enthusiasm that makes them a favorite at weddings, bar mitzvahs, Oktoberfests, and alternative-rock clubs. Once a band to simply get wrecked to, Brave Combo is now a group to be reckoned with.

what to buy: *No, No, No, Cha Cha Cha* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Brave Combo) focuses on the group's Latin influences and boasts a seamless medley of the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction" and Ringo Starr's "No No Song," a festive salsa version of Cher's "The Way of Love," and a boss bossa-nova rendition of "Fly Me to the Moon." *Polkas for a Gloomy World* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Brave Combo) is their Grammy-nominated return to straight-ahead polka, mixing jaunty originals like "Flying Saucer" with traditional Mexican, Russian, and German polkas. *Group Dance Epidemic* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Brave Combo) collects studio versions of such live favorites as "The Chicken Dance," their Devo-like demolition of "The Hokey Pokey," and other vintage tunes designed for conga lines and bunny-hop parades. The band's warped genius is revealed on its cover of Van McCoy's "The Hustle," in which it uncovers the melodic thread connecting the disco hit with Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side."

what to buy next: *Girl* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Brave Combo, Bucks Burnett), a surprisingly listenable collaboration with Tiny Tim, demonstrates the depth of Brave Combo's musical vocabulary and its astounding ability to make anyone sound good. Check out the hepcat-jazz version of "Stairway to Heaven" and the "Wooly Bully"-like re-working of "Bye Bye Blackbird."

what to avoid: *Musical Varieties* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Brave Combo) is a compilation of pre-Rounder tracks from the early '80s. Although hardly horrid, they lean toward predictable gimmickry ("People Are Strange" and "Sixteen Tons" as polkas), sideswiping genres the band would eventually tackle head-on.

the rest:

Polkatharsis ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Humansville ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
A Night on Earth ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990)
It's Christmas, Man! ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
Mood Swing Music ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Hokey Pokey* ♪♪♪ (denTone, 1994, prod. Brave Combo), a self-released EP, features early versions of several tunes on *Group Dance Epidemic* and the otherwise unavailable concert favorite, "The Hava Nagila Twist."

solo outings:
Brave Combo & Lauren Agnelli:
Kiss of Fire ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ You name it, from Xavier Cugat to Astor Piazzolla
▶▶ The New Orleans Klezmer All Stars

David Okamoto

The Breeders

See: Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Maire Brennan

See: Clannad

Pap Brewer

Born Finley J. Brewer, December, 27, 1906, in Justis Siding, NC. Died September 4, 1993, in Roan Mountain, TN.

At age 15, Finley J. "Pap" Brewer Sr.'s parents signed him up to work in the coal mines of Pond Creek, Kentucky, owned by Henry Ford. Here Brewer learned to play the fiddle, although he had been playing homemade instruments and dancing since he was just a toddler. When Pap took up the banjo, he didn't play it in the old clawhammer way like his father, but in the modern two-finger style like other musicians of his generation in that area. This style of banjo playing was also used by Wade Mainer, Bascom Lunsford, and Doc Watson over in Western North Carolina. Pap eventually came to play fiddle, banjo, and guitar at all the local gatherings as well as radio gigs on WOPI out of Bristol, Tennessee. He continued to play music until his death in 1993, in an auto accident; he was 86.

what's available: *Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr. from Roan Mountain, TN* ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1994, prod. Carolyn H. Sturgill, Gary Brewer) is a great glimpse into the old tradition of mountain music. Many of the songs performed here are the basis for the songs and tunes that became bluegrass standards. The recordings on this CD were made at various locations later in Pap's life. The final recordings made just a few weeks before his death. An additional tune, "Cumberland Gap" is added by grandson Gary Brewer as a tribute to his grandfather.

influences:
◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, G.B. Grayson, Wade Mainer
▶▶ Gary Brewer and his Kentucky Ramblers

Steve Gardner

Anne Briggs

Born September 29, 1944, Toton, Nottinghamshire, England.

In the liner notes to *Classic Anne Briggs*, Norma Waterson says of Anne Briggs, "Before her there was a twee style of women singing English folk songs and she brought balls to it really." We have Briggs to thank, in part, for Waterson, Shirley Collins, Maddy Prior, Sandy Denny, and June Tabor. Briggs began singing at age 17, and was soon touring England as part of the left-wing cultural project Centre 42. Thanks to the support of A.L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl, she became one of the best-known and most respected traditional singers of the early 1960s. She eventually left music to raise a family.

what's available: *Classic Anne Briggs: The Complete Topic Recordings* ♪♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1990, prod. A.L. Lloyd) introduces Briggs's charm to today's listeners. Most of the songs on this collection are unaccompanied, leaving Briggs's voice nakedly bold and as beautiful as a Goya painting. Such folk standards as "Blackwater Side" (also recorded by Bert Jansch and Sandy Denny, among others), "Willy O' Winsbury," and "Reynardine" are included, but the most moving track is Briggs's own composition, "Go Your Way."

influences:
◀◀ Isla Cameron, A.L. Lloyd
▶▶ Sandy Denny, Maddy Prior, June Tabor

Pamela Murray Winters

Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Formed 1995, in Chattanooga, TN, area.

Fletcher Bright, fiddle; George Bright, guitar; Sam Currin, mandolin; "Doc" Ed Cullis, banjo; Bob Chuckrow, bass, mandolin, mandola.

The Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band was formed when a contradance group needed some musicians. Fletcher is a versatile fiddler who can go from the bluegrass "White Horse Breakdown" into the old "Tombigbee Waltz" with relative ease. He has an affinity for James Bryan tunes and performs them often. The band may be relatively unknown, but their music is extremely enjoyable.

what's available: *The Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band* ♪♪♪♪ (The Three Guys Records, 1995, prod. Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band) is a collection of fiddle tunes from various old-time, bluegrass, and folk sources including James Bryan, Bill Monroe, and Norman Blake. This band is seemingly not concerned with sticking just to one genre, so as long as you aren't either, you'll enjoy this recording. His version of the Irish "Si Bheag, Si Mhor" is beautiful.

influences:

◀◀ Norman Blake, James Bryan, John Hartford

▶▶ Chirps Smith, Charlie Walden

Steve Gardner

Bright Morning Star

Formed 1983, in Greenfield, CT. Disbanded 1987.

Charlie King, lead and background vocals, acoustic guitar; Marcia Taylor, acoustic guitar, lead and background vocals; Court Dorsey, trombone, high-hat cymbal, drums, harmonica, vocals; Cheryl Fox, electric bass, vocals; Ken Giles, five-string viola, violin, vocals; Stephen Snyder, piano, synthesizer, electric bass, vocals.

Led by topical singer-songwriters Charlie King and Marcia Taylor, Bright Morning Star was a throw-back to the congregation-like folk groups like the Weavers, the Limelighters, and the Chad Mitchell Trio. Although they were only together for a few years, the group was a popular attraction at folk festivals on the East Coast. King and Taylor sang most lead vocals, but each member of the group has his or her moment in the spotlight. Although King and Taylor contributed original songs, the bulk of the group's repertoire showcased the songwriting of other folk-rooted writers including Bob Blue, Lorre Wyatt, and Bob Franke.

what to buy: Bright Morning Star's third album, *Sweet and Sour* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Bright Morning Star) represented their brightest moments. Politics remain at the core of the band's repertoire. But a sense of humor comes through with such songs as "Invasion of the Money Snatchers," a witty condemnation of yuppies, "Shopping Mall," a tongue-in-jowl look at the spread of commercialism, and "Their Way," an anthem of conformity.

the rest:

Arisin' ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Live in the U.S. ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)

influences:

◀◀ The Weavers, Chad Mitchell Trio, the Limeliters, the Kingston Trio, Pete Seeger

▶▶ The Foremen, Bob Franke

see also: *Charlie King*

Craig Harris

Chuck Brodsky

Born May 20, 1960, in Philadelphia, PA.

Novelty-song guru Dr. Demento and folksinger David Wilcox don't have much in common. But both of them recognized the cunning appeal of Chuck Brodsky's "Blow 'Em Away," a riotous road-rage blues that Demento included on a compilation album and Wilcox adopted into a much-requested hallmark of his own concerts. "Blow 'Em Away" has become Brodsky's signature tune and a coffeehouse staple (there's a folkie in your hometown learning the chords as you read this), but it also diverts attention from the rich textures of his touching autobiographical story songs and his endearing penchant for sports metaphors. Delivered in his raspy John Prine–like tenor, "The Ballad of Eddie Klepp" is an homage to the first white player in baseball's Negro Leagues but doubles as a commentary on racism; similarly, "Letters in the Dirt" looks beyond the home-run power of his childhood idol, the controversial Richie Allen, to examine the inner-strength that makes the difference between heroes and stars; and "Unbridled Reins," written from the viewpoint of a racehorse pumped up on steroids, reflects the pressure parents and coaches often put on teenage athletes. By relying on storytelling rather than preaching, Brodsky encourages his listeners to discover life's cold, hard truths for themselves—he doesn't hit them over the heads, but he still occasionally blows them away.

what's available: *A Fingerpainter's Murals* ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1995, prod. Chuck Brodsky, Brian C. Doser) opens with two of his finest baseball songs ("Lefty," "The Ballad of Me and Jones") and showcases his range with compassionate portraits of family farmers ("Acre by Acre") and victims of domestic violence ("Maria's Lament"). "Blow 'Em Away" is here, but its novelty feel seems out of place on an otherwise moving debut. *Letters in the Dirt* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1996, prod. Kristian Bush, Don McCollister) is more polished and band-oriented, but once again, the funny songs ("No More Mr. Nice Guy," "Talk to My Lawyer") pale in comparison to "The Ballad of Eddie Klepp" and the lovely "Until You Can Forgive."

influences:

◀◀ John Prine, Steve Goodman, Bob Dylan

David Wilcox

David Okamoto

David Bromberg

Born September 19, 1945, in Philadelphia, PA.

A New York session musician who first came to prominence playing on Bob Dylan's *Self Portrait* and *New Morning* albums, stringed-instrument virtuoso David Bromberg cut a wholly unconventional series of 10 albums for the Columbia and Fantasy labels through the 1970s that matched his refined acoustic musicianship with a wacky sense of humor. Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Dr. John, Bonnie Raitt, Ricky Skaggs, and members of the Grateful Dead have all made guest appearances on his recordings, underlining Bromberg's reputation as a musician's musician. He abruptly quit recording and touring to concentrate on making and repairing instruments, and has released records and performed rarely since 1981.

what to buy: *How Late'll Ya Play 'Til* ♪♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1976, prod. Steve Burgh, David Bromberg) is a two-disc set—one live, one studio—that's available either individually or together and finds Bromberg at the height of his powers, supported by a remarkable band.

what to buy next: His debut, *David Bromberg* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1971, prod. David Bromberg) blends the bluesy with the blowzy, the wry with the wistful, and showcases his considerable skills.

the rest:

Demons in Disguise ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972)
Wanted Dead or Alive ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974)
Midnight on the Water ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1975)
Reckless Abandon ♪♪½ (Fantasy, 1977)
My Own House ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1978)
You Should See the Rest of the Band ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1980)
Long Way from Here ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1986)
Sideman Serenade ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)

worth searching for: Bromberg plays in a relaxed Western swing vein on the Vassar Clements album *Hillbilly Jazz* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977).

influences:

Bob Dylan, Bill Monroe, Rev. Gary Davis

David Grisman, Loudon Wainwright

Joel Selvin

Jonatha Brooke

See: The Story

Big Bill Broonzy

Born William Lee Conley Broonzy, June 26, 1893, in Scott, MS. Died August 15, 1958, in Chicago, IL.

Broonzy's body of work—including his enduring originals "Key to the Highway" and "Black, Brown and White"—ranks him among Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and Robert Johnson in terms of influence. A storyteller as much as a lonesome singer, Broonzy was among the first performers to marry rough rural blues (like Johnson's brand of Mississippi Delta moaning) with upscale jazzy city blues (like Charles Brown's cocktail piano crooning). He began his career as a violinist (a skill he learned from an uncle) and learned from mentor Papa Charlie Jackson how to adapt those skills to the guitar. As his obvious talent gradually turned him into a star, he moved to Chicago and started hooking up with Memphis Slim, Brownie McGhee, John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson, and Big Maceo; he also recorded for many different labels, including Columbia, OKeh, and Bluebird. Most refused to put out "Black, Brown and White," a powerful attack on racism with the memorable tell-it-like-it-is chorus, "Get back," after Broonzy wrote it in 1949; two years later, in France, writer-critic Hugues Panassie and record company officials helped him get it in circulation. Broonzy's pockets of regional popularity coagulated into an adoring national audience after he played John Hammond's "From Spirituals to Swing" concert (as a replacement for Robert Johnson, who had just died) at New York City's Carnegie Hall in 1938. Regular Chicago and southern gigs followed until the 1950s, when Broonzy—along with peers Leadbelly, Josh White, and Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee—became an avatar of the folk movement. While touring and recording in Europe throughout the 1950s, he wrote a fascinating biography, *Big Bill Blues*, with Danish writer Yannick Bruynoghe.

what to buy: Because Broonzy was such a prolific writer and because so many different big record companies put out his stuff, plenty of thorough CD collections document various stages of his career. Most impressive include *Good Time Tonight* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1990, prod. various), which spans 1930 to 1940 (including, of course, his classic "I Can't Be Satisfied"); *Do That Guitar Rag (1928–35)* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1973); and *Blues in the Mississippi Night* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1990), a sometimes chilling 1946 Alan Lomax–recorded no-holds-barred conversation among Broonzy, pianist Memphis Slim, and harpist Sonny Boy Williamson about racism in the South.

9/4 *the brother boys*

what to buy next: As per usual with the archivist label, *Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, Vols. 1–11* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. various) is far too complete unless you're a major fan or an obsessive collector; if you are, of course, you can't go wrong.

best of the rest:

Big Bill Broonzy Sings Folk Songs ♪♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1962)

Big Bill Broonzy & Washboard Sam ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1962)

The Young Big Bill Broonzy (1928–35) ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1968)

Feelin' Low Down ♪♪♪♪½ (GNP Crescendo, 1973)

worth searching for: *Big Bill's Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Portrait) captures Broonzy's seriousness and humor as well as the spontaneity of his recording process.

influences:

◀◀ Papa Charlie Jackson, Son House, Robert Johnson, Jimmie Rodgers, Blind Lemon Jefferson

▶▶ Muddy Waters, Leadbelly, Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, Brownie McGhee & Sonny Terry, Eric Clapton, Taj Mahal, Cephas & Wiggins

Steve Knopper

The Brother Boys

Eugene Wolf, vocals; Ed Snodderly, vocals, guitar, dobro, fiddle, harmonica.

Though not brothers, Eugene Wolf and Ed Snodderly owe much to the classic country brother duets. Playing what they call "New Hillbilly Music," the two are no mere "retro act." Backed on their recordings by a variety of instrumentation, the Brother Boys deftly back their harmony vocals with a mix of bluegrass, country, and country/blues with a discernible rock influence.

what's available: On *Plow* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. Jerry Douglas), six originals are mixed with covers of songs from the Wilburn Brothers, Loretta Lynn, and Bill Anderson. *Presley's Grocery* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Ed Snodderly) is a refreshing mix of bluegrass songs like Bill Monroe's "Can't You Hear Me Calling," traditional country ("Those Two Blue Eyes"), and rockabilly-flavored originals ("Let's Shake Loose").

influences:

◀◀ The Wilburn Brothers, the Louvin Brothers, the Everly Brothers

▶▶ Tony Rice, Jerry Douglas

Douglas Fulmer

The Brothers Four

Formed 1958, in Seattle, WA.

Bob Flick, vocals, bass; Michael Kirkland, vocals, banjo; John Paine, vocals, guitar; Richard Foley, vocals, percussion; Mark Pearson, vocals, banjo; Terry Lauber, vocals, percussion.

The Brothers Four were a major college campus attraction in the late 1950s and early 1960s, mainly because they happened to be college kids themselves. They met as fraternity "brothers" at the University of Washington in 1958, which gave rise to the somewhat innocuous, if certainly logical, group name (none is related). As they began to find a harmonious groove, the Brothers sought work in the Seattle coffeehouses and played their first professional date in 1958 at the city's Colony Club. In July of 1959, Columbia Records signed the Brothers Four to a contract. Even though the Brothers Four came along at the beginnings of the folk revival, where cynicism and individual freedom were the burgeoning themes, it was hard to imagine the group railing at anything in particular. These were four clean-cut cheerleaders for the American way, who preferred gentle folk ballads to songs that took aim at society's values. They held a definite identification with the middle class, college-educated audience that merely wanted to hear music, not become radicalized by it. In February 1960, Columbia released the group's single "Greenfields," which became a national hit, peaking at #2 on the *Billboard* Top 40. *Greenfields* was also the title of their first album. It proved to be their most successful hit, though the standard "Green Leaves of Summer" did mildly well in 1962. The Brothers Four were named "America's Most Promising Group of 1960" by *Billboard*. This was an era in which live performances, not album sales, were the popularity barometers, and the Brothers Four were among the biggest men on campus. During 1961 and 1962, they played more than 100 colleges. They also landed spots on most of the major television variety shows. Their star vanished, along with those of other folk artists, with the onslaught of the British invasion during the mid-1960s. They reappeared briefly on Fantasy Records in 1969. The Brothers Four brought back group harmony to a genre that had become dominated by individual stylists. They released several additional albums for Columbia, including *Brothers Four* and *Rally 'Round* in 1960; *B.M.O.C.: Best Music On/Off Campus* and *Roamin' Song Book* in 1961. Their final Columbia albums came in 1964 with *Brothers Four Sing of Our Times* and *More Big Folk Hits*. Flick, who now runs a production company in Seattle, is still the leader of the band, which currently includes original member Paine and replacements Pearson and Lauber. The Brothers Four continues to

loom large on the revival circuit, playing numerous festivals in the U.S. They make yearly appearances in Asia and Japan, where they've released a number of albums not available in the States.

what to buy: *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1962/1987) represents the best overview of the Brothers Four, primarily for its staunch collection and the fact that it's one of the few of their albums still in print. "Greenfields" and "Green Leaves of Summer" head up the verdant treasures.

what to buy next: *The Tokyo Tapes* ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997) is a double-length set of live music.

the rest:
Greenfields & Other Gold ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997)
Merry Christmas ♪♪ (Sony, 1997)

worth searching for: *In Person* (Columbia, 1962) is one of the best of the early LPs.

influences:
◀◀ The Weavers, Burl Ives, Christy Minstrels
▶▶ Smothers Brothers

Bob Paxman

Alison Brown

Born August 7, 1962, in Hartford, CT.

Besides being one of the few women to make her reputation on the banjo, Brown is a progressive instrumentalist who's equally at home in traditional bluegrass as well as more experimental settings. Moving to San Diego at age 12 and growing up there, she went on to Harvard, where she studied pre-med, history, and literature. She then received her M.B.A. from UCLA and worked as an investment banker before devoting herself fully to music. She played with Alison Krauss & Union Station from 1989 to 1991 and in 1993 founded Small World Music, which evolved into the singer-songwriters' label Compass Records in 1995.

what to buy: *Quartet* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1996, prod. Garry West), her fourth album, is a delight, featuring John Burr on piano, Garry West on bass, and Rick Reed on drums. With its heavy jazz and Latin overtones, it won't remind anyone of Earl Scruggs, but Brown's use of the five-string is consistently clever, exciting, and melodic.

what to buy next: *Look Left* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1994, prod. Garry West) is Brown's third album and contains more elements of pure bluegrass, but it expands her sound into Cajun ("Etouffée Brutus?"), jazz ("Look Left"), and world beat ("Deep North") as well. It's a smorgasbord of styles that holds together and makes a pretty grand statement.

what to avoid: Be wary of the Alison Brown Quartet's *Out of the Blue* ♪♪ (Compass, 1998, prod. Garry West). Using a lot of nylon-string banjo takes the edge off Brown's playing, resulting in way too much fern-bar jazz noodling.

the rest:
Simple Pleasures ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1990)
Twilight Motel ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992)

worth searching for: For those really into Brown's playing, she performs very nicely on the following albums: Alison Krauss & Union Station's *I've Got That Old Feeling* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Bil VornDick, Jerry Douglas); Michelle Shocked's *Arkansas Traveler* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1992, prod. Michelle Shocked); and Clive Gregson's *I Love This Town* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1996, prod. Clive Gregson, Garry West).

influences:
◀◀ Alison Krauss, Béla Fleck, David Grisman, Tony Trischka
▶▶ Kate Campbell, Clive Gregson

Bob Cannon

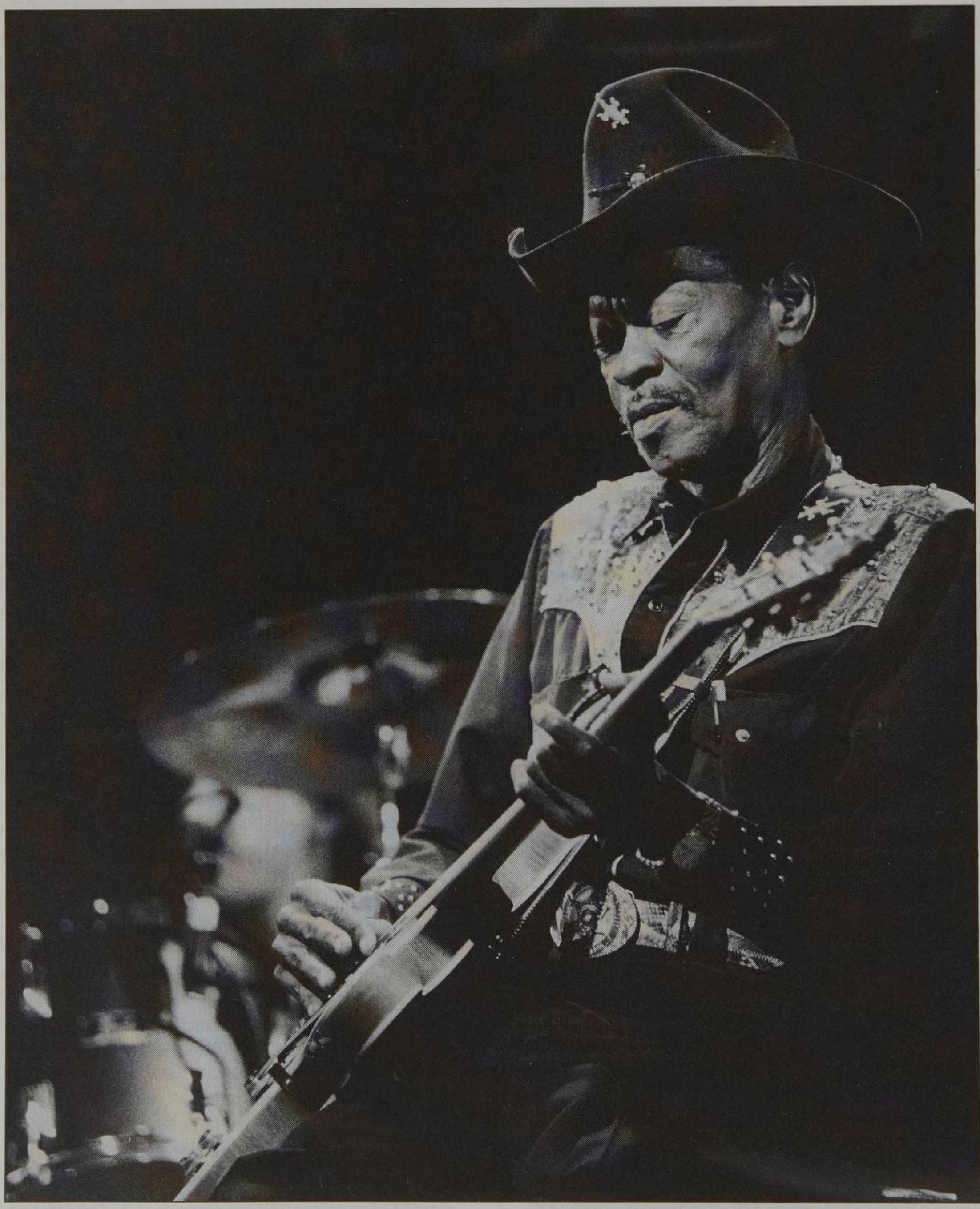
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown

Born April 18, 1924, in Vinton, LA.

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown is one of the foremost architects of modern blues guitar, second only to T-Bone Walker in terms of influential Texans. But with Gate, that's just the start of the story. A multi-instrumentalist (violin, harmonica, piano, mandolin, viola, and drums as well as guitar), Brown embraces a host of musical categories, throwing Cajun, country, bluegrass, and jazz into his blues-dominated arsenal. Gate's versatility sometimes works against him—even his best albums often include one misguided venture—but it also informs everything he does with a wide-ranging sense of possibility. And he remains a damned fine blues guitarist.

what to buy: *The Original Peacock Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Scott Billington, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown) collects Brown's 1950s work and is the best indication of how and why his playing was so influential on several generations of Texan guitarists. He returned to a big band format more than 40 years later with *Gate Swings* ♪♪♪♪ (Verve, 1997, prod. John Snyder, Jim Bateman) with smashing, jazzy results. *Pressure*

clarence "gatemouth" brown



Cooker (Alligator, 1987, prod. Bruce Iglauer) reissues 1973 French sessions, in which Brown is backed by jazz greats including Jay McShann, Arnett Cobb, and Milt Buckner. The result is a predictably swinging set.

what to buy next: Brown stuck to horn-driven blues on his comeback album, *Alright Again!* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982, prod. Scott Billington, Jim Bateman), which won a Grammy and quickly reestablished him as an American original and a musical force to be reckoned with. Most of his many subsequent albums have been quite strong, but *Standing My Ground* ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1989) stands out.

what to avoid: On *Long Way Home* ♪♪½ (Verve, 1996), Brown is mostly just hindered by guest stars ranging from Eric Clapton, who lays down a few generic solos, to John Loudermilk, who sings a wretched version of his own "Tobacco Road." The album does, however, include several excellent and unexpected acoustic tracks. *Gate's on the Heat* ♪♪ (Verve, 1975) found him saddled with a lame, stiff band.

the rest:
One More Mile ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983)
Real Life ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Texas Swing ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Just Got Lucky ♪♪♪♪ (Evidence, 1993)
Man ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1995)
San Antonio Ballbuster ♪♪♪♪ (Drive Archives, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ T-Bone Walker, Louis Jordan
▶▶ Johnny Copeland, Johnny Winter, Albert Collins, Roy Clark

Alan Paul

Greg Brown

Born in IA.

Iowa singer/songwriter Greg Brown possesses a quirky sensibility, a gift for wordplay, a wry, ironic stage presence, and a rumbling, phlegmatic baritone voice that has found much favor with festival-goers and folk club fans over the past 15 years. Probably the Brown song most familiar to traditional country music fans is "The Train Carrying Jimmie Rodgers Home," which was recorded by the Nashville Bluegrass Band. It also appears on his first Red House album.

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what to buy: *Down in There* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1990, prod. Bo Ramsey) contains 10 of Brown's most endearing, quirky originals. *The Live One* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1995) captures Brown in the venue best suited for full appreciation of his sense of humor and wordplay.

what to buy next: On *Songs of Innocence and Experience* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1986, prod. Bob Feldman, Greg Brown), Brown sets to music and sings the poems of William Blake, while Michael Doucet accompanies on fiddle. Greg Brown and Bill Morrissey team up on *Friend of Mine* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1993, prod. Ellen Karas), a batch of songs they've sung together at parties, backstage, and in green rooms. The album has a loose, amiable feel to it, and the repertoire is eclectic enough—everything from "Little Red Rooster" and "You Can't Always Get What You Want" to Hank Williams's "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive."

the rest:
44 & 66 ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1980)
In the Dark with You ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1986)
One More Goodnight Kiss ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1987)
One Big Town ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1989)
Dream Cafe ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1992)
Bathtub Blues ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1993)
The Poet Game ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994)
Further In ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ John Prine, Tom Waits
▶▶ Bill Morrissey, John Gorka

Randy Pitts

Herschel Brown /J.H. Brown

Born last half of nineteenth century, in northern GA.

Washboard player Herschel Brown recorded for both Victor and OKeh. His recordings for Victor consisted exclusively of breakdowns, but his more extended term with OKeh also produced talking blues, rags, and comic sketches in a variety of instrumental settings. Tony Russell, whose liner notes accompany the recently released Document recording, suggests that he may also have been known as J.H. Brown and that his recording career may have begun in November 1927 with a band called the Spooney Five, who recorded "Chinese Rag" and "My Little Girl" for Columbia Records. Russell reports that J.H. Brown played in a group with a similar-sounding name on Atlanta's WSB earlier that year and was described by the *Atlanta Journal*

9/8 *milton brown and the musical brownies*

as performing with "two ordinary table spoons and a wash or scrub board, with symbols (sic) attached to the fingers." In any case, Brown's recordings on Victor and OKeh were landmark recordings that were "somewhat unusual for recorded hillbilly music but probably preserved the flavor of many forgotten small-town bands."

what's available: *Herschel Brown 1928–1929* ♪♪♪♪ (Document Records, 1996, prod. Johnny Parth) contains the complete recorded works, a total of 23 tracks, of Herschel Brown in chronological order. Document has released a number of recordings that document the earliest recorded material from hillbilly and black musicians in the South. Like the others, this one is very well done, with excellent sound given the source material.

influences:

◀◀ John Dilleshaw, Chris Bouchillon

▶▶ The Skilletlickers, New Lost City Ramblers

Neal Walters

Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Formed 1932 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Milton Brown (born 1903; died April 18, 1936), bandleader, vocals; Derwood Brown, guitar; Wanna Coffman, bass, steel guitar; Ocie Stockard, banjo; Fred "Papa" Calhoun, piano; Cecil Brower, fiddle; Bob Dunn, steel guitar; Cliff Bruner, fiddle. Other members include: Jesse Ashlock, fiddle; Theodore Grantham, fiddle; Johnny Borowski, fiddle; Buck Buchanan, fiddle; Iris Harper, tenor sax; Wilson "Lefty" Perkins, steel guitar.

For a brief moment in 1930 the twin pillars of Western swing—Milton Brown and Bob Wills, along with guitarist Herman Arnspiger—worked together in Fort Worth, first as the Aladdin Laddies, then as the Light Crust Doughboys. Disputes with management led Brown, who had been leading his own vocal group since the mid-1920s, to start his own ensemble; Wills followed that same path a few months later. That meant there were two great dance bands working in Texas and Oklahoma, but the two men most responsible for fusing big band, jazz, blues, vaudeville, and hillbilly music into a classic American style recorded only two sides together ("Sunbonnet Sue" and "Nancy Jane"). Before his death in 1936 of injuries from a car accident, Brown and his band recorded better than 100 songs, some originals, most pulled from those disparate traditions and recast into this new, regional dance music. That so many sides were cut during the depth of the Depression speaks volumes about the audience for Brown's music. Wills wore Western swing's crown for most of his life, but even a casual pass through Brown's oeuvre reveals the unmistakable trace of rare genius. Brown's vocals swing with an easy, carefree joy—the same breezy confidence that made Bing Crosby an influential stylist—and he surrounded himself with a first-rate band of extraordinarily versatile musicians. Of particular note is the work of legendary steel guitarist Bob Dunn.

what's available: Every extant side cut by Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies, along with several cut by the group under his brother's leadership, those two tantalizing tracks from the Fort Worth Doughboys, and two comparatively recent recreations are assembled in the five-disc *The Complete Recordings of the Father of Western Swing: Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies 1932–1937* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Texas Rose Records, 1995, prod. Michael Kieffer). This is as close to an essential document of indigenous American music as you will find this side of Robert Johnson, Duke Ellington, or Bill Monroe. Mastered beautifully from the original 78s, these songs still glisten with the joy of invention. Highlights include the treacle of "My Precious Sonny Boy," a glorious "Sweet Georgia Brown," and the blues of "St. Louis Blues" (later recast by Elmore James and many others as "Whose Muddy Shoes").

influences:

◀◀ Bob Wills, Light Crust Doughboys, Herman Arnspiger

▶▶ Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Asleep at the Wheel

Grant Alden

Paul Brown

Born May 2, 1952, in New York City, NY.

Paul Brown is a lifelong banjo picker and old-time musician. He was raised in a small town in New York state, where his Virginia-born mother sang old-time songs and gave him recordings of Harry and Jeanie West for Christmas while his friends were getting the Rolling Stones. He started playing banjo at age ten, followed by fiddle and guitar in his early twenties. He has been a radio journalist and producer, music collector and presenter, sawmill worker, professional furniture upholsterer, vegetable gardener, and antique car driver all these years. He can be found on numerous recordings playing fiddle, guitar, and banjo.

what to buy: Paul Brown and Mike Seeger recorded an album together called *Way Down in North Carolina* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder,

1996, prod. Paul Brown, Mike Seeger). This CD is the best introduction to Paul because it showcases his versatility as a performer. On this CD you will hear him in all his talents (singer, banjo, guitar, fiddle).

what to buy next: Paul Brown has spent many years with the musicians of Mt. Airy, Surry County, North Carolina. The best recording to come out of these relationships is the one he made with Benton Flippen, *Old Time, New Times* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Paul Brown, Ken Irwin), who was once a member of the Camp Creek Boys. Paul recorded much of this CD, wrote the liner notes, and played banjo on most of the cuts.

solo outings:

Toast String Stretchers:

Wanted ♪♪♪ (Toast String Stetchers, c. 1995)

A. Robic and the Exertions:

Old Time Music Dance Party ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)

influences:

◀◀ Fields and Wade Ward, Benton Flippen, Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham

▶▶ Jim Newberry, Dirk Powell, Bill Mansfield

Steve Gardner

Jackson Browne

Born October 9, 1948, in Heidelberg, West Germany.

Jackson Browne was the right artist for his times—during a decade in which rock fans were growing up and dealing with real-life problems for the first time, Browne's thoughtful personal reflection seemed, well, thoughtful. When he titled his second LP *For Everyman*, a generation of fans took it for granted that they were the "everyman" Browne was writing about. At his best, he's a powerful songwriter because he writes personal truths and sings realistically about love from a post-collegiate point of view (Joni Mitchell was the female equivalent emotionally, though musically she was much more complex and experimental). His early songs such as "Ready or Not" and "Take It Easy" may have been sexist drivel, but guys were like that then. First noticed as a waif-like folksinger and sucked into the vortex of the New York City avant garde via a brief encounter with Velvet Underground chanteuse Nico, Browne found himself an early member of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, before settling into the nascent Southern California country-rock scene that also birthed the Eagles and Linda Ronstadt in the 1970s. Over the course of his albums, you could watch Browne grow up; his best work—songs such as "Fountain of Sorrow" or "For a Dancer"—weren't macho manifestos like his boyish songs, but thoughtful (there's that word again) ruminations on lost love that went well beyond the simple romanticism of Top 40 radio. But on *Late for the Sky*—the same album that yielded "For a Dancer"—Browne planted the seeds of his ultimate downfall as an artist. His socio-political conscience, revealed on the anti-nuke song "Before the Deluge," powerful and moving as an album closer, was the beginning of Browne's immersion in issues of the day. By the 1980s, Browne's somewhat one-dimensional sound sounded strident because of his insistence on using his position as a pop star to issue political harangues, albeit important ones, about Central America, the environment, and modern America in general. Most of his recent output makes him sound as tedious and preachy as Bruce Cockburn, even though he's tried to reach back to earlier styles and musical values.

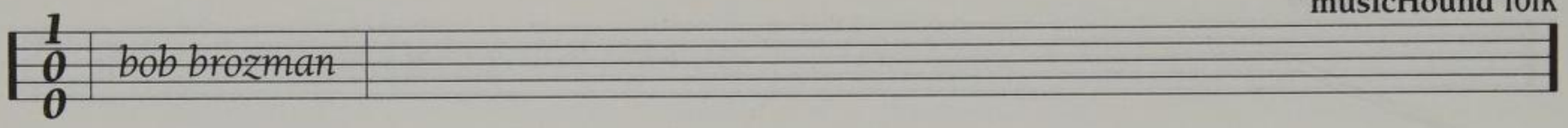
what to buy: *Late for the Sky* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1974, prod. Jackson Browne, Al Schmitt) is a bit mopey, but it hangs together as Browne's strongest and most melodious album, with a couple of rockers thrown in to perk up the listeners. The best song, the fondly reflective "Fountain of Sorrow," is typical of Browne's ability to make personal experiences seem universal.

what to buy next: *The Pretender* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1976, prod. Jon Landau) gets a little ponderous on songs such as "Sleep's Dark and Silent Gate" and the title track, Browne's first rant at middle America, but it also was emotionally powerful, with songs of regret ("Your Bright Baby Blues," "Here Come Those Tears Again"), and hope for the future ("The Only Child," "Daddy's Tune") following his first wife's 1976 suicide. It solidified his commercial cachet and was his first platinum LP.

what to avoid: *Running on Empty* ♪ (Asylum, 1977, prod. Jackson Browne) was hailed at the time as a brilliant concept album about life on the road, but it hasn't held its luster. It now sounds like an indulgent pastiche thrown together with second-rate, emotionally uncompelling material, and a couple of curio-like cover songs (the Rev. Gary Davis's "Cocaine" and the Zodiacs' "Stay," with a cameo vocal by guitarist David Lindley).

the rest:

Jackson Browne ♪♪½ (Asylum, 1972)
For Everyman ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1973)
Hold Out ♪♪ (Asylum, 1980)
Lawyers in Love ♪♪ (Asylum, 1983)
Lives in the Balance ♪♪ (Asylum, 1986)
World in Motion ♪♪ (Elektra, 1989)
I'm Alive ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1993)



Looking East ♪♪ (Elektra, 1996)
The Next Voice You Hear: The Best of Jackson Browne ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1997)

worth searching for: The promotional CD for Browne's 1993 single "I'm Alive" was accompanied by a well-chosen 12-song retrospective that was digitally re-mastered to sound better than Browne's regular CDs.

influences:
◀◀ Leonard Cohen, Eric Andersen, Phil Ochs
▶▶ David Wilcox, Garth Brooks, Natalie Merchant, Alanis Morissette

Gil Asakawa

Bob Brozman

Born March 8, 1954, in New York, NY.

The foremost contemporary champion of the National steel guitar, Bob Brozman is an exciting and very exacting guitar player who has mastered a variety of slide styles along with swing and fingerstyle playing. One of Brozman's passions is Hawaiian music, which he has approached with a scholar's thoroughness and a fan's zeal, producing five compilations of early Hawaiian music and making new recordings with the legendary Tau Moe Family and slack key master Ledward Kaapana. A former member of R. Crumb's Cheap Suit Serenaders, Brozman is also well versed in electric and acoustic blues styles, and has published the definitive history of National guitars and recorded a series of instructional videos for Homespun Tapes.

what to buy: Bob Brozman teamed with Ledward Kaapana to record *Kika Kila Meets Ki Hoalu* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1997, prod. Bob Brozman, George Winston). This pairing works nicely: Kaapana's full-bodied fingerpicking covers the melody and rhythm, allowing Brozman's amazing slide work to provide the textural accents and coloration his instrument has traditionally provided in Hawaiian music. This is soulful, happy music, played with verve and respect.

what to buy next: Brozman's electric blues album, *A Truckload of Blues* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Bob Brozman, Pete Carlson), finds him in fine, if gruff, voice on classics like "Come on in My Kitchen" and "We Gonna Move" alongside new period pieces like the rockin' "Never Hit the Same Place Twice" and "Backwards Blues."

the rest:
Devil's Slide ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
Hello Central, Give Me Dr. Jazz ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
Bob Brozman and His Thieves of Sleep (Sky Ranch)
Blues Round the Bend (Sky Ranch)
Snapping the Strings (Kicking Mule)
Blue Hula Stomp (Kicking Mule, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Tau Moe, the Genial Hawaiians, Robert Johnson
▶▶ Ry Cooder, David Lindley, Ben Harper

Michael Parrish

Brute

See: Vic Chesnutt

James Bryan

Born November 24, 1953, in Gadsden, AL.

Fiddler James Bryan grew up surrounded by the traditional music of his native northeastern Alabama. He learned to play fiddle as a young boy from his father and from neighbors John and Mac Blaylock, Marvin Downer, and Tommy Smith. As a teenager he traveled to Nashville to study under bluegrass legend Kenny Baker, turning professional soon after. He toured for a while with Bill Monroe and with Tennessee Ernie Ford among others before finding a home in Norman Blake's Rising Fawn String Ensemble. Bryan's fiddle playing, rooted firmly in the old-time tradition yet technically strong and expressive, was a natural fit in Blake's quietly virtuosic ensemble and he shared many years of great recordings and concerts with the group. As a solo performer, Bryan has recorded two albums of fiddle tunes and one album with fellow Rising Fawn alumnus Carl Jones. James's fiddle style is smooth and precise, closer to the showy, fast, notey fiddle style of Missouri than to the more archaic sounding Galax or Round Peak styles. His professional training under Kenny Baker and his years as a touring musician have left him with great technique wedded to a deep love and understanding of southern old-time music. In recent years Bryan has performed less frequently, staying home in Mentone, Alabama, and raising a family. Long known for finding and recording obscure tunes, primarily from Alabama, he has in recent years turned his attention to resuscitating the vast repertoire contained in nineteenth-century music books, primarily banjo tutors. Several of these tunes appeared on his most recent album, *Two Pictures*. Bryan is one of the great lights of the old-time music revival and should be more widely known than he is.

what's available: James Bryan and Carl Jones's *Two Pictures* ♪♪♪ (Martin, 1995, prod. Carl Jones) is an album of duets between Bryan and guitarist Jones. It is a strong collection of both traditional tunes and newly composed material. Bryan's fiddling is still strong and smooth, as he provides another load of unknown tunes for fiddlers to get to know. Jones provides a strong guitar accompaniment and some choice songs from his own pen. The cassette-only *The First of May* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986, prod. James Bryan) and *Lookout Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983, prod. James Bryan) are great old-time fiddle albums, chock full of unknown tunes and played with great feeling and technical skill. Bryan's technical training gives him the musical vocabulary to express himself fully, while his deep roots in southern old-time music and life keep him close to the music's core. It's a shame Rounder hasn't reissued these fine recordings on CD; we can only hope they do so soon. *Lookout Blues*, his solo debut, features a raft of older traditional tunes, as well as several tunes from the pen of Bill Monroe and Kenny Baker. It features appearances from fellow Rising Fawn String Ensemble members Norman and Nancy Blake and Tom Jackson, among others. *The First of May* contains another bunch of largely unknown tunes including several by the great young fiddler Bruce Greene. The sound is again solid and warm, with sensitive accompaniment from the Blakes and Tom Jackson. Among the many highlights on *The First of May* are a beautiful "Swedish Waltz" and the opening reel, "Julianne Flanigan."

influences:

⏮ Kenny Baker, Tommy Jackson

⏭ Bruce Molsky, Kirk Sutphin

see also: *Norman and Nancy Blake*

Tony Ziselberger

Bryndle

See: Karla Bonoff

Rachel Buchman

Born July 3, 1956, in New York, NY.

The enthusiasm and creativity that Texas-based vocalist, pianist, guitarist, songwriter, and folksinger Rachel Buchman once brought to the theatrical stage as an actress continues to be expressed through her recordings and performances as a children's music performer. Buchman's 1986 debut album, *Hello Ev'rybody! Playsongs and Rhymes from a Toddler's World*, received prestigious awards from the American Library Association, *Parent's Choice*, and Oppenheimer Toy. Subsequent albums have included playsongs and poems collected during her travels around the globe and Jewish holiday songs. Raised in a musical home in New York City, Buchman sang in a choir and studied piano as a youngster. Although she initially focused more on acting, she began to entertain at children's parties to supplement her work as an actress. Buchman's interests in Jewish music for children were sparked by a trip she made, as a college student, to Israel. While visiting relatives in London on her way home, she met a cousin who was a Holocaust survivor. Inspired to learn the Yiddish language, she enrolled at Yivo University in New York upon her return. While there she developed an interest in Yiddish theater and Yiddish music. Buchman's first opportunity to bring Jewish and Yiddish songs to the public came during the year that she and her husband, Harvey Yunis, a teacher of ancient Greek and Roman languages, lived in Berlin. Her multi-lingual songbook and guide to Jewish holidays, *Jewish Holiday Songs for Children*, was published by Mel Bay Publications in 1997. The mother of two children, Buchman expanded her knowledge of languages and musical traditions while working in a day-care center at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Buchman, who currently works at the Becker Early Childhood Center of Temple Emanu El of Houston and is a frequent performer at Texas schools, has recently incorporated classical music and piano improvisation into her performances for children.

editor's choice
9 mountain dulcimer albums

Jerry Rockwell, *The Blackbird and the Beggarman* (Wizmak)

Various Artists, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* (Susan Trump)

Hollis Landrum, *Swing Dulcimer* (HL)

Lois Hornbostel, *Dulcimer Jubilee* (AHR)

Mike Casey, *The Pleasures of Hope* (Wizmak)

Don Pedi, *The Hog Went through the Fence Yoke and All* (Class IV)

Gary Gallier, *On the Wing* (Dancing Thumb)

Mark Nelson, *Autumn* (Wizmak)

Alan Freeman, *The Mountain Dulcimer* (JMP)

what to buy: A seasonal theme threads the British, Scottish, and American folk songs that Buchman interprets on *Sing a Song of Seasons* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Steve Netsky, Rachel Buchman). Accompanying herself on guitar, glockenspiel, harmonica, and miscellaneous sound effects, Buchman sings of summertime swims, spring flowers, winter snows, and autumn leaves. While most of the songs are traditional, Buchman offers musical adaptations of Robert Louis Stevenson, Dixie Willson, and Marie Louise Allen poems and an original story, "Mystery of the White Things."

what to buy next: The culmination of Buchman's fascination with Yiddish and Jewish music, *Jewish Holiday Songs for Children* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Steve Netsky, Rachel Buchman), is a musical sampling of Jewish tradition. With accompaniment provided by Eitan Ornoy (violin), Ruth Shechter (accordion), Aviva Weisel (cheese grater, whisk, and tambourine), and seven children, including her son Jacob and daughter Judith, Buchman offers a musical exploration of the Jewish calendar.

the rest:

Hello Ev'rybody! Playsongs and Rhymes from a Toddler's World ♪♪♪ (A Gentle Wind, 1986)
Songs and Games from around the World ♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
Baby and Me—Playsongs and Lullabies to Share with Your Baby ♪♪ (A Gentle Wind, 1991)
Hello Rachel! Hello Children! ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Theodore Bikel, Ella Jenkins

▶▶ Priscilla Herdman, Sally Rogers, Peter Alsop

Craig Harris

The Buckets

See: Ed's Redeeming Qualities

The Buckhannon Brothers

Formed 1993, in Saint Charles, MO.

Curtis Buckhannon, mandolin; Dennis Buckhannon, guitar.

Curtis and Dennis Buckhannon are two young old-time musicians who, although they don't sing, have an instrumental style reminiscent of several brother duets of the 1930s and 1940s. As brothers, they've obviously grown up appreciating the music of earlier times and they describe themselves as having gotten "hooked on old-time music so long ago that neither of them can remember exactly how it happened." They are mainstays of the Midwestern old-time music scene.

what's available: *The Buckhannon Brothers* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1993, prod. the Buckhannon Brothers) is their only release, but it is a definite winner if you like mandolin and guitar played with danceable energy, unfailing good humor, and excellent musicianship. Sprightly fiddle tunes from New Mexico, Sweden, and their own Ozark region, ragtime masterpieces, peppy polkas, and sweet waltzes are played impeccably; and there's a full 73 minutes of music. Frank Reed, a dance fiddler from Moberly, Missouri, once said, "You can't listen to this music and feel bad. If you do, the devil's got your soul."

influences:

◀◀ The Blue Sky Boys, the Monroe Brothers

▶▶ The Case Brothers, Mando Mafia

Neal Walters

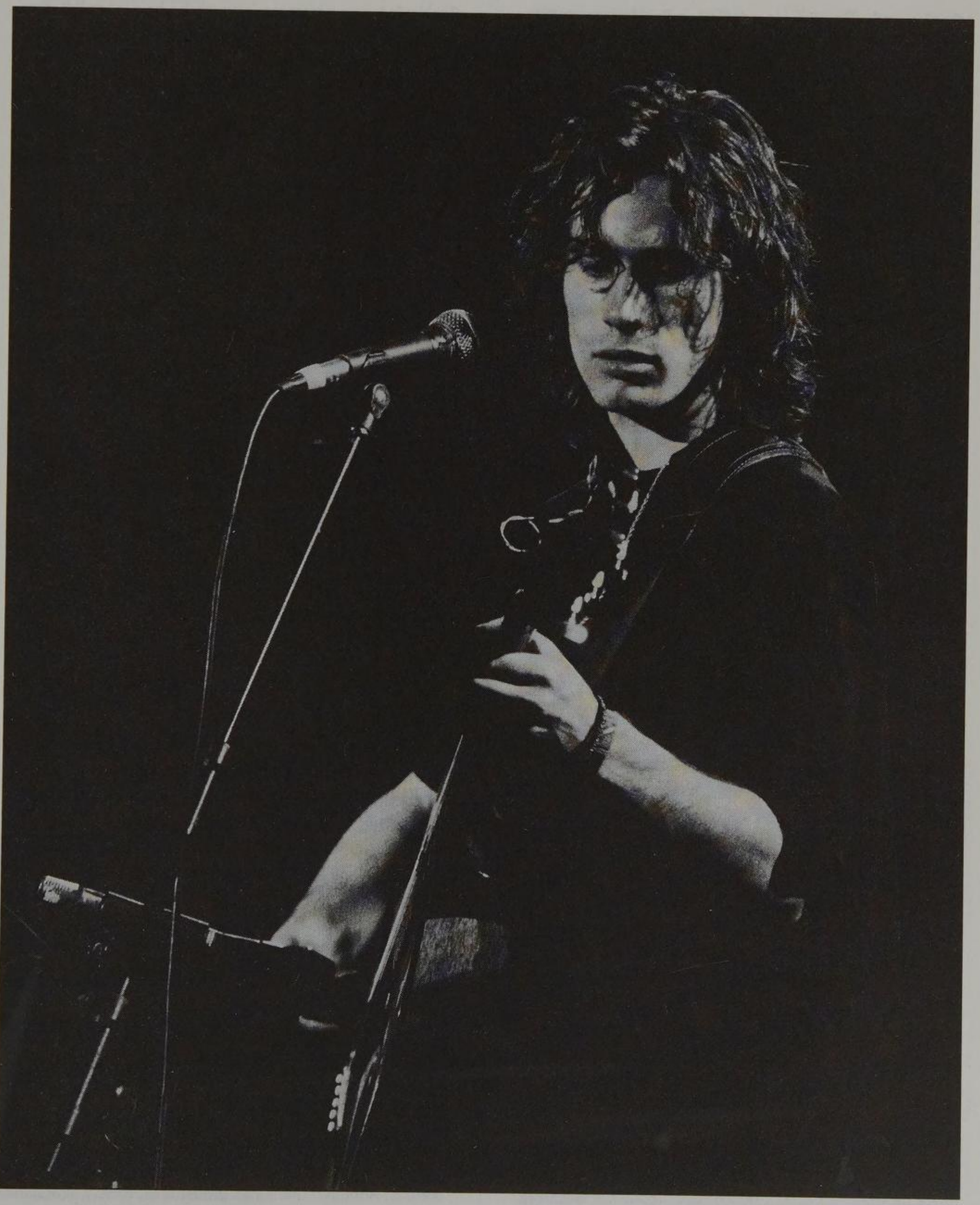
Jeff Buckley

Born November 17, 1966. Died May 29, 1997, in Memphis, TN.

Jeff Buckley was the son of legendary experimental folk artist Tim Buckley, and, as Julian Lennon will tell you, having a famous father can be both a blessing and a curse. As the inheritor of such a legacy, Buckley endured comparisons to his late father and the expectations of fans eager for the progeny to take up where the sire left off. Like his father, Buckley possessed an ethereal voice capable of dramatic sweeps of range; his singing uncannily evoked Tim's. However, Buckley the junior clearly had a musical agenda quite apart from his father's. In fact, Jeff claimed very little musical influence from his father, who died before his son was old enough to remember him. While his material tangentially recalls Tim's florid romanticism, Jeff's musical direction—especially with a band—leaned more toward '70s album-rock than folk ballads. He drowned in the Mississippi River near Memphis; at the time of his death he was recording his second full-length album.

what's available: *Grace* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994, prod. Andy Wallace, Jeff Buckley) is Buckley's second recording, and his first with a full band following the more intimate solo coffee house EP *Live at Sin-E* ♪♪♪ (Big Cat/Columbia, 1993, prod. Jeff Buckley, Steve Berkowitz). The material ranges from progressive rock ("So Real") to meditative ballads (a stunning voice and guitar arrangement of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah"), to dreamy psychedelia ("Mojo Pin"), yet the album impresses as a

Jeff Buckley **(© Jack Vartoogian)**



cohesive work. The unifying principle is Buckley's versatile singing; his voice can sinuously entwine itself around a beautiful melody, hover with growling menace, and soar to startling falsetto heights, often within the same song. The most pop-friendly material here ("Last Goodbye," "Grace") boasts smart hooks, inventive arrangements, and restrained yet aggressive playing. Buckley's writing on *Grace* shows a distinct knack for interesting melodies and haunting lyricism, and the album stands as an impressive early achievement.

influences:
Tim Buckley, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan

David Galens

Tim Buckley

Born February 14, 1947, in Washington, DC. Died June 29, 1975, in Santa Monica, CA.

One of numerous folk singer-songwriters to surface in Dylan's mid-60's wake, Buckley soon parted company with his peers to chart a path very much his own. Though his earliest records seem innocently romantic today (he was just 19 when his first album appeared), his turn towards a more free-form, jazz-influenced sound pushed his introspective and always impassioned vocals right off the map. For it was Buckley's voice, above all, that distinguished him—a stunning, four-octave wonder that ranged from angelic tenderness to blistering passion. Recording for Frank Zappa's Straight label from 1970 to 1973, his folk/jazz experimentation—and angst-ridden, sexually direct material (e.g. "Get on Top of Me Woman")—was critically admired but found little commercial acceptance. By 1975, Buckley was dead of a heroin overdose. Ironically, his underappreciated legacy is being rediscovered today through the popularity of his son Jeff Buckley (who sounds uncannily like his father).

what to buy: Oddly, for a singer of Buckley's improvisational talents, no live recordings appeared during his lifetime. Two recent releases have remedied that—and are a perfect place for the uninitiated to start. *Dream Letter: Live in London, 1968* ♪♪♪♪ (Manifesto, 1990, prod. Bill Inglot, Lee Hammond) is a two-CD set recorded by the BBC, generously capturing the passion of Buckley's early performances, with jazz-textured guitar, bass, and vibraphone backing. *Honeyman* ♪♪♪♪ (Manifesto Records, 1995) is from a 1973 New York radio show—and an altogether edgier, more incendiary affair from a man who had now left his '60s innocence far behind.

what to buy next: Adventurous listeners should proceed directly to *Starsailor* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1970, prod. Tim Buckley), Buckley's most uncompromising work—by a long shot. Consciously experimental, its raw passion still outweighs its avant-garde pretensions. The more accessible, languidly melancholy *Blue Afternoon* ♪♪♪½ (Straight, 1969) is the best of the '60s discs. *Greetings from LA* ♪♪♪½ (Straight, 1972, prod. Jerry Goldstein) is gloriously decadent late-era Buckley, in full carnal heat.

what to avoid: Near the end, the inspiration was sadly lacking. *Look at the Fool* ♪ (Planet 3 Records, 1974, prod. Joe Falsia) provides the evidence.

the rest:
Tim Buckley ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966)
Goodbye and Hello ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1967)
Happy/Sad ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1969)
Lorca ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1970)
Sefronia ♪♪ (Planet 3 Records)
The Peel Sessions ♪♪♪ (Dutch East India, 1991)
Live at the Troubadour, 1969 ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)

worth searching for: If you can find it, Buckley's soundtrack for the 1969 Hall Bartlett film *Changes* is worth hearing.

influences:
Bob Dylan, Leadbelly, Miles Davis, John Coltrane
This Mortal Coil, Bono, Patti Smith, Jeff Buckley

Doug Pippin

Richard Buckner

Born in Chico, CA.

Though this San Francisco singer-songwriter's twang resembles Dwight Yoakam's, it carries a soft, emotional intensity instead of a honky-tonking joy. Critics compared him to the comparatively upbeat Gram Parsons when his debut, *Bloomed*, came out during 1995, but a heavy sense of dread hangs over Buckner's best songs. For example, "22" is a classic country tear-jerker about suicide, only much darker and scarier, like the script for a good horror movie. On *Devotion & Doubt*, producer J.D. Foster contributes droning pump organs, rumbling drums, and whining dobros—and the overall sound complements Buckner's observations about tightening throats, deadly highways, and lying awake at 4 a.m. By the time he opens "On Travelling" with the words "I love you, darling," you just know something terrible is going to happen.

what to buy: *Bloomed* ♪♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1995, prod. Lloyd Maines) would be a great album even if it were just "22" and 11 lemons. Although the songs of lost love, misery, tears, and

snuffed fires inside occasionally get heavy-handed, Buckner establishes himself as an important new voice in country music.

the rest:
Devotion & Doubt ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Dwight Yoakam, Gram Parsons, the Violent Femmes, Johnny Cash, the Cowboy Junkies
▶▶ Gillian Welch

Steve Knopper

Buckwheat Zydeco

Born Stanley Dural Jr., November 14, 1947, in Lafayette, LA.

Although Stanley Dural Sr. was a respected La-La (pre-zydeco) accordionist, his son Stanley Junior rebelled and took up the piano. By nine he had gone professional. He put together his first R&B band in 1971 and worked the busy Lafayette scene. During the late 1970s he began playing organ with Clifton Chenier's Red Hot Louisiana Band. Chenier lectured Dural on the importance of Creole culture and music. By 1979 Buckwheat had learned the piano accordion and left to start his own band, Il Sont Partis. His combination of tradition and more contemporary sounds have given Buckwheat accessibility to listeners far outside the normal zydeco audience. He has been able to attract major label interest and promulgate the zydeco gospel throughout the world. His bands have a reputation for being extremely well rehearsed and tight, as well as highly danceable.

what to buy: *100% Fortified Zydeco* ♪♪♪♪ (Black Top, 1985, prod. Hammond Scott, Nauman S. Scott) shows Buckwheat and his band rocking away. It has the mix—from the very rural and funky to the very urbane—that packs the floor at El Sido's in Lafayette.

what to buy next: When Buckwheat steps up with just the drums before him and drives the music with his accordion, you can hear how good this man can be. It is the litmus test for all good zydeco accordionists. *Waitin' for My Ya-Ya* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Scott Billington) comes close to finding that balance between his talent and his desire to please a diverse audience.

the rest:
On a Night Like This ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1987)
Buckwheat's Party ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Turning Point ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
Taking It Home ♪♪½ (PolyGram, 1988)
Ils Sont Partis ♪♪♪ (Blues Unlimited, 1988)
Buckwheat's Zydeco Party ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988) (compilation album)
Where There's Smoke There's Fire ♪♪♪ (Island, 1990)
Menageri: Essential Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Mango/Antilles, 1993) (compilation album)
Five Card Stud ♪♪½ (Island, 1994)
Choo Choo Boogaloo ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1994)
Trouble ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Clifton Chenier, Boozoo Chavis, Amédée Ardoin
▶▶ Nathan Williams, Lynn August, Zydeco Force

Jared Snyder

Buffalo Springfield

Formed 1966, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1968.

Stephen Stills, guitar, vocals; Neil Young, guitar, vocals; Richie Furay, guitar, vocals; Dewey Martin, drums, vocals; Bruce Palmer, bass, vocals (1966); Jim Fielder, bass, vocals (1967); Ken Koblun, bass (1967); Jim Messina, bass, vocals (1968).

This was a transitional, seemingly jinxed group that is almost more important for what its members did after they left it, especially Stills (Crosby, Stills, and Nash), Furay (Poco), and Young. Short-time bassist Fielder went on to Blood, Sweat and Tears, and Messina, after a stint with Poco, hooked up with Kenny Loggins. Still, its traumatic, short career doesn't take away from the charm of Buffalo Springfield's music. "There's something happening here/What it is ain't exactly clear," from the band's first hit single, "For What It's Worth," became a catch-phrase for the growing counterculture and introduced Stills as a songwriter. Young's contributions, from "I Am a Child" to "Broken Arrow" and "Mr. Soul," are nascent blueprints of his formidable talent. There are kernels of CSN, Poco, the Eagles, and every other West Coast rock group in the Springfield's mostly pleasant soft folk and country-flavored rock.

what to buy: *Buffalo Springfield Again* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atco, 1967, prod. York/Pala) is the group's strongest effort song-wise, with great contributions from Young ("Mr. Soul," "Broken Arrow," "Expecting to Fly") and Stills ("Rock and Roll Woman," "Bluebird"). *Retrospective* ♪♪♪♪ (Atco, 1969, prod. various), released soon after the group broke up, will have to do until the overdue boxed set comes out.

what to buy next: *Buffalo Springfield* ♪♪♪♪ (Atco, 1966, prod. Charles Greene, Brian Stone) is a surprising debut, with "For What It's Worth," "Go and Say Goodbye," "Sit Down I Think I Love You," "Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing," and "Burned."

the rest:
Last Time Around ♪♪♪ (Atco, 1968)

worth searching for: Bootlegs of *Stampede* ♪♪♪, the group's aborted final album, boasts a few keepers such as "Neighbor Don't Worry" and "Down to the Wire."

influences:
◀◀ The Everly Brothers, the Beatles, the Byrds

▶▶ Crosby, Stills and Nash, Poco, the Flying Burrito Brothers, Linda Ronstadt, the Eagles, Loggins and Messina, Warren Zevon, Uncle Tupelo

see also: *Crosby, Stills and Nash, Neil Young, Loggins & Messina*

Leland Rucker

Jimmy Buffett

Born December 25, 1946, in Pascagoula, MS.

Jimmy Buffett came to Nashville with hopes of becoming a country and folk singer, and even though he eventually made his mark as a tropical troubadour, his country roots still show. Buffett's songs about beaches, boats, booze, and women offer a temporary escape for every office-bound baby boomer with a mortgage, three-car garage, and a surly boss. Few can resist the singer/songwriter's balmy fantasyland filled with palm trees, fast boats, cold beer, cheeseburgers, margaritas, and romance. Sure, there are sharks to reckon with and volcanoes to flee and broken hearts to mend, but Buffett's songs assure us they can be dealt with. Buffett majored in journalism at Auburn University and the University of Southern Mississippi, then worked briefly at *Billboard* magazine before heading to Nashville to write songs. A failed marriage and a move to Key West, Florida, triggered a new appreciation for the healing powers of the tropical sun. Buffett started out writing earnest, positive songs with humor and wit, and his audiences grew slowly but steadily. He scored his first big hit in 1974 with the wonderfully wistful ballad "Come Monday," but it was the booze-in-the-blender philosophical shrug of "Margaritaville" that put the wind in Buffett's sails. With little radio play and a glaring shortage of hit singles—but a large and loyal group of fans known as Parrotheads—Buffett has become one of the wealthiest beach bums in history.

what to buy: *Songs You Know by Heart: Jimmy Buffett's Greatest Hit(s)* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1985, prod. Jimmy Buffett) is an essential first step for anyone curious about the Parrothead phenomenon. The album includes the hit(s) ("Margaritaville," "Cheeseburger in Paradise") and concert favorites ("Fins," "Volcano," "Pencil Thin Mustache"). Buffett's breakthrough album, *Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1977, prod. Norbert Putnam) is a perfect sampler of feel-good folk-rockers (e.g. the title track, "Margaritaville") and pensive ballads ("Biloxi," "Wonder Why We Ever Go Home"). Another good overview is offered on *Feeding Frenzy* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1990, prod. Michael Utley, Elliot Scheiner), a live recording featuring 72 minutes worth of classic concert craziness.

what to buy next: If Buffett has cast his spell on you, you won't mind indulging in the four-disc box set *Boats Beaches Bars & Ballads* ♪♪♪♪ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1992, prod. various), an extensive retrospective dividing the 72 songs included by the categories listed in the title. *Living and Dying in 3/4 Time* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1974, prod. Don Gant) captures the lyrical charm of early Buffett ("Come Monday," "The Wino and I Know"), while *Banana Wind* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1996, prod. Russ Kunkel) shows some justifiable crankiness ("Jamaica Mistaica," "Cultural Infidel") along with Buffett's first instrumental tune, the steel-drum calypso title track.

what to avoid: Keep out of the way of *Last Mango in Paris* **woof!** (MCA, 1985, prod. Jimmy Bowen) and *Off to See the Lizard* ♪ (MCA, 1989, prod. Elliot Scheiner), which, after their one-trick titles, wander around in a sea of overly slick production, losing sight of Buffett's laid-back charm.

the rest:
A White Sport Coat and a Pink Crustacean ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
A-1-A ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1974)
Havana Daydreamin' ♪♪½ (MCA, 1976)
Son of a Son of a Sailor ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1978)
You Had to Be There ♪♪½ (MCA, 1978)
Volcano ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1979)
Coconut Telegraph ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1981)
Somewhere over China ♪♪ (MCA, 1981)
One Particular Harbor ♪♪ (MCA, 1983)
Riddles in the Sand ♪♪ (MCA, 1985)
Floridays ♪½ (MCA, 1986)
Hot Water ♪♪ (MCA, 1988)
Before the Beach ♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1993)
Fruitcakes ♪♪♪ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1994)
Barometer Soup ♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1995)
Christmas Island ♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1996)
Banana Wind ♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1996)

worth searching for: *All the Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Prism Leisure, 1994, prod. various), a British hits collection, is a bit more generous than *Songs You Know by Heart*.

influences:

◀◀ Gamble Rogers, Irma Thomas, Benny Spellman, Jerry Jeff Walker

▶▶ Iguanas, subdudes, Blues Traveler

David Yonke

Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla

Formed in Grant's Pass, OR.

Luke Bulla (born 1981), fiddle; Jenny Anne Bulla (born 1982), fiddle.

Siblings Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla entered their first fiddle contest in 1987 at ages 6 and 5, respectively. By 1990 they'd become so proficient in bluegrass and Texas fiddling styles—Luke placed in the Top 10 at the Grand Masters Fiddling Championships—that the pair became something of a sensation in the fiddling-contest world.

what's available: *Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Bil VornDick), recorded when Luke was 11 and Jenny Anne 10, shows two musicians with unlimited promise. They're accompanied on these largely traditional tunes by a band that includes their father on guitar, Mark Schatz on bass, and Butch Baldassari on mandolin.

influences:

◀◀ Mark O'Connor, Alison Krauss

▶▶ Chris Thile

Brian Mansfield

Robin Bullock

Born April 19, 1964, in Washington, DC.

Bullock, said the *Baltimore City Paper,* is "one of those guys who can play just about anything with strings disgustingly well." Bullock has recorded on guitar, cittern, mandolin, fiddle, viola, pennywhistle, piano, and bass guitar and is known to be practicing on other instruments as well. He came up through the folk scene in Washington, D.C., and he joined the chamber-folk trio Helicon in 1986. His exposure in that band led to gigs with Walt Michael & Company, the John Whelan Band, and the dance ensemble Footworks. Bullock has kept an active solo career alive, often performing in group shows with his labelmates at Maggie's Music.

what to buy: The best introduction to Bullock's music is *Midnight Howl* ♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1995, prod. Robin Bullock), his second solo album. Subtitled *A Celebration of the Wild American Spirit and its Roots in Traditional, Irish, and Old-Time Music,* the all-instrumental recording illuminates the connections between the Old World and the New. Unlike most Celtic folkies, Bullock pays special attention to the rhythmic bottom of his sound, and this album features two drummers (Celtic percussionist Myron Bretholz and Afro-Cuban percussionist Steve Bloom) as well as Bullock himself multi-tracked on bass. As a result the sparkling Celtic-Appalachian melodies (fleshed out by Helicon flutist Chris Norman and Ceoltoiri harpist Sue Richards) are pushed along with considerable momentum.

what to buy next: The flat-backed cittern is a medieval cross between the lute and the guitar and has recently become popular in Celtic circles for its four mandolin-like pairs of strings and its bouzouki-like range. The cittern and guitar are primarily used as rhythm instruments in Celtic music, but Bullock successfully proves they can be used in lead roles as well. Though the multi-tracking of the one-man album, *Green Fields* ♪♪♪ (Dorian Discovery, 1993, prod. Robin Bullock), lacks the animated give-and-take of *Midnight Howl*, it does make a vigorous case for the Celtic guitar as a soloing instrument.

solo outings:

Helicon:

Between Earth and Sky N/A (Maggie's Music, 1998)

influences:

◀◀ Arty McGlynn, Alec Finn, Norman Blake

▶▶ Zan McLeod, Jesse Winch

see also: *Helicon*

Geoffrey Himes

Kevin Burke

Born June 9, 1950, in London, England.

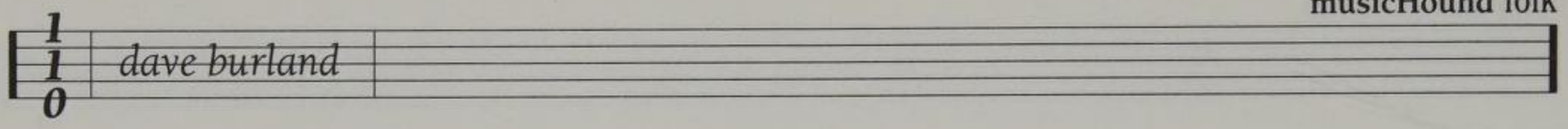
With parents of Sligo heritage, Kevin Burke grew up on the music of the Sligo master fiddlers of the 1920s and 1930s, Michael Coleman, James Morrison, and Paddy Killoran. As a budding fiddle player, he was also exposed to the playing of the many expatriate Irish musicians who lived in London during the 1950s and 1960s, hence the unmistakable blend of influences, mainly from Sligo and Clare, which characterizes Burke's style. A chance encounter with Arlo Guthrie during Willie Clancy Week in Milltown Malbay led to an invitation to go to the United States to appear on one of Guthrie's albums. This was a turning point for Burke, who then made the decision to become a professional musician. It was during that first visit to the States that he recorded his first album, *Sweeney's Dream*, for

kevin burke

Folkways. Back in Dublin, Burke was playing in Christy Moore's backup band when he was offered to replace Tommy Peoples in the Bothy Band in 1976. With Moore's blessing, he jumped at the chance of joining the best Irish band on the scene. During the period of his playing with the band, he would do the odd gig with one or two of the other members if the venue could not accommodate the full lineup. Burke especially liked to work with Mícheál Ó Domhnaill and the two of them collaborated on Burke's first solo album, *If the Cap Fits*, in 1978, then made the very successful *Promenade* as a duet the following year. After the Bothy Band officially called it quits in 1979, Burke and Ó Domhnaill decided to try their luck in America and ended up based in Portland, Oregon, where future Open House member Paul Kotapish had set up some gigs for them. Their equally successful second duet album, entitled *Portland*, was recorded for Green Linnet in 1982. Shortly thereafter, with Ó Domhnaill having decided he had had enough playing backup guitar and starting to work with Portland violinist Bill Oskay, Burke found guitarist Gerry O'Beirne to replace him and recorded *Up Close* with him in 1984. In the meantime, Kerry accordionist Jackie Daly, who had appeared on *If the Cap Fits* and with whom Burke had recorded *Eavesdropper* in 1979, had left De Danann. Burke, Daly, and former Planxty member Andy Irvine toured together, with guitarist Arty McGlynn soon joining in, and the band Patrick Street was born in 1987. Meanwhile, Burke had kept in touch with Portland guitar and mandolin player Paul Kotapish. Kotapish introduced him to singer and harmonica player Mark Graham—Kotapish and Graham appeared on *Up Close*—who, in turn, introduced them to dancer Sandy Silva, and the quartet was soon touring the Pacific Northwest and started to record for Green Linnet in 1992. Yet another musical venture with which Burke was associated during that period was the Celtic Fiddle Festival, a tour first organized in 1992 and bringing together, besides Burke's, the talents of Scotland's ex–Silly Wizard fiddler Johnny Cunningham and Brittany's ex-Kornog member Christian Lemaître. The tour led to a live album being released the following year. One of today's best known and busiest Irish musicians, Kevin Burke continues to appear solo as well as with Patrick Street, Open House, and the Celtic Fiddle Festival at festivals and concert venues all over the United States and abroad.

what to buy: Although recorded early on, Kevin Burke's *If the Cap Fits* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1978/Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Dónal Lunny) remains one of the quintessential Irish fiddle albums. The repertoire is Burke's typical mixture of Sligo and Clare tunes, with a few Kerry polkas learned from accordion player Jackie Daly, who appears on a couple of tracks. The debt to the Bothy Band is clear, Burke's main two accompanists being Dónal Lunny and Mícheál Ó Domhnaill. Yet, there are some new ideas, like the double and triple tracking of the fiddle to vary the texture, which Burke will continue to exploit on later recordings. The most spectacular experiment on the album has to be the relentless, 16-minute long medley of reels, which occupied most of side two of the original LP, in which Burke keeps going from tune to tune while the instrumental combinations vary with each change. *Promenade* ♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1979/Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Gerry O'Beirne, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill) is a somewhat quieter affair, and a different kind of album since it is a duet with Ó Domhnaill, even if the fiddle instrumentals outnumber the songs. Burke performs some of his classic tune medleys, like the reels "Pigeon on the Gate" and "Lafferty's," in his characteristically fluid yet lilting style. Ó Domhnaill's songs include the now famous ballad "Lord Franklin," relating the events of Franklin's doomed expedition of 1845–47 to the North-West Passage. By contrast, *Eavesdropper* ♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1981/Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Kevin Burke, Jackie Daly), a duet album made in 1979 with Kerry accordion and concertina player Jackie Daly, is entirely instrumental. It features some of the closest duet playing one is likely to hear, with sparse guitar or piano accompaniment or none at all, and an eclectic repertoire of lesser-known tunes. Among the latter, a beautiful arrangement with guitar of an uncommon version of "The Blackbird" stands out. Cork flute player Conal Ó Gráda guests on a few tracks, and so does Paul Brady on piano. The excellent *Portland* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1982, prod. Kevin Burke, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill), the first album made by Burke and Ó Domhnaill in the United States, follows the same formula as *Promenade* but the result is even more exciting. Burke's renditions of Ed Reavy's "Maudabawn Chapel," the jig set "The Rolling Waves," and the final reel medley starting with "Tom Morrison's" and "The Beare Island Reel" have inspired many a fiddle player. Ó Domhnaill's love songs in Gaelic provide a melancholic counterpoint to the dance tunes, and the piece of Scottish mouth music "S'iomadh Rud a Chunnaic Mi" fits perfectly in the set of instrumental flings. The entirely instrumental *Up Close* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1984, prod. Gerry O'Beirne) is the product of Burke's later association with guitarist Gerry O'Beirne. The fiddle playing is as inspiring as ever, for instance on the opening "Lord Gordon's Reel" or on Bill

Kevin Burke **(© Jack Vartoogian)**



Monroe's "Jerusalem Ridge," and O'Beirne's distinctive accompaniments complement it well. The participation of musical guests like ex–Bothy Band flute player Matt Molloy, Galway accordionist Joe Burke, and the amazing harmonica-playing Murphy family from Wexford, brings variety to the album, even if it ends up sounding a bit piecemeal.

what to buy next: *Sweeney's Dream* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1973) was Kevin Burke's first album, recorded while he was on his first visit to the United States. Still available from Folkways through the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., it has also been issued on compact disc by the Irish label Ossian (1989). Burke's selections lean heavily towards the Sligo repertoire, with famous medleys heard from the 78s of Coleman and Killoran, and quite a few tunes that he recorded again later solo or with the Bothy Band. The accompaniment on guitar, five-string banjo, mandolin, and autoharp gives some of the tracks an American string band sound. Burke's contributions to *The Celtic Fiddle Festival* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Johnny Cunningham) include two unaccompanied solos, the Clare jigs "Garrett Barry's" and "Cliffs of Moher," and a reprise of the "Pigeon on the Gate" medley from *Promenade*. The remarkable ensemble playing on the album's trio tracks makes it well worth a listen. Kevin Burke appears on a few tracks on two superior live albums, *My Love Is in America—The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin) and *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America* ♪♪♪♪ (Nimbus, 1992, prod. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Robin Broadbank), recorded live on the occasion of the 8th annual Éigse na Laoi festival of traditional music at University College, Cork.

the rest:

(With Johnny Cunningham, Christian Lemaître) *Celtic Fiddle Festival Encore* N/A (Green Linnet, 1998)

worth searching for: Burke was one of four fiddle players featured on the LP *An Fhidil Sraith II (The Fiddle, Volume II)* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1980, prod. Paddy Glackin), an outstanding collection of unaccompanied traditional fiddle playing. Of the several albums on which Burke was a guest fiddle player, few rival the classic *Andy Irvine, Paul Brady* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Dónal Lunny). Although the focus of the album is vocal, there are some dance tunes on which Burke's playing can be savored, particularly the jig "The Blarney Pilgrim" and the reel medley of "Fred Finn's" and "Sailing into Walpole's Marsh." One of Burke's most curious guest appearances, though, would have to be Arlo Guthrie's *Last of the Brooklyn Cowboys* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1973, prod. John Pilla, Lenny Waronker), on which the fiddler performs two short reel medleys, one with Guthrie on banjo and Ry Cooder playing bottleneck guitar.

solo outings:

Open House:

Open House ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992)
Second Story ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994)
Hoof and Mouth ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Michael Coleman, Paddy Killoran, Michael Gorman, Bobby Casey, Martin Rochford, Paddy Fahy

▶▶ Martin Hayes, Dale Russ, Randal Bays

see also: *The Bothy Band, Patrick Street*

Philippe Varlet

Dave Burland

Born July 12, 1941, in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, England.

Dave Burland, the son of a policeman, became a policeman himself before moving into folk music; he became a professional musician in 1968. Burland's first album, *A Dalesman's Litany* (now out of print), was voted best folk album of 1971 by *Melody Maker*. Once a member of the folk-rock band Hedgehog Pie, in recent years the British singer-songwriter has recorded albums of songs by Richard Thompson and Ewan MacColl.

what's available: *Benchmark* ♪♪♪½ (Fat Cat, 1994, prod. John Leonard) includes sprightly versions of "The Rambling Sailor" and "Hot Asphalt," with energetic guitar accompaniment, and 13 other "Trad. Arr. Burland" songs. *His Master's Choice: The Songs of Richard Thompson* ♪♪½ (Road Goes on Forever, 1992, prod. John Leonard, Steve Robertshaw) will be hated by most fans of Thompson's albums; it might be best appreciated by those who like Thompson's songs but can't stand his singing voice. Burland delivers an unusual assortment of Thompson compositions in a vibrato-heavy, echoey baritone that suggests Perry Como or Roger Whittaker. It's worth noting that Thompson plays acoustic and electric guitar on the album, and the supporting players include Julie Matthews, Christine Collister, and Clive Gregson. Burland's style works well on the melancholy "Down Where the Drunkards Roll."

worth searching for: Dave Burland's collaboration with Tony Capstick and Dick Gaughan, *Songs of Ewan MacColl* ♪♪♪♪ (Black Crow, 1978), demonstrates Burland's affinity for MacColl's songs and his collaborative skills with Sheffield's Cap-

stick and Scotland's Gaughan. The album is not currently in release in the United States.

influences:

Richard Thompson, Ewan MacColl

Pamela Murray Winters

T-Bone Burnett

Born John Henry Burnett, January 14, 1948, in St. Louis, MO.

One of popular music's true men out of time, T-Bone Burnett is an old-school moralist in the mold of his one-time employer Bob Dylan—which is to say that Burnett's God is one of wrath. He can be pretentious and overbearing, but Burnett's saving grace is that he tends to be at least as hard on himself as he is on his creations. He initially gained notice as part of Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue during the mid-'70s, and as one-third of the Rolling Thunder spin-off, the Alpha Band. Burnett was the one who wrote the "weird" songs on the Alpha Band's three albums, the surreal narratives that namechecked obscure artists and faded starlets. He has continued on a similar course of wiseacre existentialism on his solo albums, ensuring his following will remain cult-sized. Providing partial compensation is Burnett's acclaim as a producer for Counting Crows, Los Lobos, Sam Phillips (his wife), Peter Case, Gillian Welch, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, the Wallflowers, and Marshall Crenshaw, among many others.

what to buy: *T-Bone Burnett* ♪♪♪♪ (Dot, 1986, prod. David Miner) is the purest and most unadorned country music he's ever made, a folksy effort knocked out in four days just like they used to do way back when. In stark contrast is the lush bombast of *Proof through the Night* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1983, prod. Jeff Eyrich), a guest-laden super-session that was Burnett's big shot at stardom. *Proof* may be the definitive Burnett album, encapsulating his bad as well as good tendencies. It's his preachiest work, certainly (especially the narcissist character sketch "The Sixties"), but also his most accessible.

what to buy next: Burnett's first post–Alpha Band album, *Truth Decay* ♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1980, prod. Reggie Fisher), is Christian cosmic-cowboy music that picks up where his former band left off. The follow-up EP, *Trap Door* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1982, prod. Reggie Fisher, T-Bone Burnett), is slicker but also hookier. It also has, in the deadpan rockabilly reading of "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend," Burnett's single finest on-record moment.

the rest:

J. Henry Burnett, the B-52 Band & the Fabulous Skylarks ♪♪♪ (Uni, 1972/One Way, 1994)

Behind the Trap Door ♪♪♪ (Demon, 1984)
The Talking Animals ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1988)
The Criminal under My Own Hat ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1992)

worth searching for: *When the Night Falls* ♪♪♪ (Bench, 1990, prod. Reggie Fisher), by Black Tie, is a quasi–Rolling Thunder reunion featuring Burnett and many longtime cronies including Billy Swan and his Alpha Bandmates Steven Soles and David Mansfield. There's also the 1995 Rykodisc reissue of Elvis Costello's 1986 Burnett-produced masterpiece *King of America* (Rykodisc, 1995, prod. T-Bone Burnett). Among the reissue's bonus tracks are two songs Costello recorded with Burnett under the name the Coward Brothers—Leon Payne's "They'll Never Take Her Love from Me," and the brilliant proto-twangcore "The People's Limousine."

influences:

Bob Dylan, Kris Kristofferson, Roger McGuinn, Buddy Holly, Randy Newman, Van Dyke Parks, John Prine

Peter Case, Tonio K., Joe Henry, Alejandro Escovedo

see also: *Alpha Band*

David Menconi

The Burns Sisters

Formed in Binghamton, NY.

Marie Burns, vocals; Jeannie Burns, vocals; Annie Burns, vocals.

The seventh, eighth, and ninth of 12 children, Marie, Jeannie, and Annie Burns are now based in Ithaca, New York. The sisters began singing together in 1980, cut two albums of pop-rock material for Columbia during the 1980s as a fivesome (along with sisters Terry and Sheila), then split up for several years. Terry became a Nashville songwriter and Sheila taught art in Ithaca. In 1991, solo projects by Marie, Jeannie, and Annie were combined to make the self-distributed *Songs of the Heart*, and in 1993 the three reunited and were signed to Philo Records. Their sound is country-based folk, with shimmering harmonies that are a consistent highlight.

what to buy: Produced by the former E Street Band bassist, *In This World* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1997, prod. Garry Tallent) is the Burns' most exhilarating and focused work, adding a dash of rock to their sound and featuring adventurous vocal interplay and strong songwriting on tracks like "Dance upon This Earth" and "Johnny Got a Gun."

what to buy next: *Close to Home* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1995, prod. Rich DePaolo), the Burns Sisters' first official trio album, is a more

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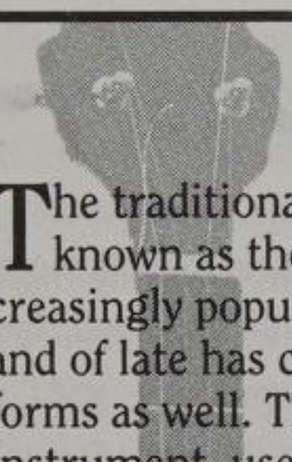


bodhrán

The traditional frame drum of Ireland, known as the bodhrán, has become an increasingly popular instrument in Irish music, and of late has crossed over into other musical forms as well. Though it was originally a ritual instrument, used to accompany mummers during their annual rounds on Saint Stephen's Day, rudimentary forms of the bodhrán were appearing on recordings of traditional Irish dance music as early as the mid-1920s. By the early 1960s, Sean O'Riada, who led the pioneering Ceoltoiri Chualann (later to metamorphose into the Chieftains), was utilizing the bodhrán as a less jarring alternative to the ceili-band-style trap drums then in vogue. The Chieftains opened the floodgates, and before long, the bodhrán was entrenched in Irish music. Traditionally made with a goatskin head (and, less frequently, from a greyhound skin) and a wooden rim, and more often in recent years made from synthetic materials as well, the bodhrán, like percussion instruments in many cultures, looks and sounds deceptively easy to play. It is actually quite a complex and baffling instrument in that it can be used not only (in the right hands) to enhance and intensify the rhythm of a session or a recording, but (in the wrong hands) as a "session-buster," ruining any hope of a musically euphonic gathering. Players such as Ireland's Dónal Lunny (a founder of both Planxty and the Bothy Band, and a notable producer who makes salubrious use of the bodhrán at every opportunity), Tommy Hayes (formerly of Stockton's Wing), Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh (ex-De Dannan, now with Arcady), Mel Mercier (who is involved with many of Micheal O'Suilleabhain's projects), Martin O'Hare (of La Lúgh), Frank Torpey (Nomos), Scotland's Jim Sutherland (Easy Club), and America's Jesse Winch (Celtic Thunder) and Mark Stone (a frequent accompanist of fiddler James Kelly) have all added to the bodhrán's luster, owing to their sensitive and often unconventional approaches.

Myron Bretholz

rustic affair, stressing their folk and gospel roots on tunes like "I Am a Patriot" and "Into the Wind."

the rest:
The Burns Sisters ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1986)
Endangered Species ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1989)
Songs of the Heart ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1991)
Tradition: Holiday Songs Old and New ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1997)

worth searching for: The sisters briefly sing on the soundtrack to Louis Malle's 1981 film *Atlantic City*. Also, albums by Charlie Louvin—*The Longest Train* ♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1996)—and Mac Benford & the Woodshed All-Stars—*Willow* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996)—feature Marie Burns.

solo outings:
Annie Burns:
(With the Rain) *Annie Burns and the Rain* (Art for Art's Sake, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Whites
▶▶ Cox Family, Beth & April Stevens, McCarters

see also: *Mac Benford*

Bob Cannon

Laura Burns

See: The Burns Sisters

Sam Bush

Born April 13, 1952, in Bowling Green, KY.

Bush was a founding member of the innovative New Grass Revival and a regular part of Emmylou Harris's Nash Ramblers before making his debut as a solo recording artist in 1996. The three-time International Bluegrass Music Association Mandolin Player of the Year is one of the most in-demand session players in Nashville, with credits on albums by Trisha Yearwood, Pam Tillis, and others.

what to buy: In *Glamour & Grits* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Sam Bush) Bush mixes traditional bluegrass sounds with a little rock 'n' roll. Former New Grass Revival mates John Cowan and Béla Fleck are among an impressive group of guests. *Glamour & Grits* includes high-powered originals and even a cover of Bob Marley's "Is This Love."

influences:
◀◀ New Grass Revival, Bill Monroe
▶▶ Butch Baldassari, John Reischman

Douglas Fulmer

David Buskin /Buskin and Batteau

David Buskin born December 13, 1943, in New York, NY; Robin Batteau born January 12, 1948, in Boston, MA. Buskin and Batteau formed 1984, in Boston; disbanded in 1990.

Acoustic guitar player, piano player, and vocalist David Buskin has had his greatest success as a songwriter. His songs have been covered by Judy Collins, Tom Rush, and Mary Travers of Peter, Paul and Mary, and used as television commercials by Burger King, the United States Postal Service, Amtrak, Stouffer's, and NBC. A former sideman for Mary Travers and Tom Rush, Buskin teamed up with violinist, guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Robin Batteau to form the popular pop-folk duo Buskin and Batteau in the 1980s. Since the breakup of the duo, Buskin has continued to perform as a soloist. He released a solo album, *Heaven Is Free Tonight,* in 1993. Buskin began lessons in piano at the age of five. By the time he reached high school, he played well enough to join a rock and roll band, the Premiers, that covered tunes by Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, and Duane Eddy. His earliest exposure to folk and acoustic music came at the impromptu jam sessions held at Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village on Sunday afternoons. Buskin didn't write his first song until he graduated from Brown University with a degree in American Literature. A copy of the song, sent to Mike Stoller of the influential rock 'n' roll songwriting duo, Leiber and Stoller, was accepted for publication.

Although his early success came to a halt when he was drafted into the U.S. Army, Buskin spent the next two years strengthening his skills as a performer with the Third Army Soldiers' Chorus and as musical director of an Army variety show in Atlanta. Following his military discharge, Buskin returned to New York to pursue a career in music. After releasing a solo album, he came to the attention of Mary Travers of Peter, Paul and Mary, who recorded five of his songs on her album *Morning Glory* and hired him as a member of her band. An invitation to join a rock band, Pierce Arrow, led Buskin to a more commercial sound. Although the group only released two commercially disappointing albums, the experience introduced Buskin to multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Robin Batteau. When Pierce Arrow disbanded, the two musicians continued to play together, both as the duo Buskin and Batteau as well as in an acoustic trio with Tom Rush. One of their most productive collaborations was a songwriting project with Judy Collins, shortly before they disbanded in 1990. The duo composed several songs for Collins's album *The Fires of Eden*, including "Home before Dark," which they wrote with Collins. With their success writing and singing advertising jingles, the duo was pushed further apart. Buskin reached his commercial apex with his first jingle, "We're NBC, Just Watch Us Now," which won a prestigious Cleo Advertising Award in 1982, while Batteau's rendition of "Chevrolet—the heartbeat of America" made him one of television's most-heard voices. In the aftermath of the duo's separation in 1990, Buskin remained at a loss until spending time on Martha's Vineyard at a songwriter retreat run by Christine Lavin in 1991 and 1992. Two multi-artist albums came out of the retreat weekends. *Big Times in a Small Town* features Buskin's satirical anthem "A Folksinger Earns Every Dime," while *Follow That Road* includes a live version of Buskin's tender love song "Heaven Is Free Tonight" with Jonathan Edwards on harmonica.

what to buy: Although he initially planned his first post–Buskin and Batteau album, *Heaven Is Free Tonight* ♪♪♪ (Joe-Pye, 1993, prod. Lloyd Paul Donnelly), as an intimate solo recording, his plans evolved into a craftsman-like full-blown production. Buskin displays a poet's touch with romantic songs, including "Words That Bring the Tear" and the title track, while remaining equally effective with up-tempo pop tunes like "Standing Still and Dancing."

what to buy next: While Buskin and Batteau's final recording together, *B&B* ♪♪♪ (Silver Wing, 1989, prod. David Buskin, Robin Batteau) failed to bring the duo the commercial success they seemed destined to attain, it remains an infectious pop-folk document. Most songs reflect their individual talents as songwriters, but three co-written tunes—"These Nights," "You're Not a Kid Anymore," and "A Little More Each Time"—show that their collaborative efforts were more than what they could do alone.

influences:

◀◀ Peter, Paul and Mary, Tom Rush, Aztec Two-Step

▶▶ Christine Lavin, David Wilcox

Craig Harris

Paul Butterfield Blues Band /Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Paul Butterfield Blues Band formed 1963, in Chicago, IL. Disbanded 1971. Paul Butterfield's Better Days formed 1972, in Woodstock, NY.

Paul Butterfield Blues Band members: Paul Butterfield (born 1941, in IL; died 1987), harmonica, piano, flute, vocals; Smokey Smothers, guitar (1963–64); Elvin Bishop, guitar, vocals; Jerome Arnold, bass (1963–67); Sam Lay, drums, vocals (1963–65); Michael Bloomfield, guitar, vocals; Mark Naftalin, piano/keyboards (1964–69); Billy Davenport, drums/percussion (1965–67); Gene Dinwiddie, tenor saxo-

paul butterfield blues band

phone, mandolin, flute, vocals (1967–71); David Sanborn, tenor/alto/soprano saxophones (1967–71); Keith Johnson, trumpet, keyboards (1967–79); Philip Wilson, drums/percussion, vocals (1967–69); Bugsy Maugh, bass, vocals (1967–69); Buzzy Feiten, guitar (1968–69); Steve Madaio, trumpet (1968–71); Rod Hicks, bass, vocals (1969–71); Trevor Lawrence, baritone saxophone (1969–71); Ted Harris, keyboards (1968–69); Ralph Wash, guitar, vocals (1970–71); George Davidson, drums (1970–71); Dennis Whitted, drums (1971). Paul Butterfield's Better Days members: Paul Butterfield, vocals, harmonica, piano; Geoff Muldaur, vocals, guitar, keyboards; Amos Garrett, guitar, vocals; Ronnie Barron, vocals, piano/organ; Billy Rich, bass; Christopher Parker, drums.

It's hard today to estimate the immeasurable impact the Butterfield Blues Band had on the course of blues, folk, pop, and rock and roll music when the band burst on the scene in 1964. Initially introduced on a 1965 sampler LP of Elektra artists by what became their signature tune—"Born in Chicago"—the Butterfield Band was no group of rank amateurs or folkies attempting to make the jump from acoustic to amplification. This was a group of seasoned musicians, trained playing six sets a night in the legendary Southside blues clubs. Butterfield, a child prodigy on flute, had left his middle class home in Hyde Park and moved into the Southside in his late teens and immersed himself in the blues scene, studying with Little Walter and James Cotton, and had become a respected member of the scene and an adopted son of Muddy Waters and Smokey Smothers. Guitarist and co-founder Elvin Bishop had taken a similar route from his home in Tulsa, as had guitarist Mike Bloomfield—who joined the group in 1965—a blues musicologist comfortable in the acoustic blues traditions, as well as the amplified Southside approach. The band's rhythm section of Sam Arnold and Lay had served years with Howlin' Wolf. This fully integrated group took Chicago's Northside by storm, then floored the audience at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival; their appearance at the latter firmly established them as leaders in the new movement of amplified American bands on the East Coast, probably the finest working young group in the country. The band had a similar impact on the West Coast scene, especially in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where their level of musicianship and professionalism placed them in a class separate from and high above any of the groups working there. The 1965 West Coast tour not only introduced their highly respectful, energetic take on the blues, but also a growing interest in jazz and Indian music, especially in their long, improvisational approach to Cannonball Adderley's "Work Song" and Bloomfield's raga/rock "East-West." The latter, based on Eastern scales and motifs, would set the tone for the entire San Francisco sound exemplified by the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, et al. The band's impact on club owners like the Fillmore's Bill Graham was also immense and would lead to his reliance on their recommendations to book Muddy, B.B. King, Wolf, and others, which would introduce a new white audience to these masters; Butterfield and Bloomfield are arguably the sourcepoint for the beginning of the popularity of the blues in the U.S.

By 1966 almost everyone in blues and rock—from coast to coast—was watching and aping the Butterfield Blues Band. Bloomfield left in 1967 claiming fatigue from the road, but his creative energies were clearly focused on other directions. Butterfield, always hearing a new and different type of blues in his head, elevated Bishop to the lead guitarist role, gave Naftalin more room as both pianist and arranger, and added bassist/vocalist Maugh, as well as a group of young jazz players—Dinwiddie, Johnson, and Sanborn—heavily influenced by both the blues and avant jazz. This first "big band" reached its zenith with the LP *In My Own Dream*, an assemblage of songs evocative of the blues but entirely unique to the genre, an album of democratic input and superb soloing by Sanborn and Bishop, whose squawking style would predate similar efforts of New York's Eastside jazz guitarists of the '80s. Bishop would leave in 1969 to pursue solo fame, but was followed by a stellar array of guitarists, including Buzz Feiten and Ralph Wash. By 1970 the band was as much a jazz outfit as a blues group, and Butterfield's harp playing was on another level from that of his Chicago predecessors—swinging, exploratory, and highly emotional. The big band opened musical doors for its many progeny, including Blood, Sweat & Tears and Chicago. However, by 1971, musical trends were changing, and the band was suffering from a plague of drugs and recording inertia. Although still famous for its live shows and highly profitable on the road, the band split after its final album, *Sometimes I Feel Like Smilin'*, stiffed.

what to buy: *The Box Set* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1998) is two CDs that collect the great examples of the great powers of each evolution of the Butterfield Band, starting with their unreleased (until 1995) first studio effort through to the end. Taken as a tour-de-force of Butterfield's leadership abilities, proof of his harmonica genius and artistry, or of his bands' incredible blowing power, there's nary a wasted moment throughout. Invaluable for the long out-of-print tracks from the last four LPs. *The Paul Butterfield Blues Band* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1965, prod. Paul Rothchild) is the band's episodic debut, wherein a variety of blues styles are respectfully altered to the Butterfield sound—

loud, aggressive, incredibly musical. This is the album that made Bloomfield and Butterfield legends. *The Lost Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1964/Rhino, 1995, prod. Paul Rothchild) marks Bloomfield's initial days with the band, but really showcases the tough four-piece unit with Lay, Arnold, and Bishop that wowed Chicago audiences. *East-West* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966, prod. Paul Rothchild, Mark Abramson, Barry Friedman) is Bloomfield's swan song, and although not representative of the band's live prowess, it set the stage for all rock experimentation to follow and marked Bloomfield as a guitar deity. *East West Live* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Winner, 1997, prod. Mark Naftalin) is a lo-fi masterpiece from live tapes. These three versions of the title tune—12, 15, and 28 minutes long—freeze frame the brilliance of this band, whose playing seems modern and progressive even today. A timeless recording of their ferocious artistry and proof; this was possibly the greatest blues and rock band of its time, maybe all time. The final (1967) version of the song is pure musical genius, six musicians weaving a seamless, exotic tapestry of styles. Expect greatness from Bloomfield (and Bishop), but the real discovery is Davenport, and Butterfield's remarkable explorations on harp. *The Resurrection of Pigboy Crabshaw* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1968, prod. John Court), rushed out not long after the big band had been formed, consists mostly of blues covers, but is a harbinger of what would develop with the horn players. Taken from live performances taped by fans, 1966–68, *Strawberry Jam* ♪♪♪ (Winner, 1995, prod. Mark Naftalin) can be a tough listen at times, but is worth the effort for its many gems. Butterfield appears on only half of *An Offer You Can't Refuse* ♪♪ (Red Lightnin', 1997), with mentor Smokey Smothers as well as Lay and Arnold; it was recorded from a 1963 Big John's/Chicago live date. Butterfield's harp style shows its uniqueness and rarely derivative punch in these blues standards.

what to buy next: After the Blues Band broke up, Butterfield rebounded in 1972 with a completely different venture; Paul Butterfield's Better Days occasioned another great assemblage of players—Ronnie Barron from New Orleans, Amos Garrett from Canada, Geoff Muldaur a storied Cambridge folkie, mixed with a very young rhythm section. The musical depth of Muldaur, Butterfield, and Barron, mixed with the stellar guitar work of Garrett, made for some great music reflecting blues traditions from around the U.S. Their first album, *Better Days* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bearsville, 1973, prod. Paul Butterfield, Geoff Muldaur), was a great collection of new and old blues compositions, ranging from Robert Johnson and Percy Mayfield to Eric Von Schmidt and Bobby Charles—with Barron, Muldaur, and Butterfield sharing the vocal chores. Barron's work is terrific throughout, and Muldaur's take on "Please Send Me Someone to Love" is a classic. Butterfield's singing is in top form, and his harp playing—acoustic to amplified—shows him to be the best of the best. By the time *It All Comes Back* ♪♪♪½ (Bearsville, 1973, prod. Paul Butterfield, Geoff Muldaur, Nick Jameson) arrived, the band was in the throes of a breakup, and although this album is strong, it doesn't capture the essence or completeness of the first. Butterfield's playing, however, is stunning, and Muldaur's reading of "Small Town Talk" is beautiful. Butterfield would carry on with three solo albums to follow; there were highpoints on most, but each showed his abilities were stronger in a band environment, not as a solo artist.

worth searching for: Butterfield would also lend his harp to great releases by Muddy Waters: *Fathers & Sons* (Chess, 1969, prod. Norman Dayron) and *The Woodstock Album* (Chess, 1975, prod. Henry Glover), the former one of Muddy's greatest albums, wherein Butterfield shows himself the true successor to Little Walter, and the latter Muddy's Grammy-winning effort. Of special interest to folk fans and harmonica enthusiasts is *Paul Butterfield Teaches Blues Harmonica Master Class* ♪♪♪♪ (Homespun 1982/1998) wherein Butterfield gives a Zen-like lesson on acoustic playing, mostly unaccompanied; with Happy Traum as his backup on guitar, he provides beautiful readings of "Key to the Highway," "St. James Infirmary," and other folk standards. His mastery of technique and expressiveness are overwhelming. Highly original, this CD shows Butterfield to be one of the greatest of all harmonica players—in either acoustic or amplified settings.

solo outings:

Paul Butterfield:

Put It in Your Ear ♪♪♪½ (Bearsville, 1974)
North-South ♪♪½ (Bearsville, 1981)
Rides Again ♪ (Amherst, 1986)

influences:

◀◀ Little Walter, Sonny Boy Williamson, James Cotton, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Otis Rush, Bobby Bland, B.B. King, Gene Ammons, Charlie Parker, Don & Dewey, Marvin Gaye, Bobby Charles, Henry Glover, Rick Danko

▶▶ Eric Clapton, Cream, Electric Flag, Bob Dylan, the Band, Blood, Sweat & Tears, Chicago, Stephen Stills, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Grateful Dead, Robben Ford, Janis Joplin, Maria Muldaur, Bonnie Raitt, Charlie Musselwhite, Rod Piazza, J. Geils Band, Canned Heat, John Mayall

Tom Ellis III

Buttons and Bows

See: Skylark

The Byrds

Formed 1964, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1973.

Roger McGuinn, guitars, vocals; Chris Hillman, bass, vocals (1964–68); Gene Clark, vocals, tambourine (1964–66); David Crosby, guitar, vocals (1964–67); Michael Clarke, drums, vocals (1964–67); Kevin Kelley, drums (1967–68); Gram Parsons, guitar, vocals (1967–68); Gene Parsons, drums, vocals (1968–72); Skip Battin, bass, vocals (1968–73); John York, bass (1968); Clarence White, guitar, vocals (1968–73); John Guerin, drums (1972–73).

In terms of guitar sound, along with Neil Young, Jimi Hendrix, and the Allman Brothers, the Byrds were among the most important American rock 'n' roll group of the 1960s. Inspired by the Beatles in the film *A Hard Day's Night*, especially by the Rickenbacker 12-string guitar George Harrison occasionally shouldered, Roger McGuinn and company jump-started a hazy Bob Dylan tune called "Mr. Tambourine Man," initiating a challenge that would ring back and forth across the Atlantic for several years. It's not that someone wouldn't have stumbled across the idea of playing folk songs on an electric guitar, it's that it was Roger (then Jim) McGuinn, David Crosby, Chris Hillman, Gene Clark, and Michael Clarke in Los Angeles who did—especially McGuinn, whose eclectic tastes ranged from Pete Seeger to bluegrass and whose proficiency on the 12-string was far beyond most pop practitioners of the time. The essence of the original sound and appeal was simple: folk music on electric guitars with choir-boy harmonies. In doing so they exposed the beauty and textures of the electric guitar; McGuinn's 12-string work on "Turn, Turn, Turn" and "Eight Miles High" became blueprints for folk/rock, one of the longest-running rock music genres. The Byrds became a jumping-off place for Clark, Hillman, Crosby, and Clarke, but McGuinn and whoever was with him added jazz, Moog synthesizers, and psychedelia before stripping it all away back to country music with *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*. It's not hard to hear echoes of their music everywhere today.

what to buy: *Mr. Tambourine Man* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1965, prod. Terry Melcher) is filled with mystery, harmonies, intrigue, and electrified Dylan songs—one of rock's all-time great debuts. Though flawed, *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Gary Usher) is still the album that turned rock back to country. *The Byrds* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990, compilation prod. Don DeVito, Bob Irwin) is a boxed set actually worth its price, with four discs that pretty much cover the band's output, including the long-awaited-and-well-worth-it original version of *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*.

what to buy next: "So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star" still rings true today, as does the rest of the quiet *Younger Than Yesterday* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1967, prod. Gary Usher). *The Notorious Byrd Brothers* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Gary Usher) is the prequel to *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*. If you don't buy the boxed set, *20 Essential Tracks from the Boxed Set: 1965–1990* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1992, compilation prod. Don DeVito, Bob Irwin) is a nice compilation. *The Byrds (Untitled)* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1970) includes McGuinn's ethereal equine meditation, "Chestnut Mare," and a stunning live set.

what to avoid: Like the pictures of the individual members on the front cover, *Byrds* **woof!** (Asylum, 1973, prod. David Crosby) was stitched together, leaving no group identity of any kind.

the rest:

Turn! Turn! Turn! ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1966)
Fifth Dimension ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1966)
Byrds Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1967)
Dr. Byrds and Mr. Hyde ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969)
Preflyte ♪♪♪ (Together, 1969/Columbia, 1973)
The Ballad of Easy Rider ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1970)
Byrdmaniax ♪♪ (Columbia, 1971)
Farther Along ♪♪ (Columbia, 1971)
The Best of the Byrds (Greatest Hits Vol. 2) ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972)
The Byrds Play Dylan ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1980)
The Original Singles 1965–1967 ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981)
The Very Best of the Byrds ♪♪♪ (Pair, 1986)

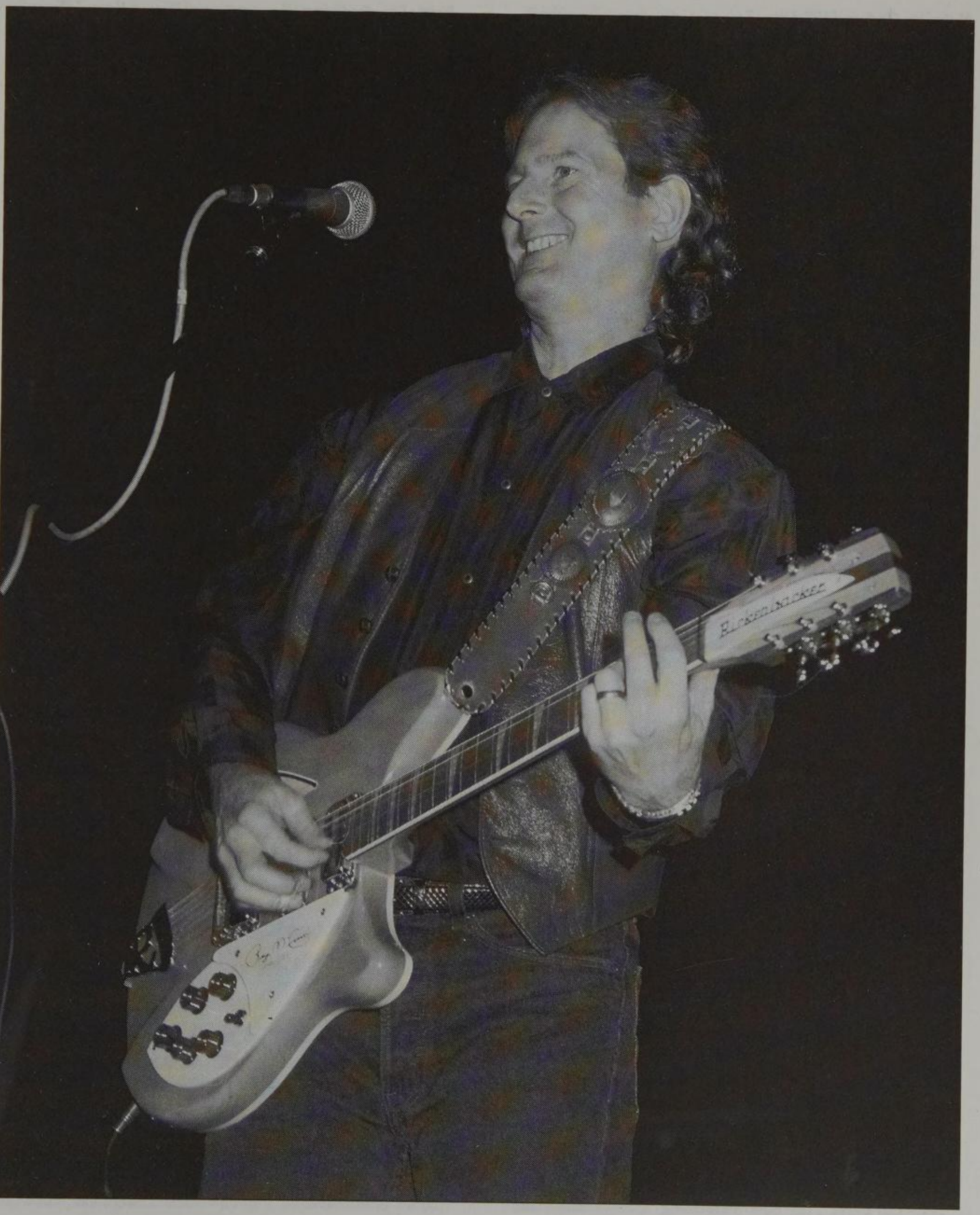
worth searching for: *Never Before* ♪♪♪♪ (Re-flyte, 1988, prod. Bob Hyde) includes, on good vinyl, the "other" version of "Eight Miles High."

solo outings:

Roger McGuinn:

Roger McGuinn ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1973)
Peace on You ♪♪ (Columbia, 1974)
Roger McGuinn and Band ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975)
Cardiff Rose ♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
Thunderbyrd ♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Back from Rio ♪♪ (Arista, 1991)
Born to Rock and Roll ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1991)
Live from Mars ♪♪ (Hollywood, 1996)

Roger McGuinn of the Byrds **(© Ken Settle)**



McGuinn, Clark and Hillman:
McGuinn, Clark and Hillman ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1979)

Gene Clark:
Two Sides to Every Story ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1977)
Echoes ♪♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1991)
Looking for a Connection ♪♪ (Dos, 1994)
This Byrd Has Flown: The Essential Gene Clark ♪♪♪½ (Monster Music, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ New Christy Minstrels, the Beatles, Bob Dylan, John Coltrane, Ravi Shankar, Merle Haggard

▶▶ Bob Dylan, Flying Burrito Brothers, Desert Rose Band, the Beatles, R.E.M., Buffalo Springfield, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Poco, the Eagles, Blue Oyster Cult, Searchers, Gin Blossoms, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Elvis Costello & the Attractions, Soul Asylum

see also: *The Flying Burrito Brothers, Chris Hillman, Gram Parsons*

Leland Rucker

C

The Cactus Brothers

See: David Schnaufer

Greg Cahill

See: Special Consensus

J.J. Cale

Born Jean Jacques Cale, December 5, 1938, in Oklahoma City, OK.

Cale is a lo-fi roots rocker and songwriter who, besides having more success with other artists covering his songs, can whip up some brilliant guitar playing when so desired. He's also one of the first artists to utilize drum machines and other new technology without losing the organic sensibilities of his songs about honky-tonk livin' and wonder. A limited vocalist but an overachiever as a tunesmith, Cale can lull you into an ambient splendor. His best-known covers include: Eric Clapton's interpretations of "Cocaine" and "After Midnight"; Lynyrd Skynyrd's (and more recently the Mavericks') take on "Call Me the Breeze"; Bryan Ferry and Captain Beefheart's renditions of "Same Old Blues"; the Band's crackling "Crazy Mama"; and Randy Crawford's jazzed-up version of "Cajun Moon." His 1982 song "A Thing Going On" from his *Grasshopper* album was recently featured in the hit movie "Phenomenon."

what to buy: *Naturally . . . J.J. Cale* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1972, prod. Audie Ashworth) is a cornucopia of roots rockin' tunes that features the hit song "Crazy Mama" (one of the first songs to utilize a drum machine) and stellar backing from Tim Drummond and Carl Radle on bass, and David Briggs on piano and organ. *Special Edition* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1984, prod. Audie Ashworth, J.J. Cale) is a 14-track best-of collection from Cale's Mercury albums, boasting the well-covered hits plus less-known but equally compelling songs such as "Money Talks," "Don't Cry Sister," and "Carry On." *Closer to You* ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1994, prod. J.J. Cale), Cale's first album for Virgin and his 11th overall, is another display of top-notch guitar playing and songwriting.

what to buy next: *Number 10* ♪♪♪♪ (Silvertone, 1992, prod. J.J. Cale) may be just a notch below *Naturally* in the song department but more than makes up for it with Cale's guitar heroics throughout.

what to avoid: There's nothing terribly wrong with *Five* ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1979, prod. Audie Ashworth, J.J. Cale), but there's a sense of interchangeability about the albums Cale recorded around this time.

the rest:
Really, J.J. Cale ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1972)
Okie ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1974)
Troubadour ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1976)
Shades ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1980)
Grasshopper ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1982)
Eight ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1983)
Travel-Log ♪♪♪ (Silvertone, 1990)
Guitar Man ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1996)
Anyway the Wind Blows: The Anthology (Mercury, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Chet Atkins, Grand Ole Opry

▶▶ Dire Straits, Eric Clapton, Wilco, Uncle Tupelo, John Campbell

Mark J. Petracca

Andrew Calhoun

Born 1957, in New Haven, CT.

Andrew Calhoun is the founder and president of Waterbug, a label that represents "renegade singer-songwriters," according to his press material. Calhoun doesn't seem like much of a

renegade, just a thoughtful and romantic composer with a rich, classically folk-steeped voice. More than many of his peers, Calhoun sounds like he's spent a lifetime listening to folk and blues and answering a muse that's more than a mirror image.

Calhoun, the son of a philosopher-poet and a teacher-novelist, played his first coffeehouse at the age of 12. In 1977, he traveled to Great Britain, where he got a chance to work with one of his heroes, Ewan MacColl. He continued composing, performing, and recording over the next decade, and in 1991 he founded Waterbug, a label that includes other intelligent songsmiths: his partner, Kat Eggleston, as well as Kate MacLeod, Chuck Brodsky, and Sloan Wainwright, among others. Tor Jonassen of WRDV summed up Calhoun's superior gifts: "He's the difference between claiming to be a singer-songwriter and actually being one."

what's available: *Phoenix Envy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Waterbug, 1996) opens with some almost expected stuff—a couple of sad songs, a piedmont-style blues—then offers a deadpan Calhoun, before a live audience, singing "Nobody comes to the coffeehouse/ Folksingers are boring." His own album disproves that notion! Calhoun is mostly alone with his guitar, and the album has the feel of an intimate live concert. *Hope* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1993, prod. Andrew Calhoun, Kat Eggleston, Steve Rashid) is more bluegrass than blues; "Glad Old Man" combines the bright future of Michelle Shocked's "When I Grow Up" with the goofy humor of a Tom Paxton song, and Fred Campeau's banjo adds zest.

influences:

◀◀ Ewan MacColl, Ralph McTell, Stan Rogers

▶▶ Sloan Wainwright

Pamela Murray Winters

California

See: Dan Crary, Byron Berline

California Cajun Orchestra

Founded 1982, in San Francisco, CA.

Danny Poullard, accordion, vocals; Eric Thompson, guitar; Suzy Thompson, fiddle, vocals; Sam Siggins, bass; David Hymowitz, drums. Past members include: Kevin Wimmer, fiddle; Alan Senauke, guitar.

Danny Poullard is one of the finest Cajun accordionists anywhere. He was born in Eunice, Louisiana, and grew up hearing his father playing accordion with his grandfather, who was a fiddler. Like many other Creole South Louisianans, he relocated to the San Francisco Bay region. He began playing with John Simien's Louisiana Playboys at the same Creole Catholic church dances where Queen Ida got her start. He took over the band when Simien died and continued to play the dances. By the early 1980s he was being backed up by the Blue Flame stringband, which included Suzy Rothfield (now Thompson) and Eric Thompson. Suzy had studied with Dewey Balfa through an NEA grant and visited such other traditional Cajun and Creole fiddlers as Dennis McGee, Wallace "Cheese" Read, and Canray Fontenot. The steady dance work evolved into the California Cajun Orchestra. The band has an extremely extensive repertoire and has garnered regular airplay in south Louisiana for their CDs on Arhoolie.

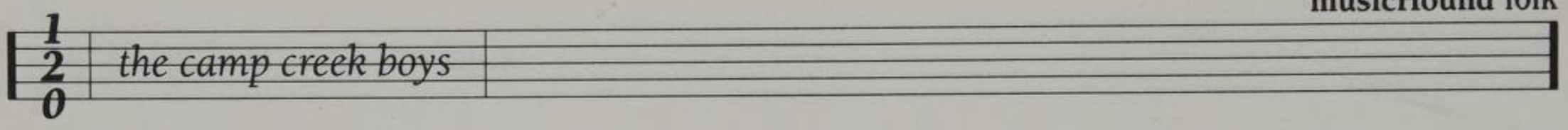
what to buy: On *Nonc Adam Two-Step* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Bob Shumaker, Jody Stecher) you can hear how well the years have served this band—Poullard's playing continues to get better and better. He rips through a whole group of Iry Lejeune tunes, the standard that every Cajun accordionist is measured against. But it is the Creole tunes in particular, such as "John Pollard's Two Step" and "Nonc Adam Two-Step," that are absolutely unique in current recordings of Cajun or zydeco music, evoking the old time Creole music of Canray Fontenot and Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin.

what to buy next: *Not Lonesome Anymore* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1991, prod. Chris Strachwitz, Michael Doucet, Suzy Thompson, Jody Stecher) was the first record by the band and it shows them in good form and demonstrates the richness of the repertoire they pull from. Using four different vocalists brings an additional richness to the recording. Suzy Thompson wails through a version of the Shorty LeBlanc hit "Sugar Bee," while Charlie St. Mary sings Canray Fontenot's "Jolie Bassette." Guest singer Andrew Carriere contributes the vocals to old chestnuts like "Valse Crimenelle" and "L'anse Paille" and Danny Poullard gets to sing "Monsieur Leonard," written by his old band leader John Simien.

the rest:

Adam & Eve Had the Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1989)

worth searching for: Michael Doucet, Danny Poullard, and Alan Senauke's *Cajun Jam Session* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1983, prod. Chris Strachwitz) is a somewhat raw recording of a live radio program over KPFA in Berkeley, California, hosted by Chris Strachwitz of Arhoolie Records. The music has a loose quality, but is played by two true masters of the genre in Michael Doucet and Danny Poullard.



influences:

Tracy Schwarz, Dewey Balfa, Canray Fontenot

Steve Riley, Balfa Toujours

see also: *Eric and Suzy Thompson*

Jared Snyder

The Camp Creek Boys

Formed in Mt. Airy, NC. Disbanded c. 1969.

Kyle Creed, banjo; Fred Cockerham, fiddle, banjo (until 1967); Benton Flippen, fiddle (1968–69); Verlin Clifton, mandolin; Paul Sutphin, guitar; Ronald Collins, guitar; Ernest East, fiddle, guitar; Roscoe Russell, guitar.

The Camp Creek Boys were one of the most exciting old-time bands to ever be recorded. Their driving traditional songs and tunes led by Kyle Creed's legendary banjo playing and Fred Cockerham's energetic fiddling caused them to be the band to watch at the fiddler's conventions in their native Surry County. Later, this reputation for being one of the best old-time string bands around had spread far and wide. Not only did they become an inspiration to many of the younger old-time revivalists of the late '60s, but they also captured the attention of the bluegrass camp with their unleashed energy. In the late '60s, with Fred Cockerham's health declining, Benton Flippen was asked to replace his spot on fiddle. After only a few years, though, the Camp Creek Boys split up, with Kyle Creed taking possession of the name of the group and forming a new one with bluegrass banjo in place of the older clawhammer style. Thirty years after the band's breakup you can still hear musicians talking about this group. To say they were an influential old-time band is like saying that Elvis had a few fans. The Camp Creek Boys are legendary.

what's available: *Old Time String Band* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1967/County, 1997, prod. Dave Freeman) is a reissue of their classic County LP from 1967. This is a great snapshot of the classic band with Fred Cockerham still on fiddle. No old-time music collection, or bluegrass collection for that matter, is complete without this album.

solo outings:

Benton Flippen:

Old Time, New Times ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)

influences:

Bill Monroe, Tommy Jarrell

Highwoods String Band, Paul Brown

Steve Gardner

Hamilton Camp

See: Bob Gibson

Glen Campbell

Born April 22, 1936, just outside Billstown, AR.

Although unjustly remembered as a somewhat ingratiating, over-the-top cornball (his hugely successful CBS television series *The Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour* can still strike terror in the faint-of-heart), Glen Campbell's long and successful career as an entertainer is testament to the obvious drive and abundant talent behind the rhinestones. First leaving home as a teen to tour with his Uncle Dick Bills's Western swing combo, the Dick Bills Band, Campbell landed in Los Angeles in 1960 at the perfect time to make use of his growing prowess on the guitar. Over the next five years, he was one of the city's most sought-after studio musicians, performing behind everyone from Spector to Sinatra. He was even a bona fide Beach Boy for a while! He also worked with his friend Jimmy Bowen for an L.A. music publisher, and performed in an early incarnation of Merle Haggard's Strangers alongside James Burton and Glen D. Hardin. Signed to Capitol Records in 1962, he quickly scored a Top 20 country hit with "Kentucky Means Paradise." He first appeared in the pop Top 50 three years later with a version of Donovan's "Universal Soldier," and in 1967 his signature tune, John Hartford's "Gentle on My Mind," placed respectably on both the country and pop charts. But it wasn't until he began recording the brilliant songs of Jimmy Webb that he became a regular visitor to the Top 10 ("By the Time I Get to Phoenix," "Wichita Lineman," and "Galveston" remain classics of their genre). After several years spent entertaining on both the small and big screens (joking that his role in *True Grit* helped co-star John Wayne win an Academy Award), he returned to the top of the charts in 1975 ("Rhinestone Cowboy") and again in '77 ("Southern Nights") before hitting the scandal sheets with Tanya Tucker and letting years of pharmaceutical dabbling get the better of him. The following decade was spent bouncing somewhat aimlessly from label to label and from style to style (including successful reunions on MCA with Jimmys Bowen and Webb), culminating with a self-confessed "work-horse" stint in the lounges of Branson's country-chic. The '90s, however, found Glen both physically and spiritually cleansed and refreshed, and he remains a popular performer—and red-hot guitarist—to this day. And he can still sing Jimmy Webb like nobody else.

what to buy: The *Essential Glen Campbell* ♪♪♪♪ series (Capitol Nashville, 1995, prod. various) gathers, in three volumes, all

the hits in gorgeous sound and includes just enough rarities, instrumentals, and live recordings to demonstrate both the depth and scope of this decidedly all-round entertainer. *The Glen Campbell Collection (1962–1989)* ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1997, prod. various) provides a more compact and concise overview.

what to buy next: Capitol has begun a long-overdue reissue of Glen's earliest albums, starting with his very first from '62, *Big Bluegrass Special* ♪♪♪ (Capitol Nashville, 1996, prod. Nick Venet), originally released by The Green River Boys. Also newly available are his three fine breakthrough LPs from '67 and '68: *Gentle on My Mind* ♪♪♪ (Capitol Nashville, 1996, prod. Al DeLory), *By the Time I Get to Phoenix* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol Nashville, 1996, prod. Al DeLory, Nick Venet), and *Wichita Lineman* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol Nashville, 1996, prod. Al DeLory).

what to avoid: Beware the myriad Greatest Hits and In Concert recordings, all of which have been rendered superfluous by the *Essential* series. More than a few of the following fall into that category.

the rest:
Greatest Country Hits ♪♪½ (Curb, 1990)
Favorite Hymns ♪♪½ (Word/Epic, 1992)
Live: His Greatest Hits ♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1994)
Phoenix ♪♪½ (Drive Archive, 1994)
All Time Favorite Hits ♪♪½ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
Classics Collection ♪♪½ (Collectables, 1995)
Christmas with Glen Campbell ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1995)
All-Time Favorites ♪♪½ (CEMA/Capitol, 1996)
Wings of Victory ♪♪½ (Intersound International, 1996)
Greatest Hits Live ♪♪½ (Prime Cuts, 1997)
Jesus and Me: The Collection ♪♪♪ (New Haven, 1997)
Best of Glen Campbell ♪♪½ (Alliance, 1997)
Glen Campbell ♪♪½ (Members Edition, 1997)

worth searching for: Glen's oft-overlooked gift as an instrumentalist is readily apparent on any of the budget reissues of his early Folkswingers recordings, particularly the *12-String Guitar* albums on World Pacific; and just as fascinating is his just-before-fame work with the baroque Beach Boy band Sagittarius alongside Gary Usher, Terry Melcher, Bruce Johnston, and Curt Boettcher.

influences:
◀◀ Django Reinhardt, Barney Kessel, Roger Miller, Jimmy Dickens
▶▶ Jim Stafford, Ricky Skaggs, Lee Greenwood, Garth Brooks

Gary Pig Gold

Kate Campbell

Born October 31, 1961, in New Orleans, LA.

Although she was born in New Orleans, Campbell grew up in Sledge, Mississippi, where her father was a Baptist pastor. She picked up the ukulele at age four and the piano at age six. She eventually moved to Nashville, though she went to college in Alabama. A clear-voiced singer/songwriter whose vivid, driven lyrics paint powerful images of Southern life in the style of Eudora Welty and Flannery O'Connor, Campbell creates refreshingly intelligent country-folk that's energizing as well as evocative.

what's available: *Songs from the Levee* ♪♪♪♪ (Large River, 1994/Compass, 1995, prod. Johnny Pierce, Jim Emrich), Campbell's debut album, is a rich collection of story songs that reaches a peak with the nostalgic "Wild Iris" and "A Cotton Field Away," a reflective tale about prejudice. This is smart stuff that never slips into pretentiousness. *Moonpie Dreams* ♪♪♪½ (Compass, 1997, prod. Johnny Pierce) begins with a funky, horn-driven song about pop culture and prehistory called "When Panthers Roamed in Arkansas." Campbell's second outing is more musically varied than *Levee*, and packs just as much lyrical punch. Other highlights include the folky "Delmus Jackson" (a tribute to an old janitor) and her ode to a vintage family car ("Galaxie 500"). With songs like "Moonpie Dreams" and "See Rock City," *Moonpie Dreams* has the makings of a minor Southern classic.

influences:
◀◀ Bobbie Gentry, Iris DeMent, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Emmylou Harris
▶▶ Carrie Newcomer, Lucy Kaplansky, Lynn Miles

Bob Cannon and Brian Mansfield

Rosamund Campbell

Born in Brooklyn NY.

Rosamund Campbell came to the gentler world of folk music with a classical piano background, wishing—as she finds many of her students do—for music that felt more personal and more portable. Educated at Sarah Lawrence College and the Juilliard School, Campbell and her Appalachian dulcimer specialize in performing music of the nineteenth century. She has performed and given workshops at festivals throughout the country and teaches dulcimer in the Chicago, Illinois, area. In 1979, she founded the Dulcimer Society of Northern Illinois. An antique dealer as well as a classically trained musician, she has channeled both interests into her books and recordings, which

abound with the music of Stephen Foster, sentimental parlor ballads, sprightly shaker melodies, temperance tunes, and songs of the Civil War. She weaves her renditions with historical notes and anecdotes, seasoned with compassion and humor.

what's available: Both her CD releases, *The Parlour Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Mel Bay, 1995, prod. Mel Bay Publications) and *The Victorian Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Mel Bay, 1992, prod. Mel Bay Publications), focus on music of the Victorian era, in her words, that era of "romance, comfortably eclectic clutter, hearts and flowers, lace and birdsong—all of this over-upholstered and overstated." Despite that seemingly critical remark, she manages to show us that the music is indeed melodious, charming, and even captivating. It is music ideally suited to the dulcimer, which was itself a parlor instrument throughout much of its history. Both releases feature companion books with notes, musical notation, and dulcimer tablature to all the tunes. These are excellent resources for budding dulcimer players or people with an interest in the Victorian era.

worth searching for: *A Tender Recollection* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1993, prod. Rosamund Campbell) is a cassette-only release of Victorian favorites including maudlin "weepers," genteel parlor songs, and solemn hymns. Lovers of Victorian music will find this a treasure.

influences:

⏪ Stephen Foster, William Shakespeare Hayes, George Frederick Root, John Hill Jewett

⏩ Susan Trump, Tull Glazener

Neal Walters

Emily & Al Cantrell /The Cantrells

Formed 1983; Emily Cantrell, born in Memphis, TN; Al Cantrell, born Al Ehlers in Corvallis, OR.

Oregon-born Al Ehlers was raised along the shores of Washington's Puget Sound in a place with the picturesque name of Three Tree Point, roughly midway between Tacoma and Seattle. The son of a church organist (his father), he traces his earliest musical influences to the Bach fugues he heard while still in the womb. After a false start as a violinist in grade school, he gravitated to rock 'n' roll and the electric bass, with his introduction to country music coming by way of Grateful Dead covers of Merle Haggard songs. Becoming disenchanted with the "fast lane" rock 'n' roll life, he returned to the fiddle and came under the influence of Idaho fiddler Teddy Jones. By the early 1980s, having absorbed the further influences of fiddlers the likes of Vassar Clements and Johnny Gimble, he had made his way around the British Isles and Norway and had returned to play throughout the Southwest as part of the Chuckwagons of the West shows. He was living in Estes Park, Colorado, in 1983 when he was invited to audition for a Boulder-based bluegrass band called the Tractors (not the retro-country band of the '90s). Emily Cantrell was the band's leader, and two years later they were married. They have been performing together as a duo ever since, combining elements of folk, bluegrass, old-time, Western swing, and whatever else suits their fancy into their own distinctive brand of acoustic country music.

Emily Cantrell was raised in Nankipoo, Tennessee, a few miles north of her Memphis birthplace. She began playing the piano at age four, and spent much of her childhood playing music with her older brother Jim. She also discovered at an early age that she had a special voice, a clear, rich soprano that captivated listeners and has drawn comparison as an adult to Joni Mitchell. Perhaps a more appropriate comparison, though, might be to the talented Nashville singer-songwriter Matraca Berg, particularly in that, like Berg, Emily Cantrell is also an accomplished songwriter—most of the songs on their two most recent recordings are originals. After moving to Boulder in 1980, she met Tim O'Brien, leader of the legendary neo-traditionalist bluegrass band Hot Rize, and he asked her to sing harmony vocals on "Queen of Hearts," on his solo album *Hard Year Blues*. She formed the Tractors in 1981, with Al joining two years later. Following the band's breakup, they remained a couple, professionally as well as in private life, and Al took her name, Cantrell—"Little Singer." After hearing them perform at a party, Robert Redford was so taken with their music that he included them on the soundtrack of *A River Runs Through It*, and Al and Emily themselves appear in the movie, playing their instruments in the church picnic scene. Among the most versatile singers around, Emily Cantrell nearly redefines the word "chanteuse"—listening to her brings the sense that she would be equally at home as the vocalist fronting a band for Bill Monroe, Duke Ellington, or Bob Wills.

what to buy: *Dancing with the Miller's Daughter* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sombrero, 1995, prod. Al and Emily Cantrell) is a lean production, with no studio musicians backing Al's fiddle and mandolin and Emily's vocals and guitar, but for this reason it gives a much clearer sense of the power and grace of the music they produce as a duo—what it's like to hear them perform live. Seven of the 10 tracks are Emily Cantrell originals, including standouts like

"Red Sombrero," "Alone at Last," and "Under the Rose." Emily's voice is compelling, but pay attention to Al's fiddle and mandolin work as well. Their version of Cowboy Bob Nolan's "Still Water Pool" is nicely done, too.

what to buy next: Choosing between their two other recordings is difficult, but to get a full picture of the versatility of the Cantrells, make *Under a Southern Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Sombrero, 1988, prod. Al and Emily Cantrell) the next choice. Originally intended as a demo, this became their first album, featuring versions of old country and pop favorites (no original tunes) ranging from "I Heard the Bluebirds Sing" to "Slow Boat to China" to "My Adobe Hacienda." The backup musicians include "Ranger" Doug Green and Fred "Too Slim" LaBour from Riders in the Sky, as well as banjo wizard Béla Fleck.

the rest:
A New Language ♪♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ Sons of the Pioneers, Peter, Paul & Mary, Bob Dylan, Hot Rize, Vassar Clements, Johnny Gimble

▶▶ Matraca Berg, Eileen McGann, Robin & Linda Williams

John Lupton

editor's choice
15 singer-songwriter albums

Kate Wolf, *Give Yourself to Love* (Kaleidoscope)

Tom Rush, *The Circle Game* (Elektra)

Joni Mitchell, *Court and Spark* (Asylum)

Paul Siebel, *Paul Siebel* (Philo/Rounder)

Rosalee Sorrels, *Report from Grimes Creek* (Green Linnet)

Iris DeMent, *Infamous Angel* (Rounder/Warner Bros.)

Sandy Denny, *Sandy* (Island)

Hazel Dickens, *A Few Old Memories* (Rounder)

Paul Simon, *Graceland* (Warner Bros.)

Gordon Bok, *Fashioned in the Clay* (Folk Legacy)

Gillian Welch, *Revival* (Almo Sounds)

Lyle Lovett, *Pontiac* (MCA/Curb)

Si Kahn, *In My Heart, Live in Holland* (Strictly Country)

Greg Brown, *Down in There* (Red House)

Bill Staines, *The First Million Miles* (Rounder)

Capercaillie

Formed in 1984, in Oban, Scotland.

The original group was: Karen Matheson, vocals; Donald Shaw, accordion, keyboards; Marc Duff, recorder, whistles; Joan MacLachlan, fiddle, vocals; Shaun Craig, guitar, bouzouki; Martin Macleod, bass, fiddle. Later, all but the first two were replaced with Mánus Lunny, bouzouki; Charlie McKerron, fiddle; John Saich, bass; Fred Morrison, bagpipes, whistles; Wilf Taylor, percussion; David Robertson, percussion.

Capercaillie rose to stardom almost overnight, forming in 1984 and recording their first album, *Cascade*, in three days. They rapidly developed a local reputation for strong live performances in their home town of Oban, Scotland. By 1988 their members were being courted to compose a soundtrack for a documentary about the history of the Gaelic Scots. This album, *The Blood Is Strong*, shot to platinum in Scotland, and soon the group was on tour around the world. Continuing this trend, they soon recorded several award-winning albums. In 1995, their members appeared in the film *Rob Roy,* adding to their claim to fame. Although known as a Scottish band, Capercaillie is truly an ethnic mix. The lineup includes two Scots, one Canadian, one Irishman, and two Englishmen. The Scottish reputation of the band is based largely on the traditional Scottish material from which they draw much of their material. The members take great pleasure in playing traditional tunes, but also develop their own music based on those Scottish roots. The group's sound could be characterized as somewhat traditional in nature, while still incorporating contemporary electronic instruments into the mix. Recent releases are much less traditional, however. The group's strongest asset has to be the supernatural voice of Karen Matheson, who inspired Sean Connery to remark that she had "a throat surely touched by God."

what to buy: Perhaps the best overview of Capercaillie's sound would be *Get Out* ♪♪♪ (Survival/BMG, 1992, prod. Capercaillie, Iain Morrow, Dónal Lunny), which contains some live tracks and several tracks from previously recorded work. Capturing a bit of the modern sound that causes the group to frequently be com-

evan carawan

pared to the Irish group Clannad, this album also contains the basic Scottish feel that made the group so popular. A beautiful rendition of "Fear a' Bhàta" from *The Blood Is Strong* and the live recording of their rhythmic rendition of the 400-year-old *waulking* song that skyrocketed to the U.K.'s Top 40, "Coisich a' Rùin," are highlights of the album.

what to buy next: Having an almost live feel, *Sidewaulk* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1989, prod. Donal Lunny) captures the essence of what the group sounds like in performance. Highly traditional in nature, the driving reels and jigs make listeners want to get up and dance. *Crosswinds* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987, prod. Capercaillie) is also filled with traditional material. There are several very moving songs on this album, including "Am Buachaille Ban."

what to avoid: *Beautiful Wasteland* ♪½ (Survival, 1997) takes a much more modern approach, using a more electric sound and combining African rhythms into the mix. It's an interesting experiment, but the album seems to lose completely the tradition the group originally set out to reclaim.

the rest:
The Blood Is Strong ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988)
Delirium ♪♪½ (BMG, 1991)
Secret People ♪♪ (Survival/BMG, 1993)
Capercaillie ♪♪ (Survival/BMG, 1994)
To the Moon ♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997)

worth searching for: *Cascade* ♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1984) displays the raw energy that initially got the group off the ground.

influences:
◀◀ Na h-Oganaich, Christine Primrose, Flora MacNeill
▶▶ Clannad, Silly Wizard, Altan, Poor Clares

Jo Hughey Morrison

Evan Carawan

See: Guy Carawan

Guy Carawan /The Carawan Family

Born July 27, 1927, in Los Angeles, CA.

Folk songs, folklore, and political activism are combined by multi-instrumentalist and baritone singer Guy Carawan. The music director of the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee, Carawan played an active role in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. His adaptation of a spiritual-turned-freedom song, "We Shall Overcome," recorded by everyone from Pete Seeger and Joan Baez to the Freedom Singers, helped to make it one of the anthems of the decade. Carawan first came to visit the Highlander Center, a non-profit organization devoted to helping solve the economic and racial problems of the American South, for a short visit in 1953. He returned to stay in 1959. The following year, he and his wife Candie, who had come to the Highlander Center from California on an exchange program with Fisk University, participated in sit-down strikes and protests against racial inequality. Their experiences and the songs that they collected were published in three books—*Freedom Is a Constant Struggle, We Shall Overcome!: Songs of the Southern Freedom Movement*, and *Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement through Its Songs*. Carawan later helped to promote interest in the music of the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina. Folklorist trips that he and Candie made to the islands resulted in the book *Ain't You Got a Right to the Tree of Life?: The People of Johns Island, South Carolina—Their Faces, Their Words, and Their Songs* and an album of field recordings, *Been in the Storm So Long: A Collection of Spirituals, Folk Tales, and Children's Games from John's Island, South Carolina*. Together with his son, Evan, Carawan recorded several albums emphasizing the hammered dulcimer. Guy, Candie, and Evan joined together, as the Carawan Family, to record the 1991 album, *Home Brew*.

what to buy: The diversity of Carawan's repertoire is exemplified on *Tree of Life: Arbol de la Vida* ♪♪♪ (1990, Flying Fish). Accompanying himself on guitar, banjo, and hammered dulcimer and joined by his wife, Candie (vocals), Rupert Oysler (harmonica), Will Byers (harmonica), and Sonny Houston (mandolin), he offers faithful renditions of Appalachian spirituals, Sea Island chants, freedom songs, and traditional British and Celtic tunes. Carlos Aguirre's musical travelogue of Nicaragua is enhanced by the addition of lead guitarist Enrique Ramirez and guitaron player Miguel Govea.

what to buy next: Recorded at the Carawan's New Market, Tennessee, home in December, 1991, *Home Brew* ♪♪♪ (1992, Flying Fish, prod. Guy Carawan, Evan Carawan, Doug Dorschug) has all the charm and intimacy of an informal living room session. Songs on the album cover a wide ground. Three tunes—"Honey in the Rock," "That's All Right," and "Run, Mary, Run"—from the Sea Islands are balanced by traditional Appalachian and Celtic instrumentals and songs by Jay Unger, Utah Phillips, John McCutcheon, Brownie McGhee, and Los Lobos. "The Tortoise and the Hare" is a hammered dulcimer instrumental composed by Evan Carawan.

the rest:
This Little Light of Mine and Other Songs ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1959)
Songs by Guy Carawan ♪♪ (Folkways, 1964)
Green Rocky Road: Songs & Hammer Dulcimer Tunes from Appalachia and the British Isles ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1976)
Jubilee ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1979)
Songs of Struggle and Celebration ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1982)
Sing Out for Freedom ♪♪♪ (Pacific Radio Archive, 1983)
The Land Knows You're There ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
(With Evan Carawan) *Appalachian & Irish Tunes of Hammered Dulcimer* (Flying Fish, 1989)
Guy Carawan ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1990)
(With Evan Carawan) *Hammer Dulcimer* (Flying Fish, 1992)

solo outings:
Lomax/Carawan/Cole:
Texas Folk Songs (Arion, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Pete Seeger, Paul Robeson, Zelphia and Myles Horton
▶▶ Sweet Honey in the Rock, Si Kahn, John McCutcheon

Craig Harris

Bob Carlin

Born March 17, 1953, in New York, NY.

Bob Carlin is one of the most knowledgeable of the younger generation of old-time musicians; in addition to recording several albums of his own, he has produced several anthologies of archival banjo recordings. He's considered one of the leading modern proponents of the clawhammer banjo style on the traditional music scene today.

what to buy: *Banging and Sawing* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Bob Carlin) is devoted to traditional fiddle and banjo tunes; first recorded 1982–84, this CD reissue contains nine previously unissued tracks.

what to buy next: Carlin and John Hartford join forces for *The Fun of Open Discussion* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Bob Carlin, John Hartford), a whimsical musical dialogue between Carlin and Hartford, who brings his considerable knowledge of old-time banjo and fiddle tunes to bear here.

worth searching for: *Melodic Clawhammer Banjo* ♪♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1977, prod. Bob Carlin) was Carlin's first album and still counts among his most enjoyable.

influences:
◀◀ Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham
▶▶ Dirk Powell, Walt Koken

Randy Pitts

Bill Carlisle /Cliff Carlisle /The Carlisles

The Carlisles formed 1951.

Bill Carlisle (born December 19, 1908, in Wakefield, KY), guitar, vocals; Cliff Carlisle, steel guitar, vocals (born May 6, 1904 , in Spencer County, KY; died April 2, 1983, in Lexington, KY).

Bill Carlisle is one of the best-known singers of country novelties, if for no other reason than he's sung them longer than just about anybody else. He and his brother Cliff performed as the Carlisle Brothers beginning in 1930. After Cliff retired in 1947, Bill went out and formed his own group, the Carlisles, in 1951. The Carlisle Brothers had but one Top 10 hit, a humorous reworking of "Rainbow at Midnight," but the Carlisles had many, "No Help Wanted," a #1 hit in 1953, among them. The Carlisles joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1954, and Bill Carlisle continues to keep Opry audiences in stitches well into the 1990s, though he now has to use a walker as a prop.

what to buy: If Jimmie Rodgers is too mild-mannered for your tastes, Cliff Carlisle's *Blues Yodeling and Steel Guitar Wizard* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie/Folk Lyric, 1996, compilation prod. Chris Strachwitz) might be just your style. Along with Jimmie Davis and Gene Autry, Cliff was one of the most popular Rodgers imitators, but his singing was wilder and his steel guitar flat-out *rocks*. The 24 tracks on this album were recorded between 1930 and 1937; some of the later recordings feature Bill on guitar and vocals. Songs like "Memphis Blues" and "Hobo Blues" show a direct Rodgers influence; another, "You'll Miss Me When I'm Gone (Just Because)" was later covered by Elvis Presley during his rockabilly days.

what to buy next: Bill Carlisle's *No Help Wanted* ♪♪♪ (King, 1994, prod. Tommy Hill) is a five-song collection of tunes that the Carlisles have performed on the Opry for more than 40 years. The most famous of these—"Iz Zat You, Myrtle," "No Help Wanted," and "Too Old to Cut the Mustard"—were at one time considered mildly bawdy.

worth searching for: Cliff Carlisle has three Jimmie Rodgers–like cuts from 1932 on *White Country Blues: 1926–1938, A Lighter Shade of Pale* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1993, prod. Lawrence Cohn, Gary Pacheco). Two of the songs

were recorded with guitarist Wilbur Ball; the other was released under the name "Bob Clifford."

influences:

⏪ Uncle Dave Macon, Jimmie Rodgers

⏩ Grandpa Jones, Elvis Presley

Brian Mansfield

Mary Chapin Carpenter

Born February 21, 1958, in Princeton, NJ.

Mary Chapin Carpenter's country sounds a lot like Nick Lowe's high-powered late 1970s rock 'n' roll. Though her voice has a hint of a Southern twang and her lyrics occasionally focus on honky tonks and highways, she studies the Beatles and Joni Mitchell much more than Merle Haggard or Johnny Cash. Either way, she has managed to build a big audience of mainstream country fans and neo-folkies clinging to albums by Carpenter's friends, Shawn Colvin and Rosanne Cash. Her best songs, including "I Feel Lucky" and a slicker version of Lucinda Williams's "Passionate Kisses," have hit the top of the country charts, and she consistently racks up Grammys and Country Music Awards.

what to buy: *Come On Come On* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1992, prod. John Jennings, Mary Chapin Carpenter) contains a whopping seven hit singles, including "I Feel Lucky," which uses Lyle Lovett and Dwight Yoakam as hunks, and "Passionate Kisses."

what to buy next: *Shootin' Straight in the Dark* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990, prod. John Jennings, Mary Chapin Carpenter), the beginning of Carpenter's breakthrough, contains the romp "Down at the Twist and Shout." *Stones in the Road* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994, prod. John Jennings, Mary Chapin Carpenter) has generally quieter and more introspective songs.

the rest:

Hometown Girl ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1988)
State of the Heart ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
A Place in the World ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996)

worth searching for: *On Location: Conversation and Music by Mary Chapin Carpenter* is a one-hour radio special on CD from 1992 that features Carpenter talking about the songs from her first four albums.

influences:

⏪ Carlene Carter, the Beatles, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Rosanne Cash

⏩ Shawn Colvin, Trisha Yearwood, Patty Loveless, Suzy Boggus, Dar Williams

Steve Knopper

Chubby Carrier /Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Born J.R. Carrier Jr., July 1, 1967, in Lafayette, LA. Bayou Swamp Band formed 1990, in Lawtell, LA.

Chubby Carrier, one-row accordion, three-row accordion, piano accordion, vocals; John Gaar, guitar; Lance Ellis, saxophone; Tray Landry, drums; Corey Duplechain, bass; Mike Chaisson, frattoir, percussion. Past members include: David Lejeune, guitar; Rodney Dural, bass.

Chubby Carrier is part of an extended family of musicians from the Lawtell/Mallet area of Louisiana. His father, Roy Carrier Sr., is a well-respected zydeco musician and club owner who leads his own band, "The Night Rockers." Chubby got his break filling in for his father at the Offshore Lounge on the nights when his father was out working on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico. His father encouraged him to develop his own style and introduced Chubby to the Clifton Chenier and blues performers like Bobby "Blue" Bland and B.B. King. He got his start playing drums with Terrance Simien and the Mallet Playboys. Like Simien, he puts a lot more guitar solos in his music than most other zydeco bands. He also uses a lot more rock 'n' roll rhythms in his music (there is even a tribute to Jerry Garcia!), which does make him more accessible to a mainstream audience, but less appealing to the hardcore zydeco scene. This is not to disparage Carrier, though, he's a fine performer on the one- and three-row accordions right out of the Rockin' Dopsie school of tough zydeco licks; and his experience as a drummer shows in his always tight grooves.

what to buy: On *Who Stole the Hot Sauce?* ♪♪♪½ (Blind Pig, 1996, prod. Michael Freeman) Carrier shows not just his roots, with a cover of Clifton Chenier's classic version of the traditional "Zydeco Sont Pas Sale," but the more contemporary influence of Beau Jocque, as well, with his own remake of War's "The Cisco Kid." For rock 'n' roll fans, check out the zydeco version of Pete Townshend's "Squeezebox" and hear how a rock song can be turned into a South Louisiana dance number.

Mary Chapin Carpenter **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

chubby carrier 1/7

what to buy next: No one is denying that Carrier can wail on the three-row, or that the man can sing and lead a band, but *Dance All Night* ♪♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1993, prod. Chubby Carrier, Edward Chmelewski, Jerry Del Giudice) may not suit those whose tastes run more toward the sounds of South Louisiana. The piquant version of the Texas Playboys' "Stay a Little Longer" is especially fun if you're familiar with Bob Wills's original. He passes the litmus test for zydeco accordionists by soloing over just the drums and rubboard on "Old Time Zydeco" and pays his respects to Clifton Chenier with a high speed cover of "Tout le Temps en Temp."

the rest:
Boogie Woogie Zydeco ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ Roy Carrier, Rockin' Dopsie, Clifton Chenier
▶▶ Keith Frank, Chris Ardoin, Geno Delafose

Jared Snyder

Roy Carrier /Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Formed 1961, in Lawtell, LA.

Roy Carrier, one-row and three-row button accordions, vocals; Kevin Carrier, guitar; Troy Dickie Carrier, drums; Paul Newman, bass; Kevin Brousard, frattoir; Gerard St. Julien Jr., drums.

Roy Carrier's Offshore Club is the place for zydeco music in the small town of Lawtell, Louisiana. Carrier comes from a family with a deep tradition in music making in the town. His uncles Bebe and Eraste Carrier were playing dances in the area since almost the turn of the century, and the Lawtell Playboys of Calvin Carrier and Delton Broussard also had played the area for years. Roy grew up in this rich culture; he started to play the rubboard at age 6, and would sneak his father's accordion out to the barn to learn that instrument, as well. Despite the whipping he got when his father found out, he was determined to learn accordion and by age 14 had formed the Night Rockers with his brother. A farm accident took half of Roy's index finger on his right hand, but like musicians such as Django Reinhardt, he used the adversity to his advantage and developed a "cross chord" technique for his accompaniment that is unique to zydeco players. Roy's zydeco sound has the diatonic push-pull and syncopated scratch that hearken back to the rural zydeco of the Lawtell Playboys. This is balanced by his love of blues performers like Bobby "Blue" Bland and B.B. King as well as the influence of zydeco king Clifton Chenier. Roy is the father of the "Jimi Hendrix of the Accordion," Chubby Carrier.

what to buy: It's a truism that zydeco bands are always much better live than on record, and that's certainly true in this case. However, *Zydeco Strokin'* ♪♪♪½ (Paula, 1995, prod. Lee Lavergne) gives a good taste of what to expect when you go out and get dancing to the Night Rockers. Any good zydeco recording has to have a tune where the accordionist (and leader) solos over just the frattoir and drums so he can prove that he can drive the band without the benefit of guitar and bass. On this CD, Carrier plays a kicking version of Clifton Chenier's "Baby Do Right" over the rhythm section and the overall mix emphasizes the drums, frattoir, and accordion over the guitar and bass. While many of the tunes are slight rewrites of current zydeco riffs and songs, you also get the band riffing off on Clarence Carter's R&B hit "Strokin'," just keeping enough of the original to see where they're coming from. Carrier's strong blues influence shines on "My Baby Wants to Leave Me," and the ubiquitous zydeco novelty cover is, in this case, a rocking version of "Tequila." Not as good as a night at the Offshore, or seeing Carrier at your local dance hall, but it's a nice record. Don't make this your first zydeco purchase.

what to buy next: The same reservations stated above apply to *Offshore Blues and Zydeco* ♪♪♪½ (Chubby Dragon, 1997, prod. Ray Alden). Carrier ain't gonna win any awards as the poet of his generation, but that's not the point with zydeco music. Lots of Carrier's songs are built around a zydeco riff and call-and-response singing. His "Kansas City Blues" sounds like Wilbert Harrison lost in the fog on Highway 190 somewhere between Lawtell and Swords, and his "Living in the USA/Shake, Rattle and Roll" medley sounds like something he pulls out for LSU frat parties. Still, the man can drive a band with his accordion: check out his "My Baby Don't Wear No Shoes," done in the old house-dance style, and his cover of Clifton's "Blake Snake Moan." This one is only available by mail order, but it has some of Carrier's nicest playing. It's available from Chubby Dragon Productions, 124 Quaker Bridge Rd, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 110520. Phone: (914) 941-8536.

the rest:
At His Best ♪♪♪ (Zane, 1996)
(With Joe Walker) *Soulful Side of Zydeco* ♪♪ (Zane, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Clifton Chenier, Boozoo Chavis, Rockin' Dopsie
▶▶ Chubby Carrier, Chris Ardoin

Jared Snyder

Liz Carroll

Born September 19, 1956, in Chicago, IL.

We have Sister Francine to thank in part for Liz Carroll's contribution to Irish traditional fiddle music. As Carroll was growing up and becoming involved in Irish dancing and music making in her native Chicago, she first started playing on her father's three-row accordion, only later to be inspired to take up the fiddle by Sister Francine's violin teaching at school. Fortunately for Carroll, the 1960s were a time of cultural reawakening for the Chicago Irish community and, under the aegis of the local Irish Traditional Musicians Association, she was soon playing and learning alongside veteran practitioners like Mayo piper Joe Shannon and Chicago-born fiddler John McGreevy. By 1973, Carroll's playing had become impressive enough for visiting accordionist Paddy Gavin to encourage her to compete in the All-Ireland competitions. Although that year she was second to future De Danann frontman Frankie Gavin in the under-18 category, she won first place in 1974, and went on to a stunning victory in the senior division the very next year, with a title in the duet competition to boot. It wasn't long before Carroll was asked to join in Mick Moloney's Green Fields of America tours of the United States and to record for the New York Irish label Shanachie. Two early LPs, the first being a duet album with Offaly accordion player Tommy Maguire, were followed by a number of guest appearances on recordings by fellow Green Fields performers Mick Moloney and Jimmy Keane as well as by ethnomusicologist and folk-rock artist Lawrence McCullough. Carroll has since made another solo album, consisting mostly of her own compositions, and has been touring and recording since 1991 with the group Trian, with accordionist Billy McComiskey and singer and guitar player Dáithí Sproule. In 1994, Liz Carroll was presented with a prestigious National Heritage Fellowship award.

what's available: On the strength of her All-Ireland success, Liz Carroll recorded her debut album, *Kiss Me Kate* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1978, prod. Daniel Michael Collins, Richard Nevins), with accordion player Tommy Maguire, himself an All-Ireland winner in 1964, and Jerry Wallace on piano. The album abounds in impressively tight duet playing of the often-complex tunes which the notoriously tune-hungry Carroll seems to favor. However, her true musical personality really unfolds on her solo album, *A Friend Indeed* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1979, prod. Richard Nevins, Daniel Michael Collins), recorded a year later with Marty Fahey on piano. Here, Carroll demonstrates not only her awe-inspiring command of the instrument and of the idiom, sometimes spicing things up with quirky, American-sounding licks, but showcases her talents as a composer as well. It took Carroll almost 10 years before she made her next solo album, but the result was worth the wait. *Liz Carroll* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Liz Carroll, Dáithí Sproule) is a dazzling display of her superior musicianship and compositional genius, all but six of the tunes recorded being from her pen. Besides her work with the group Trian, there are a few tracks by Carroll on a number of anthologies worth seeking. She recorded an uncommon setting of "Miss McLeod" followed by a couple of her compositions on *Cherish the Ladies: Irish Women Musicians in America* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Mick Moloney), the original album resulting from Mick Moloney's efforts to promote the playing of Irish women musicians in America. This also featured Eileen Ivers, recently of *Riverdance* fame. Carroll also appears on the live recording *My Love Is in America: The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival* ♪♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin), a fabulous collection every Irish fiddle music lover should have on their shelf, as well as on the recently released and equally worthwhile *Gaelic Roots* ♪♪♪♪♪½ (Kells Music, 1997, prod. Séamus Connolly), also recorded live at Boston College. Finally, she can be heard on two solo tracks, playing more of her own compositions, and one duet with accordionist Billy McComiskey on *Dear Old Erin's Isle: Irish Traditional Music from America* ♪♪♪♪½ (Nimbus, 1992, prod. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Robin Broadbank), recorded live on the occasion of the 8th annual Éigse na Laoi festival of traditional music at University College, Cork.

worth searching for: *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from Chicago, Vol. 2* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976, prod. Miles Krassen, Larry McCullough) and *Ed Reavy* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979, prod. Mick Moloney), an album devoted to the compositions of the famous County Cavan fiddle player, are two of the LP collections on which Liz Carroll's playing was featured early on. *Fathers and Daughters from Cherish the Ladies* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Mick Moloney) was the follow-up to the original *Cherish the Ladies* album, but has not been reissued on CD. Liz Carroll appears on a couple of tracks with her father Kevin on accordion.

influences:

Kevin Carroll, Martin Byrne, Joe Shannon, John McGreevy, Eleanor Neary, Terry Teahan

Eileen Ivers, Cherish the Ladies, Kathleen Collins

see also: *Trian*

Philippe Varlet

The Carter Family /The Carter Sisters /Maybelle Carter

Formed 1927, in VA. Disbanded in 1943.

A.P. Carter, vocals (1927–43); Sara Carter, autoharp, vocals (1927–43); Maybelle Carter, guitar, vocals (1927–78). The original group disbanded in 1943, re-formed as the Carter Sisters & Mother Maybelle: Maybelle Carter; Anita Carter, vocals; Helen Carter, vocals; June Carter, vocals.

The history of modern country music began in 1927 with the Carter Family. New York record executive Ralph Peer discovered the band when it performed at a portable recording studio he had set up in rural Bristol, Tennessee. To the sparse accompaniment of Sara's autoharp and Maybelle's guitar, the group poured out songs of sadness, hard work, and an unwavering commitment to Biblical tenets. Peer was particularly impressed with the Carters' rhythmically sophisticated vocal delivery, punctuated by subtle harmonies, as well as Maybelle's uncanny ability to pick the melody of a tune on the bass strings of her guitar while simultaneously strumming the rhythm on the treble strings. Between 1927 and 1941 the group recorded more than 270 songs, including such chestnuts as "Keep on the Sunny Side," "Wildwood Flower," "My Clinch Mountain Home," "Wabash Cannonball," and "I Never Will Marry." The Carter Family tradition is being carried on today by Maybelle's daughters Helen, Anita, June, and June's daughter, Carlene. That foursome released a wonderful album in 1988 titled *Wildwood Flower*.

what to buy: *Anchored in Love: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1927–1928* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993) covers the first historical recording session the Carters did for Ralph Peer. Among the classics are "Wildwood Flower," "Single Girl," and "Keep on the Sunny Side." *When the Roses Bloom in Dixieland: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1929–1930* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) consists of 10 songs recorded in sessions from the end of 1929 and six songs from May 1930. Among the gems included are "When the Roses Bloom in Dixieland," "Carter's Blues," "Jimmy Brown the Newsboy" (which would become a Flatt & Scruggs mainstay), and "Wabash Cannonball," which the Carters taught to Roy Acuff, who would subsequently popularize the tune as the Grand Ole Opry's theme.

what to buy next: *My Clinch Mountain Home: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1928–1929* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993) consists of material recorded at the second Peer recording session, including "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes" and "Foggy Mountain Top." *Sunshine in the Shadows: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1931–1932* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996) includes "Lonesome for You" and features A.P. and Sara alternating verses, buoyed by Maybelle's new flattop Gibson guitar. Also included are two comedy skits featuring Jimmie Rodgers. *Give Me the Roses While I Live: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1932–1933* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997) was recorded under tense conditions to say the least, as A.P.'s and Sara's marriage continued to crumble. Nevertheless, they managed to put their differences aside and bang out 11 of this collection's 15 tracks in one marathon session in Camden, New Jersey, on October 12, 1932. Standout cuts include "My Little Home in Tennessee" and "The Spirit of Love Watches over Me," a rare duet between Sara and Maybelle.

the rest:
20 of the Best of the Carter Family ♪♪♪♪♪ (RCA International, 1984)
Wildwood Flower ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1988)
Diamonds in the Rough ♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1989)
Country Music Hall of Fame Series ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991)
Clinch Mountain Treasures ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1991)
Worried Man Blues: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1930 ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
On Border Radio, Vol. I ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1995)
Country by the Carter Family ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1997)
On Border Radio, Vol. II (Arhoolie, 1998)

worth searching for: The Carter Sisters' *Wildwood Flower* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1988, prod. Jack Clement) features Helen, Anita, June, and Carlene performing such Carter Family classics as "Worried Man Blues," "Dixie Darlin'," and "Church in the Wildwood."

solo outings:
Maybelle Carter:
Wildwood Pickin' ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1997)

influences:
Johnny Cash, June Carter, Carlene Carter, Rosanne Cash

Rick Petreycik

Jason Carter

Born in KY.

Jason Carter is the 1997 IBMA Fiddle Player of the year. He is also a member of the Del McCoury Band. Jason shares his home state, Kentucky, with many other influential fiddlers such as Ed Haley, Kenny Baker, and Art Stamper. He's definitely a

bluegrass fiddler, though his solo work shows him to be versatile enough to take a few shots at some of the older styles.

what's available: *On the Move* ♪♪♪♪½ (1997, Rounder, prod. Ronnie McCoury, Jason Carter, David Grier) is an amazing debut solo album for this young fiddler. It is nearly all instrumental and will keep you riveted to the CD player from start to finish. From the old-timey sounding "Carter Country" (an original tune, by the way) to the blazing take on the Benny Martin tune "Back Up and Push," this CD is a gem.

worth searching for: Check out more of Jason's fiddling on these other fine discs: The Del McCoury Band's *The Cold Hard Facts* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Jerry Douglas, Ronnie McCoury); Del McCoury's *A Deeper Shade of Blue* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Jerry Douglas, Ronnie McCoury); Ronnie & Rob McCoury's *Ronnie & Rob McCoury* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Ronnie McCoury); Paul Williams's *Ain't God Good* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Ken Irwin); and Union Springs' *Help Me, Lord* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1994, prod. Union Springs).

influences:

◀◀ Benny Martin, "Chubby" Wise, Bobby Hicks, Art Stamper

▶▶ Stuart Duncan, David Crow

see also: *The Del McCoury Band, Union Springs*

Steve Gardner

Maybelle Carter

See: The Carter Family

Sara Carter

See: The Carter Family

Wilf Carter /Montana Slim

Born December 18, 1904, in Gaysboro, Nova Scotia. Died December 5, 1996.

Wilf Carter was Canada's first country star and a cowboy singer who was a legitimate cowboy. He was raised on a ranch in Alberta and took the stage name Montana Slim for his first U.S. recordings in 1937. He continued to record until his retirement in 1980, and he took Jimmie Rodgers's country yodeling style and expanded it in the Swiss style. Carter wrote more than 500 songs and recorded primarily for RCA Canada, Decca, and Starday.

what to buy: *Montana Slim—Wilf Carter* ♪♪ (Starday, 1967) was recorded well after Carter's heyday, but it's a good example of his prodigious yodeling capabilities on songs like "Frankie & Johnny," "On Top of Old Smokey," and the then-topical "A Mother's Son in Vietnam."

what to avoid: If you want Carter's yodeling, don't look for it in *Montana Slim* ♪♪ (Hollywood/IMG, 1988). There's only a couple of good examples. Instead, Carter leans more toward melodramatic story songs like "Two Little Girls in Blue" and "The Little Shirt My Mother Made for Me." It does, however, contain "Hey Hey Mr. D.J.," a clever plea for airplay that originally appeared as a B-side.

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers

▶▶ Patsy Montana, Hank Snow

Brian Mansfield

Eliza Carthy /Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr /Kings of Calicutt

Kings of Calicutt: Andi Wells, drums; Barnaby Stradling, bass; Saul Rose, melodeon, vocals; Maclaine Colston, hammered dulcimer, vocals; Eliza Carthy, fiddle, viola, mandolin, vocals.

Eliza Carthy was born into one of the most musically gifted families in England. Her father is the noted guitarist and singer Martin Carthy; her mother is Norma Waterson of the Watersons. Perhaps it was a deliberate decision on the family's part that she learn fiddle, or perhaps it was a fortuitous accident; at any rate, her fiddle skills have stood her in good stead with Waterson:Carthy as well as her other projects. She worked for a time in a duo with Nancy Kerr, another fiddler and sometime member of the Kings of Calicutt.

what to buy: *Heat Light & Sound* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1996, prod. Eliza Carthy, Ray Williams, Tony Engle) boasts exciting arrangements of traditional tunes and songs. Carthy's voice is charmingly untutored and sweet. The plaintive "Ten Thousand Miles/Bacca Pipes" is a sample of the best of what the English music tradition has to offer.

the rest:

(With Nancy Kerr) *Eliza Carthy & Nancy Kerr* ♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Casey Records, 1993)

shape of scrape ♪♪♪½ (Mrs. Casey Records, 1995)

(With the Kings of Calicutt) *Eliza Carthy & the Kings of Calicutt* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1997)

martin carthy

celtic music

Celtic music encompasses a wide geography, including Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Nova Scotia, Brittany, Galicia, Cornwall, and the Isle of Man. The one thing these territories all have in common is their historical roots. The ancient Celts or their ancestors settled these lands, making their heritage and home in each. This one historical link has led to the musical connection now associated with these areas. It is perhaps unfortunate that the strong musical traditions of these areas are lumped into one great melting pot. Each area's music has its own distinctive flavor, and its own traditional music. For example, the Welsh music is characterized by strong vocal harmony and the love of theme and variation in their music. This style is distinctly different from the Irish tradition, which includes a strong melodic line and a tendency to ornament the melody heavily. Due to these differences, it is hard to describe what makes Celtic music "Celtic." Perhaps part of it is the rich heritage of these people, who all have a strong sense of history and a deep-rooted love of their countries. A deeply emotional connection to their heritage shines through in their music. Also, there is a common pool of musical instruments that characterizes this music, including bagpipes, harp, and fiddle. Although the types of bagpipes and harps differ between the areas, the sounds remain enough alike to tie the music together.

Jo Hughey Morrison

influences:

Watersons, Martin Carthy

see also: *Waterson:Carthy*

Pamela Murray Winters

Martin Carthy

Born May 21, 1940, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, England.

Singer-guitarist Martin Carthy has been involved in most of the significant developments in British folk music for the past 30 years. A sampling: he taught "Scarborough Fair" to Paul Simon; he belonged to Steeleye Span; he influenced guitarists like Richard Thompson, Martin Simpson, and Stephen Fearing; he married into the singing family the Watersons. Carthy's first recording came out in 1963. His groups have included Three City Four (with Leon Rosselson) and Brass Monkey (with John Kirkpatrick and Sue Harris), and he's toured and recorded extensively with fiddler Dave Swarbrick. Carthy is an understated singer, a superbly sensitive guitarist, and a scholar of folk music who is noted for his respect for the original material.

what to buy: *The Martin Carthy Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1993) is an obvious starting point for learning about Carthy. With traditional songs, a Carthy composition ("Company Policy," about the Falklands conflict), and "Palaces of Gold" by Leon Rosselson, one of Britain's best-known political songwriters, it highlights Carthy's socially conscious side, as well as his fondness for reworking old songs.

what to buy next: Martin Carthy and Dave Swarbrick's CD *Life and Limb* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Topic/Green Linnet, 1991, prod. John Chelew) includes the beautifully creepy "Bows of London" and one of many versions of "The Begging Song." Dave Swarbrick fiddles beautifully on "Carthy's March/The Lemon Tree," tunes he wrote for Carthy and Trevor Lucas, respectively.

best of the rest:

Crown of Horn ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1976)
Out of the Cut ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
(With Dave Swarbrick) *Skin and Bone* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992)

influences:

A.L. Lloyd, Davey Graham, Ravi Shankar, the Watersons

Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Martin Simpson, Eliza Carthy

see also: *Dave Swarbrick, Steeleye Span, Waterson:Carthy, the Watersons*

Pamela Murray Winters

Ann and Phil Case

Formed in Dayton, OH.

Ann and Phil Case are at their best when they sing duet style old-time music with guitar, mandolin, and clawhammer banjo accompaniment. Ann has an amazingly strong voice reminiscent of Hazel Dickens, and Phil's accompaniment is tasteful and enjoyable.

what's available: *The Springtime of Life* ♪♪♪½ (Dry Run Recordings, 1996, prod. Ann Case, Phil Case, Paul Nienhaus) is the

duo's debut self-produced CD. It should appeal to anyone who likes old-time country duet singing.

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family, Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, Ola Belle Reed

▶▶ Dick Harrington and Victoria Young

Steve Gardner

Karan Casey

See: Solas

Mike Casey

Born January 22, 1958, in Columbus, OH.

Mike Casey grew up in northeastern Ohio and started playing classical guitar at age 17. He began playing lap dulcimer in 1980 and the flute the next year. In 1986, he received an apprenticeship grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to learn Irish flute from Jack Coen. A native of County Galway, Coen's stories of legendary musicians, house dances, and mummers' sprees led Casey to travel to Ireland, where he was able to combine musical and academic interests by conducting fieldwork in Ireland's rural west. In East Galway, he encountered a distinct musical style and a musical community far richer than either Coen's stories or his own imagination had led him to expect. He was able to learn from dozens of musicians who were still active. One result of his travels was that he began adapting techniques from flute, fiddle, and other fretted instruments to the dulcimer. He added a lower bass string (tuned to an A below the normal D) which enables him to play all the notes in the dance tunes and harp pieces that he had been hearing, and this served as the basis for what has since become a distinctive style. Casey's sojourn in Ireland also resulted in a thesis on the East Galway flute tradition and earned him a Master's Degree in Folklore from the University of North Carolina. For six years he headed the Southern Folklife Collection at the University, leaving recently to devote more time to performing and touring.

what to buy: *The Pleasures of Hope* ♪♪♪♪ (Wizmak Productions, 1996, prod. Pete Sutherland) is an inspired musical journey through the instrumental dance and harp music of the Celtic lands. Casey plays (and plays well) the flute, wire-strung harp-zither (commonly known as a MacArthur harp after Margaret MacArthur, who is credited with its renaissance in this country), dulcimette (a half-size octave dulcimer), whistle, and his five-string dulcimer. With the able assistance of a number of very musical cohorts on fiddle, accordion, guitar, cittern, piano, keyboards, bodhrán, and cello, Casey delivers a varied and somewhat unusual cross-section of music from the Shetland Islands, Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany. Those tunes that are familiar are not usually heard on dulcimer and there are several less common tunes taken from the Scottish harp tradition and from Casey's primary flute influences, Jack Coen, Sean Moloney, and Jean-Michel Veillon. This is wonderful music.

what to buy next: *The Hourglass* ♪♪♪♪ (Wizmak Productions, 1995, prod. Mike Casey, David DiGiuseppe) is Casey's first recording and is also exceptional. It also features pieces from the Irish, Scottish, and Breton traditions and again focuses on the lyrical and smooth playing style of East Galway. Casey, according to one reviewer, "really makes the dulcimer sound at home with these tunes . . . danceable, listenable, singable, and fluid." The pace is relaxed but intensely musical.

influences:

◀◀ Jack Coen, Sean Moloney, Jean-Michel Veillon, Neal Hellman

▶▶ Jerry Rockwell, Chris Norman

Neal Walters

Johnny Cash

Born February 26, 1932, in Kingsland, AR.

A larger-than-life figure that looms over the history of country music, and rock 'n' roll as well, Johnny Cash scarcely needs an introduction to anyone whose ears have been open during the past 40 years. Yet for someone who is as recognizable as Mount Rushmore, Cash has always been a surprisingly mercurial artist; he was the most country-leaning of the Sun rockabilly crowd, yet his pill-popping, hell-raising lifestyle would likely make any of today's "alternarockers" blanch. Soon after he embraced country he threw over Nashville, moving instead to California, where he remained, for better and worse, his own man. He later moved back, but was always considered an outsider in Music City. Amid the politically conservative world of country music, Cash has always been a firebrand, championing minority rights, especially for Native Americans, and condemning the Vietnam war. And he traded songs with the rock world, notably with Bob Dylan, and in later years, with Bruce Springsteen and U2. Yet for all that, he is a passionately evangelical Christian whose best friends are the Rev. Billy Graham on the one hand, and fellow hellraiser Waylon Jennings on the other. Not for nothing did Kris Kristofferson celebrate him as "a walking con-

johnny cash

tradiction." A member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and Nashville's Songwriter's Hall of Fame—the only person to be so honored—Cash casts as long a shadow as anyone over almost the whole of American popular music.

what to buy: Might as well begin at the beginning. Cash started out with the rest of the rockabillies at Sun Records, where he developed his trademark boom-chicka-boom sound on such classics as "Folsom Prison Blues," "Hey Porter," "Get Rhythm," and "I Walk the Line." *The Sun Years* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sun/Rhino, 1990, prod. Jack Clement) collects all of those tunes plus many more. The fruits of Cash's labors at his second label are amply covered on *The Essential Johnny Cash, 1955–1983* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, prod. various), a three-disc set that belongs in every serious collection of country music. For the budget-minded, there's *Columbia Records, 1958–1986* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987, prod. various), a single-disc collection that will suffice but also whet your appetite for the larger set. Cash's roots are in folk music as much as in country, and *American Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (American, 1994, prod. Rick Rubin) returns him to the form he had not explored extensively since the early part of his Columbia era. Featuring songs by younger rockers, the album and its attendant hoopla introduced Cash to a new generation of fans who likely had never heard him before.

what to buy next: *At Folsom Prison/At San Quentin* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1975, prod. Bob Johnston) compiles Cash's two legendary prison recordings from the late 1960s on one disc, and it constitutes some of the bravest recordings ever made. Before the very definition of a captive audience, Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues," "Wanted Man," "Cocaine Blues," and "San Quentin" tell it like it is to such a degree that you expect a riot to bust out any minute. *Classic Cash* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1988, prod. Johnny Cash) is one of those rare occasions when an album featuring re-recordings doesn't merely avert the expected disaster; it actually offers a few new insights into such well-known favorites as "Get Rhythm" and "Sunday Morning Coming Down." Another exception to the rule, *Water from the Wells of Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1988, prod. Jack Clement) transcends the usual empty hype that attends most duet albums—this one with vocalists Emmylou Harris, Tom T. Hall, Hank Williams Jr., the Everly Brothers, and Paul McCartney, among others.

what to avoid: Most of Cash's unworthy albums have fallen out of print. In assessing those that remain, take as a general rule of thumb the old saw that you get what you pay for. Steer clear of the many budget releases of Cash's work that exist, such as *Super Hits* ♪♪½ (Columbia Special Products, 1994), *The Ultimate Johnny Cash* ♪♪½ (Bransounds, 1994), and *The Many Sides of Johnny Cash* ♪♪½ (Columbia Special Products, 1993). They may contain several hits apiece, but for the most part they have too few tracks to make them truly worthwhile.

the rest:

Now There Was a Song! Memories from the Past ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1960)
Ring of Fire: The Best of Johnny Cash ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1963)
Blood, Sweat and Tears ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1963)
Bitter Tears: Ballads of the American Indian ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1964)
Greatest Hits Volume 1 ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1967)
Greatest Hits Volume 2 ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1971)
Biggest Hits ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982)
(With Waylon Jennings) *Heroes* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1986/Razor & Tie, 1995)
Boom Chicka Boom ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1990)
Patriot ♪♪ (Columbia, 1990)
The Mystery of Life ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1991)
Best Of ♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1991)
The Gospel Collection ♪♪½ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)
Ride This Train ♪♪½ (Collector's Series, 1993)
Wanted Man ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1994)
Hello I'm Johnny Cash ♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Ring of Fire: Best of Johnny Cash ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1995)
Gospel Glory ♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Giant Hits ♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Christmas Spirit ♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Sings His 20 Best ♪ (TeeVee, 1995)
Unchained ♪♪♪♪½ (American Recordings, 1996)
The Hits ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1997)
Country Christmas ♪ (Laserlight, 1997)
Personal Christmas Collection ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: Hardcore Cash fans with truly deep pockets will want the comprehensive multi-disc sets released in Europe by the Bear Family label. They include *The Man in Black (1951–58)* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1990); *The Man in Black* ♪♪♪♪ (1959–62) (Bear Family); *The Man in Black 1963–69* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1995); and *Come Along and Ride this Train* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family). They're great, but be prepared to mortgage the house. Also, the definitive Cash cameo appearance is on U2's *Zooropa* ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1993), where he sings "The Wanderer," a song Bono wrote for him. It finds the Man in Black in a futuristic setting of synthesizer bleeps and burbles, yet the song fits his legend perfectly, and his performance is perfect.

Johnny Cash **(© Ken Settle)**

johnny cash

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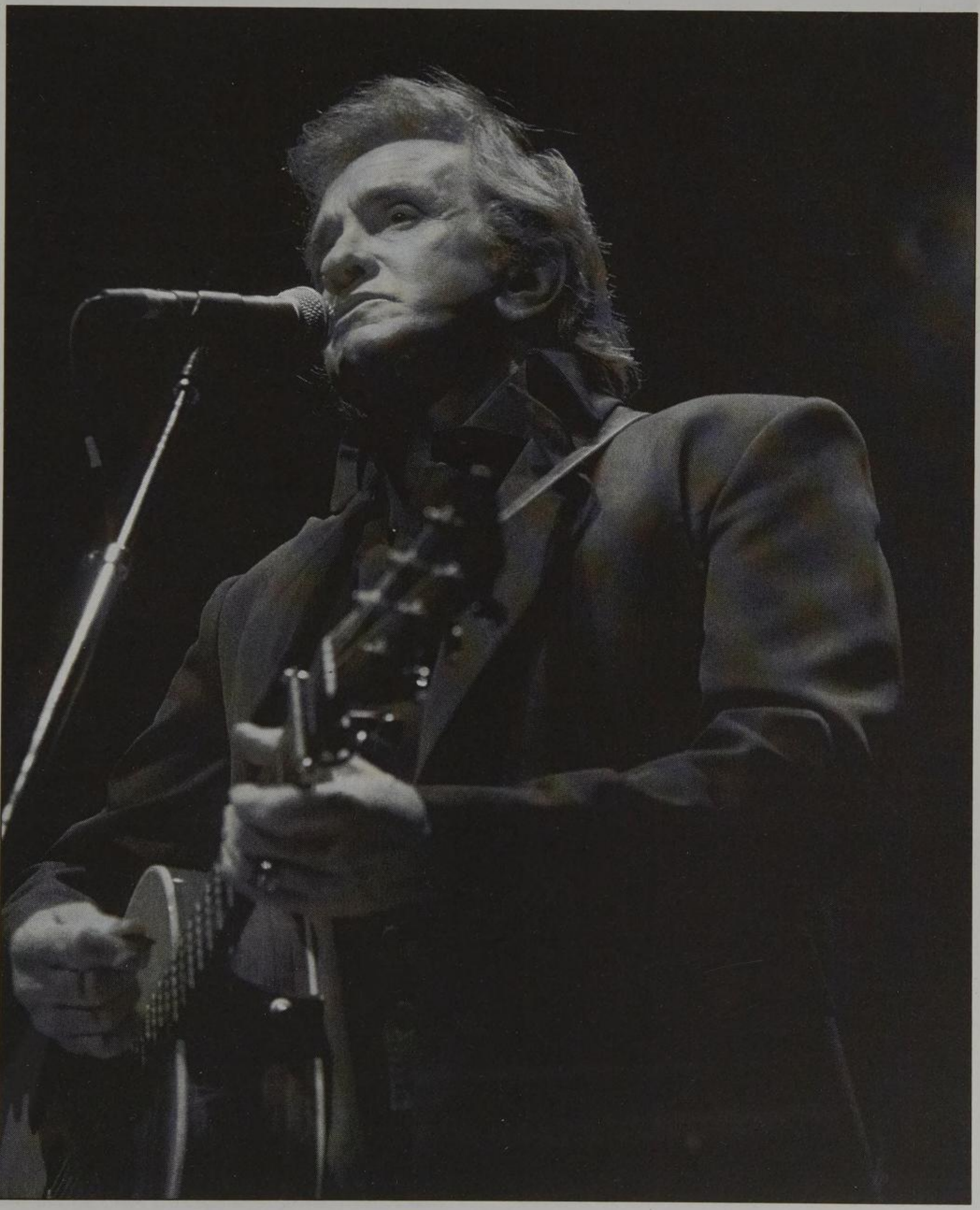

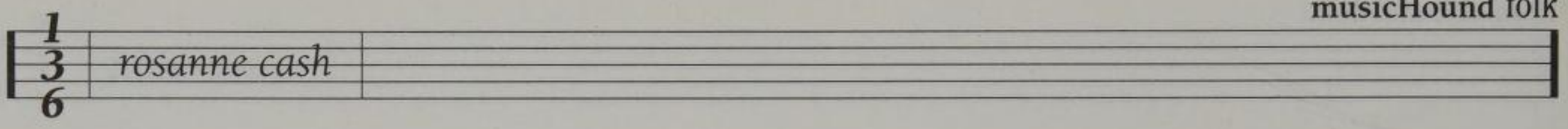

solo outings:

Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins:

The Survivors ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982/Razor & Tie, 1995)

The Highwaymen:

Highwayman ♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Highwayman 2 ♪ (Columbia, 1990)
The Road Goes On Forever ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1995)

influences:

- The Louvin Brothers, the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers
- Bob Dylan, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson, Marty Stuart, Bruce Springsteen, Rosanne Cash, Carlene Carter, Nick Lowe, Mekons

Daniel Durchholz

Rosanne Cash

Born May 24, 1956, in Memphis, TN.

Rosanne Cash survived her Nashville Royalty pedigree (her dad is Johnny Cash) to carve out an identity during the 1980s as an innovative and remarkably successful country artist. On a string of records starting in 1979, Cash and producer/husband Rodney Crowell progressively expanded the boundaries of what a female performer could accomplish in Nashville, and her emphatic fusion of hard-hitting rock and classic country scored big on the hidebound Nashville radio charts. Cash's sound on those records can be considered maverick for its time, and for originality and gutsiness compares favorably even now to such latter-day country queens as Shania Twain. But Cash's critically acclaimed balancing act crashed in 1990. With her marriage to Crowell dissolving and her affinity for the country establishment plummeting, Cash released the somber, commercially disastrous *Interiors* and packed it in for life in a Greenwich Village brownstone. She has concentrated since on raising her three daughters, writing fiction (her first collection, *Bodies of Water,* appeared in 1996), and recording spare, ironic songs with a lyric confessionalism that's about as far from conventional Nashville tunesmithing as you can get. It's also awfully good.

what to buy: *King's Record Shop* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1988, prod. Rodney Crowell) is unquestionably the summation of Cash's Nashville work. It arcs smoothly from wistful pop ("If You Change Your Mind") to playful nostalgia ("Tennessee Flat Top Box") to edgy social balladry ("Rosie Strike Back," a call to arms for battered wives). Cash authoritatively demonstrates that she could take everything Nashville threw at her and throw it right back. Her first major effort, *Right or Wrong* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1979, prod. Rodney Crowell) still sounds surprisingly fresh, with the title tune's ironic exploration of adultery and the first of Cash's sassy take-that-guys anthems, "Man Smart, Woman Smarter." Cash's current incarnation is best represented by *Ten Song Demo* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996, prod. John Leventhal, Rosanne Cash), a stripped-down collection redolent of her frank, biting wit. After listening to "Take This Body," just try looking at a cosmetic-surgery ad without wincing.

what to buy next: *Seven Year Ache* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981, prod. Rodney Crowell) features some of the trenchant songwriting (the title track and "Blue Moon with Heartache") that would blossom more fully for Cash once she began to leave the country-heartbreak constraints behind. She also has gender-bending fun with "My Baby Thinks He's a Train" and "What Kinda Girl?"

what to avoid: On *Interiors* ♪ (Columbia, 1990, prod. Rosanne Cash), as the analysts say, Cash had some issues to work through. And by God she did—with a frankness that teeters into the maudlin. The album is significant in that it marks Cash's definitive break with Nashville power pop, but it's not a pretty sight—or sound.

the rest:

Somewhere in the Stars ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982)
Rhythm and Romance ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Hits 1979–1989 ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
The Wheel ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1993)
Retrospective ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1995)
Country Side ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)

worth searching for: *Live at the Bottom Line* (RSM) is a clean-sounding bootleg of a hot 1988 performance in New York.

influences:

- Roy Orbison, the Everly Brothers, Emmylou Harris, Joni Mitchell, Johnny Cash, Rodney Crowell
- Mary Chapin Carpenter, Shawn Colvin

Elizabeth Lynch

Ceolbeg

Formed 1988, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Peter Boond, vocals, flute, whistle, cittern; Davy Steele (1988–95), lead vocals, guitar, bouzouki; Katie Harrigan (1988–91), vocals, clarsach, electroharp; Andy Thorburn (1988–91), vocals, keyboards; Gary West (1988–92), vocals, Highland pipes; Wendy Stewart (1991–present), vocals, electroharp, concertina; Colin Matheson

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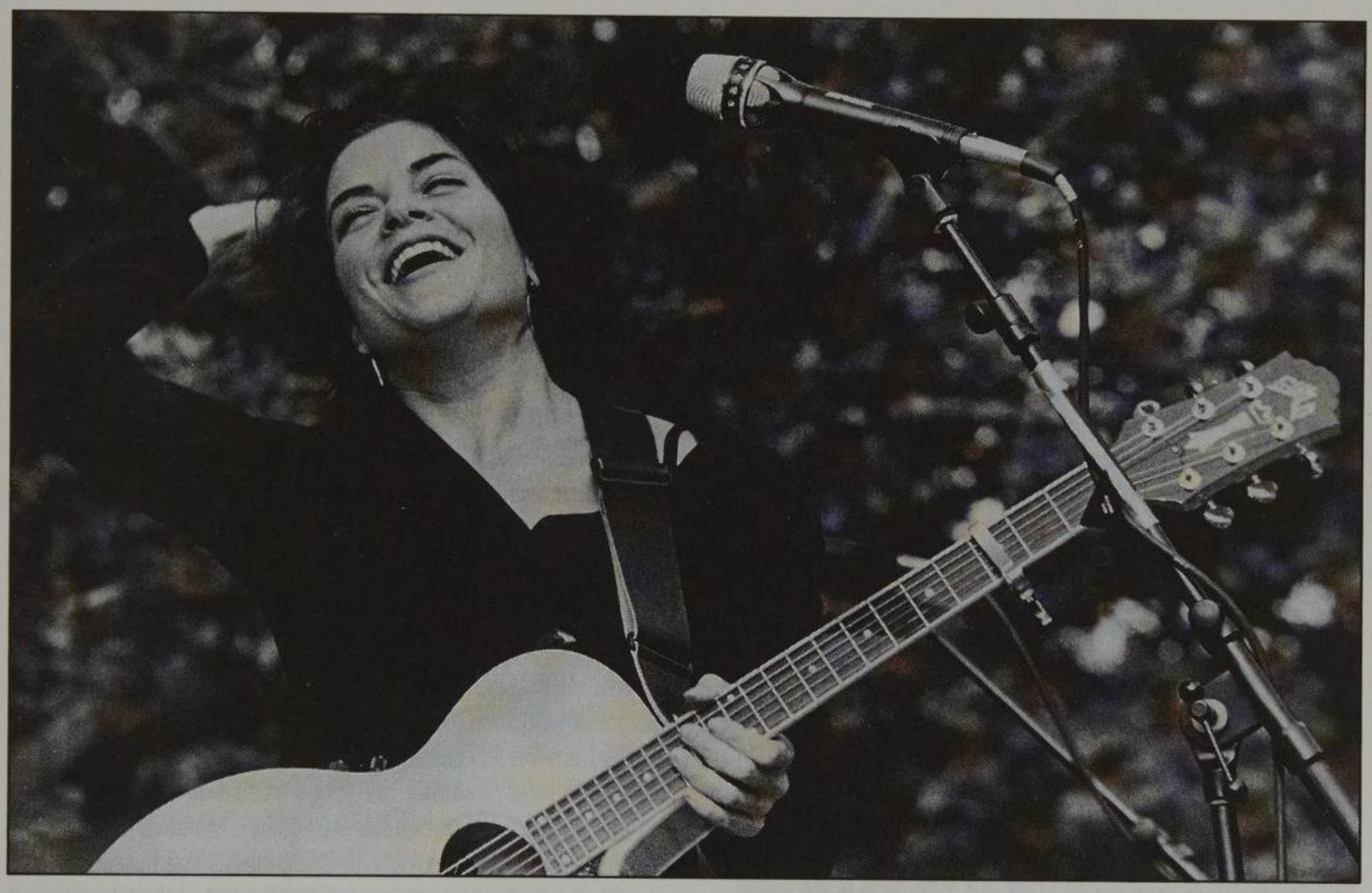


Rosanne Cash **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

(1991–95), vocals, keyboards; Mike Katz (1994–97), Highland pipes; Rod Paterson, lead vocals, guitar (1995–present); Adie Bolton, sound engineering.

In the Gaelic language of the Scots, "Ceol Beag" (KALE-beg) translates literally to "small music" and refers to the jigs, reels, and strathspeys of traditional Scottish music, while "Ceol Mor" ("big music") describes the booming classical sound of the Highland bagpipe. Over the last 20 years and more, a number of such Scottish bands as the Battlefield Band, the Tannahill Weavers, and Wolfstone have combined traditional music, modern acoustic and electric instrumentation, and the "Ceol Mor" to produce what many have called "bagpipe rock," drawing large numbers of new fans into the world of folk music in the process. Missing from these bands in many instances, though, was the delicacy and variety of the "Ceol Beag." From their formation during the late 1980s (Peter Boond is the sole remaining original member), Ceolbeg set out to prove that the harp and Highland pipes could be brought together in a format both traditional and contemporary to produce music that is anything but "small," and as many critics and reviewers have commented throughout the history of Ceolbeg, the band's name is a misnomer—they're big. Part of Ceolbeg's secret has been the uncommon ability of pipers Gary West, and later Mike Katz, to moderate the sound of the Highland pipes and achieve a sound that one publication described as "fluency with firepower." When combined with the electroharp or *clarsach*, particularly when played in Wendy Stewart's distinctive percussive style, along with keyboards and Boond's flute and cittern work, the effect has been described as "an atmospheric mist of swirling instrumentation." Yet Ceolbeg is much more than an instrumental phenomenon, much of their appeal can be traced to the powerful, emotional lead vocals of Davy Steele, a singer regarded as being an interpreter of modern and traditional Scottish music in the same league with his close friends Andy M. Stewart and Dick Gaughan. Steele left the band in 1995, replaced by Rod Paterson, and as of September 1997 had joined the Battlefield Band; to replace the departing Alistair Russell. Mike Katz has also signed on with the Battlefield Band; his re-

placement in Ceolbeg is unknown at this time. In more recent years, Ceolbeg has added a drummer and percussionist in the person of Jim Walker, who appears on their most recent album. Their recorded output is of uniformly high quality, but from their earliest days Ceolbeg has believed themselves to be their best when performing live—they regard their longtime sound man Adie Bolton as a full-fledged band member. In 1991, the *Scottish Folk Gazette* hit the mark in saying, "Ceolbeg bring to their audiences not only musical virtuosity and dynamic performances, but also a great deal of humour and repartee."

what to buy: All three of Ceolbeg's generally available releases on the Greentrax label are of consistently good quality. The one to start with is probably their most recent, *An Unfair Dance* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1993, prod. Roy Ashby), if for no other reason than it contains the most music—60 full minutes. Their trademark treatments of the reels and strathspeys is satisfying, and Steele's vocals are powerful, whether delivering a Burns ballad ("My Love Is Like a Red, Red Rose") or one of his own songs, such as the emotion-packed "The Collier's Way," which deals with his father's experiences as a miner. It's a gripping song that deserves mention in the same breath as American mining classics like Merle Travis's "Dark As a Dungeon" and Jean Ritchie's "Blue Diamond Mine." While Steele's voice is reminiscent of pop-rock icon Sting, his singing is much richer and more expressive, and totally absent of the pretension that weighs down Sting's music. The unusual instrumental combination of Highland war pipes with Wendy Stewart's harp style (described by some as "bubbling") brings to mind the "bull in a china shop" metaphor, but Gary West's piping is well-modulated to allow each band member's contributions to be clearly heard and appreciated.

what to buy next: Both their debut album, *Not the Bunnyhop* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1990, prod. Phil Cunningham), and their second release, *Seeds to the Wind* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1992, prod. Dick Gaughan), feature the same entertaining mix of instrumental and vocal accomplishment. Highlights on *Not the Bunnyhop* include Andy M. Stewart's "Queen of Argyll" and Steele's "The High and Mighty." On *Seeds to the Wind*, Steele shines on material like "Johnnie Cope" and Robert Burns's "A' the Airts," while the interplay between Stewart's harp and West's piping makes both recordings worthwhile additions.

solo outings:

Wendy Stewart:

About Time ♪♪♪½ (Greentrax, 1992)

About Time, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1997)

Davy Steele:

Chasing Shadows ♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Capercaillie, Silly Wizard, Clan Alba, Dick Gaughan, Andy M. Stewart

▶▶ Battlefield Band, Tannahill Weavers, Old Blind Dogs

John Lupton

Ceoltoiri

Formed as a duo in 1983, in the Washington, DC, area.

Karen Ashbrook, hammered dulcimer, pennywhistle, boxwood flute; Sue Richards, Celtic harp; Connie McKenna, vocals, guitar (1987–present).

Ceoltoiri, the Irish Gaelic word for musicians, is the perfect name for this band. Ceoltoiri was originally formed as a Celtic harp and hammered dulcimer duo, combining two traditional sounds that were obviously made to go together. Karen Ashbrook's virtuoso melodies combine with Sue Richards's haunting harp lines to create a rich texture of sounds, and then they switch roles, keeping the tunes fresh and interesting. It is sometimes hard to believe they can create such lush sounds with so few instruments. Amazing musicians, indeed! Sometimes described as "chamber folk," Ceoltoiri selects traditional tunes with great soul and then arranges them in a theme and variations format. The result is dynamic. The group was joined by Connie McKenna in 1987, who had guested on their first recording. Following Irish tradition, Connie studied *sean nos* singing, a particular style of unaccompanied, highly ornamented vocal work. She brought an elegant classical guitar background and a rich sense of Irish vocals to the group, adding spice to an already flavorful mix.

what to buy: *Silver Apples of the Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1992, prod. Charlie Pilzer) combines the best these musicians have to offer, all on one recording. From delightful duets by Karen and Sue, such as "Flowing Tide/New Claret," to Connie's evocative a cappella *sean nos* singing in "The Plain Girl's Lament," the tracks offer something different at every turn. The darkly beautiful song "Death of Queen Jane" alone is worth whatever price you pay for the CD.

what to buy next: The original duo shows their stuff on *Celtic Lace* ♪♪♪ (Foolscap Pub., 1989/Maggie's Music, 1992). This recording amply demonstrates the perfect blend a Celtic harp and hammered dulcimer can create. *Women of Ireland* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1998, prod. Charlie Pilzer) features some

heartwrenching ballads, beautifully delivered. This album is well worth the price for their rendition of Dougie MacLean's "Caledonia" alone. Guests on this album include Billy McComiskey on accordion and Kieran O'Hare on uilleann pipes. Harper and pianist Carol Rose Duane, a regular performing guest with the group, also joins them on this album.

influences:

⏪ Maggie Sansone, Magical Strings

⏩ Ironweed, Jody Marshall

see also: *Karen Ashbrook, Sue Richards*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Cephas & Wiggins

Formed 1976, in Washington, DC.

John Cephas (born September 4, 1930, in Washington, DC), guitar, vocals; Phil Wiggins (born May 8, 1954, in Washington, DC), harmonica.

This acoustic duo lovingly preserves the "Piedmont Blues" tradition—which basically means the heavily rhythmic, almost playful, East Coast style of legends Sonny Terry, Blind Boy Fuller, the Rev. Gary Davis, and Blind Blake. "Bowling Green" Cephas met the much younger Wiggins at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 1976. (Cephas had made his name in the 1960s when he lured pianist Big Chief Ellis out of retirement and established him as a solid festival performer and recording artist.) Like John Hammond Jr. and Taj Mahal, these historians and blues fanatics put out an album of traditional standards every couple of years and go into great depth about the material's origins in accompanying liner notes. They mimic the style and instrumentation of the great Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, and they're distinctive in their own way. But despite the occasional fun, driving blues song—such as "Action Man"—they tend to put out the same album over and over.

what to buy: The duo won a W.C. Handy award for *Dog Days of August* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986), which established their reverential, sometimes playful, sometimes soulful take on traditional country-blues standards.

what to buy next: One of their best songs, the snappy "Action Man," opens *Cool Down* ♪♪½ (Alligator, 1995, prod. Joe Wilson), which then reverts to the usual solemnly-remake-the-classics style.

the rest:

Sweet Bitter Blues ♪♪½ (L&R Music, 1984/Evidence, 1994)
Let It Roll: Bowling Green ♪♪ (Marimac, 1985)
Guitar Man ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)
Walking Blues ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1988)
Flip, Flop & Fly ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992)
Bluesmen ♪♪ (Chesky, 1993)

influences:

⏪ Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, Blind Boy Fuller, Blind Blake, Taj Mahal, John Hammond Jr., Big Chief Ellis

⏩ Rory Block, Keb' Mo'

Steve Knopper

Chad & Jeremy

Formed 1963, in London, England.

Chad Stuart (born December 10, 1943, in Durham, England), vocals, guitar, piano; Jeremy Clyde (born March 22, 1944, in Buckinghamshire, England), vocals, guitar.

In the quest to be the most popular Everly Brothers clone of the original British Invasion, Chad & Jeremy were second only to fellow London folk-rockers Peter & Gordon. Although probably more talented and certainly more qualified to reinterpret the Odetta songbook, Merseybeat-style than P&G, C&J had an undeniable disadvantage in the quest for *new* material—neither had a sister, like Peter did, who was dating Paul McCartney at the time. So, immediately following their first appearance on the American charts with "Yesterday's Gone" in 1964, Chad & Jeremy relocated to the U.S., where they quickly became fixtures on the small screen (*Hullabaloo, Shindig,* even *The Dick Van Dyke Show*). Their biggest hit, "A Summer Song," came soon afterwards, before Jeremy returned to England to take a role in a London musical. That left Chad to form a duet with wife Jill until his partner returned in '67. What followed were their two heavy-handed but well-meaning stabs at the post-*Sgt. Pepper* sweepstakes, *Of Cabbages and Kings* and *The Ark*, after which Jeremy again returned to the world of musical-comedy. Chad briefly served as musical director on the Smothers Brothers' television show and, like Jeremy, began dabbling in the theater. The two still reunite occasionally on stage and on record, and they can still sing the Everlys better than Peter & Gordon ever could.

what to buy: The 20-track *Best of Chad & Jeremy* ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1996, prod. John Barry) features amongst its sampling of early hits the delightful "My How the Time Goes By" with which, as the Redcoats, they serenaded Rob and Laura Petrie. Likewise, the cream of their Columbia crop is colorfully compiled on *Painted Dayglow Smile* ♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1992, compila-

tion prod. Bob Irwin), wherein C&J bravely begin applying their Simon & Garfunkel–Lite approach to the material of Van McCoy and Rogers and Hammerstein.

what to avoid: *Chad Stuart and Jeremy Clyde* ♪♪ (Rocshire, 1983, prod. Chad Stuart) is yet another misguided reunion album which proves, as so many such projects do, that you simply *cannot* re-heat a soufflé.

the rest:
Yesterday's Gone ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1993)
Yesterday's Gone ♪♪♪ (Drive Archive, 1994)
Best Of ♪♪½ (Quicksilver, 1997)
I Don't Want to Lose You Baby ♪♪♪ (SPM, 1997)

worth searching for: Fans of the dreaded Concept Album must, without a doubt, grab *Of Cabbages and Kings* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1967, prod. Gary Usher), if only for the 17-minute-plus "Progress Suite," which bravely mixes nuclear explosions with the first-ever appearance on record by the Firesign Theatre. Bones are also awarded for this record's ultra-cheesy, sub-*Satanic Majesties* cover shot, which brings all new meanings to the phrase "Why do you think they call it dope?"

influences:
◀◀ Peter, Paul & Mary, the Everly Brothers, Flanders & Swann
▶▶ Boyce & Hart, Wham!, the Proclaimers

Gary Pig Gold

The Chambers Brothers

Formed early 1960s, in MS.

George Chambers, bass; Willie Chambers, guitar; Lester Chambers, harmonica; Joe Chambers, guitar; Brian Keenan, drums.

With their roots in gospel, the Chambers Brothers would seem unlikely funk-psychedelic crossover pioneers, providing a reference point for other crossover groups beginning to hit their stride at the same time, including Parliament/Funkadelic and Sly and the Family Stone. The acoustic gospel band made its first amplified appearance at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival to great acclaim. White drummer Brian Keenan had joined and the band hit the rock club circuit, where a typical set would include any number of lengthy jams that would have made another young Southern brother act, the Allmans, proud. In 1968, the Brothers had a hit single with "The Time Has Come Today," an edited version of the powerful 12-minute psychedelic epic on their Columbia debut, the first of six releases to chart. The band pulled from equal parts Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, and Haight Ashbury, always with a nod back to their beginning at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church near Carthage in Lee County, Mississippi.

what to buy: A terrific sampling of the band is available on *The Chambers Brothers' Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1971, prod. David Rubinson, the Chambers Brothers, Tim O'Brien), with the complete version of "The Time Has Come Today" plus the blistering "I Can't Turn You Loose" and the more traditional gospel crooning of "People Get Ready."

the rest:
People Get Ready ♪♪½ (Vault, 1965)
Chambers Brothers Now ♪♪♪ (Vault, 1966)
Time Has Come ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1967)
Shout! ♪♪♪ (Vault, 1968)
Love, Peace and Happiness ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969)
Feelin' the Blues ♪♪½ (Vault, 1970)
Chambers Brothers Live at Fillmore East ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1970)
Unbonded ♪♪♪ (Avco, 1974)
Right Move ♪♪½ (Avco, 1975)

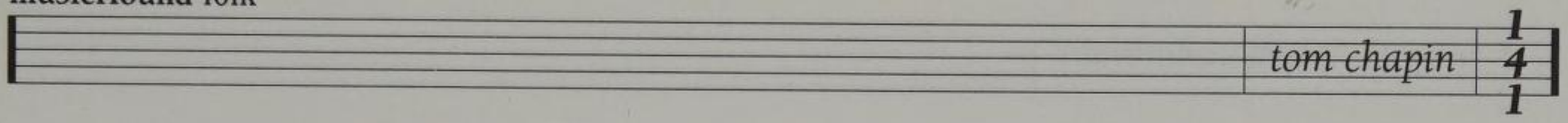
influences:
◀◀ Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding, James Brown, the Animals
▶▶ George Clinton, Sly and the Family Stone, Run-DMC, War

Martin Connors

Harry Chapin

Born December 7, 1942, in New York City. Died July 16, 1981.

One of folk music's most underrated heroes, Harry Chapin carried the flag for compassion during the pre–Live Aid era when it just wasn't cool to care. He invested much of his time and energy into raising awareness of world hunger: more than half of his annual concerts were benefits for the cause and in 1978, prodded by Chapin's relentless badgering on Capitol Hill, President Jimmy Carter appointed him to the presidential commission on world hunger. His humanitarian passion mixed with his irreverent sense of humor to transform his live shows into intimate, moving experiences that were never captured on his uneven studio albums. Chapin scored Top 40 hits with the touching "Taxi," the parentally challenged "Cat's in the Cradle," and the behind-the-mike DJ tale "W.O.L.D.," despite his penchant for lengthy narratives that unfolded more like short stories than songs. Such tenacious but taxing melodramas as "Sniper," "What Made America Famous," and "The Mayor of Candor Lied" became his trademarks but they also branded him a heavy-handed overachiever. Indeed, Chapin was at his most affecting when he



scaled back his dramatic ambitions and simply tapped into the everyday doubts and dreams that fuel such heartfelt ballads as "Any Old Kind of Day," "If My Mary Were Here," "I Wonder What Happened to Him," "Tangled Up Puppet," "Last Stand," and his stirring ode to '60s idealism, "Remember When the Music."

what to buy: Although its ragged sound quality confirms it was recorded chiefly for archival purposes, the two-disc *The Bottom Line Encore Collection* ♪♪♪½ (Bottom Line, 1998, prod. Peter Fornatale, Hank Medress) stands as the most affecting testament to Chapin's appeal. Marking his 2,000th-concert milestone, this January 1981 show captures the manic energy, raucous humor, and unapologetic passion that were barely hinted at on 1976's best-selling but heavily overdubbed *Greatest Stories Live*. His spirited performances of such favorites as "A Better Place to Be," "W.O.L.D.," "Mr. Tanner," and "I Miss America" are so loose they almost wobble. But then, Chapin never tried to be perfect: he was too busy being human.

what to buy next: Musically diverse and emotionally charged, *Dance Band on the Titanic* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1977, prod. Stephen Chapin) is the closest Chapin ever got to making a solid studio album. The rollicking title track raises a convincing political ruckus; "One Light in a Dark Valley" and the achingly vulnerable "I Wonder What Happened to Him" rank among his most touching performances; and the 14-minute "There Only Was One Choice"—an autobiographical art-rock collage—eerily foreshadows his early death.

what to avoid: Commemorating his posthumous awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal, the two-CD *Gold Medal Collection* ♪½ (Elektra, 1988, prod. various) slaps together singles, album tracks, live performances, and interview/speech snippets with no regard for context or content. Chapin's legacy deserves better.

the rest:
Heads and Tales ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1972)
Sniper and Other Love Songs ♪♪ (Elektra, 1972)
Short Stories ♪♪ (Elektra, 1973)
Verities and Balderdash ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1974)
Portrait Gallery ♪♪ (Elektra, 1975)
Greatest Stories Live ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1976)
On the Road to Kingdom Come ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1976)
Living Room Suite ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1978)
Legends of the Lost and Found ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1979)
Sequel ♪♪½ (Boardwalk, 1980)
Anthology of Harry Chapin ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1985)
The Last Protest Singer ♪♪ (DCC, 1988)

worth searching for: Pat Benatar, the Hooters, Judy Collins, Richie Havens, and others perform Chapin's tunes on *Harry Chapin Tribute* ♪♪♪ (Relativity, 1990, prod. Stephen Chapin), recorded live at Carnegie Hall. But the most inspired match is Bruce Springsteen's touching rendition of "Remember When the Music," complete with a monologue about Chapin's commitment to keeping "a good clear eye on the dirty ways of the world" that stands as his finest epitaph. *Remember When the Music* ♪♪½ (DCC, 1987, prod. Howard and Ron Albert) is a resequenced reissue of 1980's *Sequel* with two previously unreleased bonus tracks, including a throwaway ditty built around "The Hokey Pokey."

influences:
◀◀ Phil Ochs, Pete Seeger
▶▶ James McMurtry, John Mellencamp, Mary Chapin Carpenter

David Okamoto

Tom Chapin

Born 1940s, in NY.

Tom Chapin is one of the pioneers of modern children's music. His family-oriented albums, including *Family Tree*, *Mother Earth*, and *Billy the Squid*, have received numerous awards from *Parents Magazine* and the American Library Association. A live-in-concert video, *This Pretty Planet*, includes several of his environmentally conscious songs. Chapin's repertoire, however, is aimed as much at his grown-up listeners and he continues to alternate adult-oriented albums with his recordings for the younger set. On a 1994 adult album, *So Nice to Be Home*, he wrote three songs and collaborated on others with Si Kahn, John Forster, and Michael Mark. Chapin's greatest exposure with children's music came in the early 1970s when he hosted a national television show called *Make a Wish*. Most of the show's songs, including "All My Life's a Circle," were composed by Chapin's older brother, Harry. Chapin inherited much of his love of music and art; one grandfather was an acclaimed critic, author, and philosopher while the other was a painter. His father is a jazz drummer who still plays with a trio and conducts drum workshops. Together with his brothers, Chapin was heavily influenced by the folk music of the Weavers and the Kingston Trio and formed a group, the Chapin Brothers. Staples of the Greenwich Village folk scene of the early 1960s, the Chapins recorded their debut album in 1966. Switching to folk-rock (after the electrifying of Bob Dylan) proved to be a mistake, and Chapin left the group to attend the State University College of New York at Plattsburg where he excelled at basket-

owen "snake" chapman

ball and was named small college All-American honorable mention. Invited to try out for the St. Louis Hawks, he declined the invitation and attended graduate school. Despite teaching at an academy in White Plains, New York, Chapin remained drawn to entertainment. In 1969, he worked on a documentary film about sharks, *Blue Water, White Death.*

Harry Chapin's debut 1971 single, "Taxi," became a staple of hit-oriented AM radio and placed him among the upper echelon of folk-pop singer-songwriters. Although Tom continued to perform in folk music coffeehouses as a soloist, he remained in his older brother's shadow. In 1975 the two brothers reunited to create a Broadway show, *The Night That Made America Famous,* and to perform together on an eight-month tour of the United States that resulted in the album, *Greatest Stories Live.* Tom grew increasingly uneasy being known as "Harry's younger brother," however, and left his brothers' band to seek his own fortune. He later returned to Broadway with two productions—*Cotton Patch Gospel* and *Lies and Legends: The Musical Stories of Harry Chapin*—that were based on his brother's songs. As an actor, he appeared in the lead role of Neil Simon's comic play, *Pump Boys and Dinettes.* Chapin has continued to be involved with World Hunger Year, the organization founded by his older brother in 1975.

what to buy: Chapin's best work has been the product of musical collaborations. On *Doing Our Job* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. John McCutcheon, Tom Chapin, Joe DiGiorgi), he joins forces with multi-instrumentalist and vocalist John McCutcheon. Recorded during December 1996 concerts in Missouri and Kansas, the two musicians combine for a high-spirited, musical celebration. Chapin's six- and 12-string acoustic guitars and McCutcheon's hammer dulcimer, banjo, and guitar are enhanced by Bobby Read (keyboards, clarinet, and saxophone) and Michael Mark (bass and concertina). While they offer memorable renditions of Pete Seeger's "Well May the World Go" and Woody Guthrie's "Pastures of Plenty," the duo make their greatest impact with their songwriting. Chapin's songs range from an autobiographical ode to folk traditions ("Pass the Music On," co-written with topical songwriter Si Kahn) to a witty children's song, "Make It Right," written on his own. Chapin and McCutcheon pool their songwriting talents on three songs—"Hard Cider," "Heaven Help," and "The Older I Get."

what to avoid: Chapin has not fared well with his adult albums. Although he's periodically shown promise as a songwriter, his arrangements remain firmly entrenched in the innocuous sounds of folk-pop.

the rest:

Children's Recordings:

Billy the Squid ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1992)
Family Tree ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1992)
Moonboat ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1993)
Mother Earth ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1994)
Zag Zig ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1994)
Around the World and Back Again ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1996)

Adult Recordings:

Let Me Back into Your Life ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)
Join the Jubilee ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1996)

solo outings:

The Tom Chapin Trio:

Insomnia ♪♪½ (Knitting Factory Works, 1993)

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Tom Paley, Bob Dylan

▶▶ John McCutcheon, Jon Gailmor, Raffi

Craig Harris

Owen "Snake" Chapman

Born 1919, in Canada, KY.

Fiddler Owen "Snake" Chapman has lived in the same area—known as Chapman's Hollow—of Kentucky that his family has inhabited for more than 150 years. Chapman started playing the five-string banjo when he was 8 years old and continued until he was 15. At that point he picked up the fiddle and never looked back. After a few more years on his own he joined up with some local groups, including Molly O'Day's band. It was then that he met fiddler Ed Haley, who was influential in his development. His career was put on hold, however, when he took a job in the mines. It wasn't until he retired in 1966 that Snake picked up the fiddle again. Now he's been playing for the past thirty years and has become an influence on many young old-time fiddlers.

what's available: John Hartford arranged to record Snake Chapman in 1995. These recordings, 26 tunes in all, were released the following year as *Up in Chapman's Hollow* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. John Hartford, Mark Wilson). The tunes

Tom Chapin **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

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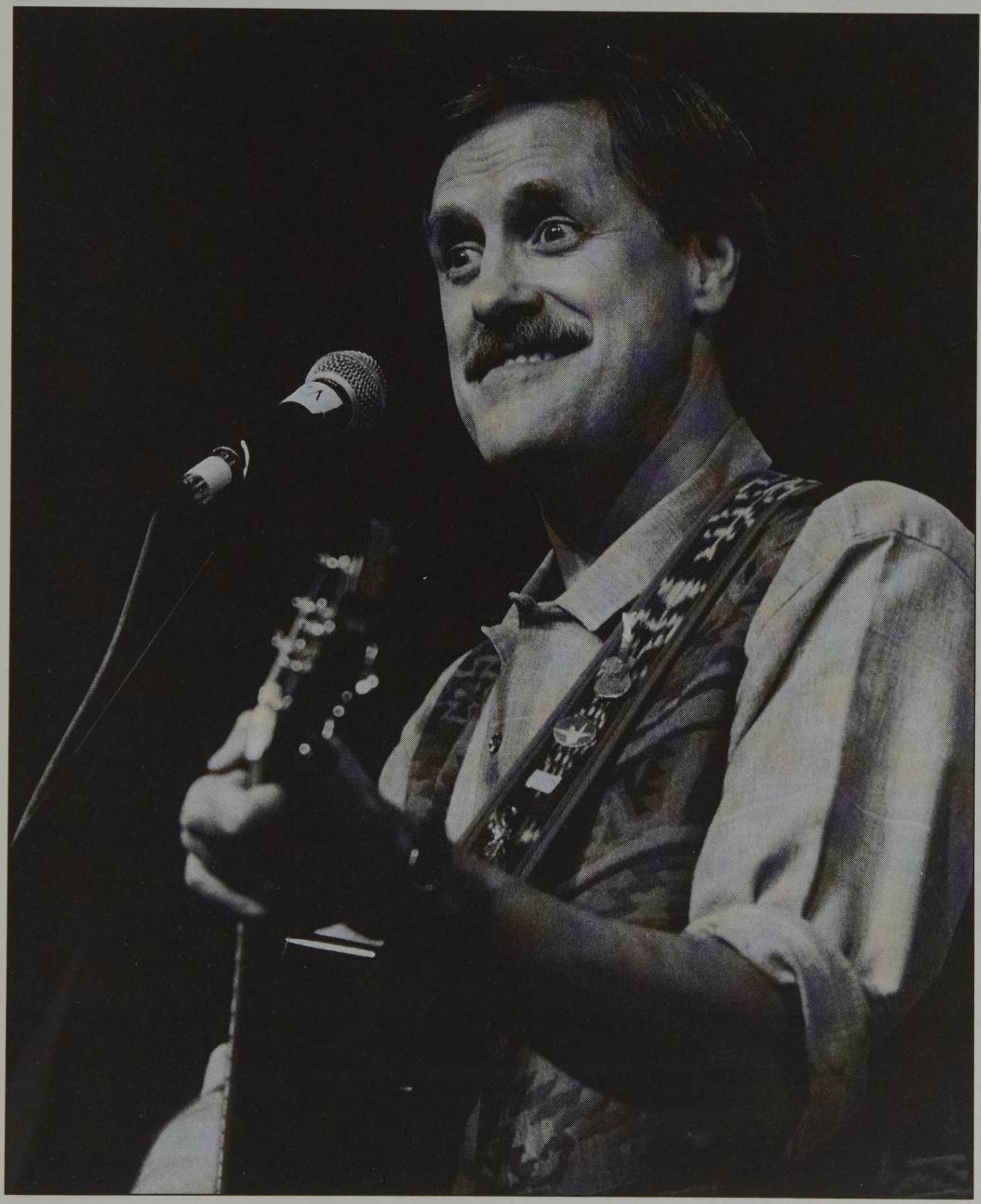
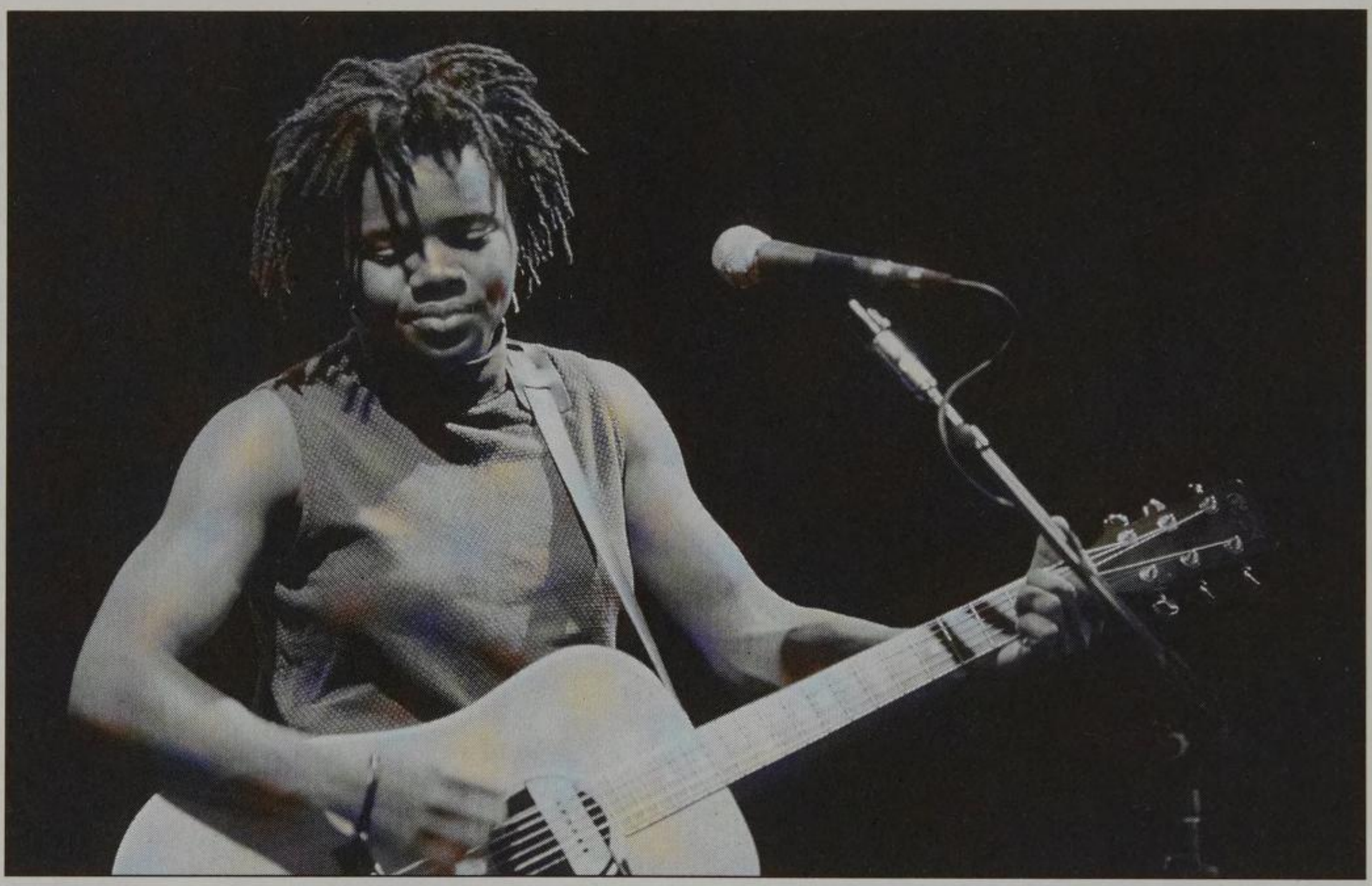


1/4/4 *tracy chapman*



Tracy Chapman **(© Ken Settle)**

trace back through Snake's fiddling history with Doc Chapman, Ed Haley, and Molly O'Day. For an exciting recording of Chapman's reintroduction into the world of old-time fiddling, check out the cassette-only *Fiddle Ditty* ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1990, prod. D. Gregory White). This album teams up Chapman with Paul Smith on Scruggs-style banjo for a marrying of old-time and bluegrass.

influences:

⏪ George "Doc" Chapman, Arthur Smith, Ed Haley

⏩ John Hartford

Steve Gardner

Tracy Chapman

Born 1964, in Cleveland, OH.

On the heels of Suzanne Vega's breakthrough with "Luka," Boston coffeehouse singer Tracy Chapman snared the attention of Elektra Records in 1988 and scored an unlikely Top 10 hit with "Fast Car," a gently rendered treatise on soured dreams driven by a captivating depth rarely heard on radio. The momentum of that small, short-lived, pre–Alanis Morissette women's movement, coupled with Chapman's skills at examining without preaching such emotionally charged topics as domestic violence and racial injustice, made her an instant star: the alternative band Thelonious Monster covered her "For My Lover," Neil Diamond recorded "Baby Can I Hold You," and she joined a high-profile Amnesty International tour with Sting, Peter Gabriel, and Bruce Springsteen. Despite her lyrical strengths and good intentions, Chapman still hasn't made another album as riveting as her self-titled 1988 debut. But then, few artists have.

what to buy: *Tracy Chapman* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1988, prod. David Kershenbaum) is an impressive calling card, detailing the frustrations of inner-city life while championing inner strength. There's a quiet, compelling sense of dignity bubbling under the fear and futility of "Fast Car," "Behind the Wall," and "Across the Lines."

what to buy next: *New Beginning* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1996, prod. Don Gehman) finds Chapman on the artistic rebound thanks to Gehman's mostly acoustic production and the singer's ability to rally attention for her causes without railing.

what to avoid: *Matters of the Heart* ♪♪ (Elektra, 1992, prod. Tracy Chapman, Jimmy Iovine) settles for easy targets like yuppie materialism and grumpy sketches instead of her usually thoughtful portraits.

the rest:
Crossroads ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1989)

worth searching for: On *Rubaiyat* (Elektra), a double-CD commemorating Elektra's legacy, Chapman performs an upbeat "Fever"-like cover of "House of the Rising Sun" with help from E-Street Band pianist Roy Bittan.

influences:

◀◀ Joan Armatrading, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Jewel, Ani DiFranco, Poe, Patty Griffin, Dionne Farris

David Okamoto

The Charles River Valley Boys

Formed late 1950s, in Cambridge, MA. Disbanded 1970.

Jim Field, guitar, vocals; Bob Siggins, banjo, vocals; Joe Val, mandolin, vocals; Everett A. Lilly, bass. Earlier members include: John Cooke, guitar; Fritz Richmond, tenor, bass kazoo; Ethan Signer, mandolin, fiddle.

The Charles River Valley Boys had a profound influence on the burgeoning bluegrass scene around Boston during the early 1960s. Playing a mixture of old-time and bluegrass music at a number of clubs and coffeehouses in the area, they came to the attention of producer Paul Rothchild, whose later credits as producer included the Doors, Janis Joplin, and Bonnie Raitt. Rothchild, working at Elektra, heard a tape of the group doing bluegrass versions of Beatles songs and pitched the idea of an entire album to the label. Although the marketing of the record proved disastrous and it was a commercial failure, the music today remains a fitting tribute to the impact and versatility of the Fab Four and is, sadly, the only recorded work on CD by the CRVB. A major turning point for the group had been the addition of staunch traditionalist Joe Val on vocals and mandolin, who remained with the group from 1963 to 1967. In 1970, with the group disbanded, Val formed the New England Blue Grass Boys and recorded several successful (and easier to find) albums.

what's available: If the marketing department at Elektra hadn't gotten scared it would have titled *Beatle Country* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1966/1995, prod. Paul Rothchild, Peter K. Siegel) the more accurately descriptive *Beatle Bluegrass*. Perhaps it works because it was done at the height of Beatlemania, and not as a revisionist afterthought. These songs lend themselves well to bluegrass arrangements. The Homer & Jethro–type send up of "Yellow Submarine" is a real hoot, but this is hardly a novelty record.

worth searching for: *Charles River Valley Boys* ♪♪♪♪ (Prestige/Folklore, 1962, prod. Paul Rothchild), a long out-of-print LP, features brilliant bluegrass music and hilarious liner notes.

influences:

◀◀ Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers, Flatt & Scruggs

▶▶ Joe Val & the New England Blue Grass Boys, Del McCoury Band

Stephen L. Betts

Boozoo Chavis

Born Wilson Anthony Chavis on October 23, 1930, in Lake Charles, LA.

Born and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the son of a tenant farmer, Boozoo Chavis began playing the accordion in his teens. His father played the accordion, as did a cousin, the legendary Sidney Babineaux. Chavis regularly played at his mother's dance hall where he would sit in with Clifton Chenier. In 1954, he recorded "Paper in My Shoe" for Goldband Records, which despite its very raw sound was a major regional hit and certainly the first zydeco hit record. Chavis left music to pursue a more lucrative career as a horse trainer, but began a real comeback in 1984. His sound is raw, funky, and loose. His one- and three-row button accordion playing gets to the heart of a groove, and the band and the dancers lock in. It is the intense response that Chavis's music gets from dancers that has influenced younger performers like Beau Jocque and Keith Frank.

what to buy: *Zydeco Trail Ride* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1989, prod. Floyd Soileau) brings together the best of Boozoo's 45s from the Maison de Soul label. Each of these songs is in its way a classic that almost every zydeco band has in its repertoire, whether they give credit to Chavis or not. This stuff is mother's milk to players like Keith Frank and Beau Jocque. Check the classics like "Motor Dude Special," "Dog Hill," and "Leona Had a Party"—the band locks into a kicking groove and Chavis's nononsense accordion and singing charges along on top. There is

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a cleaned up version of his "Deacon Jones," which was released in an X-rated version on 45. There's also a remake of Smokey Robinson's "Harlem Shuffle" that is still really popular as a line dance in Southwest Louisiana. This stuff only hints at what Chavis is like live in a dance hall, but these are all classics.

what to buy next: *The Lake Charles Atomic Bomb (Original Goldband Recordings)* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Eddie Shuler) contains Chavis's early recordings, and there is little music out there as wild or as raw. Imagine Ornette Coleman's uncle playing zydeco or Captain Beefheart backing up Amédée Ardoin. Chavis had the first zydeco hit in 1954 with "Paper in My Shoe," and a version of it is included here. Legends abound about the band not knowing the tunes and that everyone had too much to drink; nevertheless, the music has a raw power all its own. Between the strange merging of the band and Chavis and Shuler's strange production practices, you have something that sounds very primitive and very modern simultaneously. "Hamburgers and Popcorn" is one of those records that just has to be heard to be appreciated.

the rest:
Louisiana Zydeco Music ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1986)
Boozoo Zydeco ♪♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1987)
Live at Richard's ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
Zydeco Homebrew ♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1988)
Boozoo, That's Who! ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)
Live! at the Habibi Temple ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Hey Do Right ♪♪♪½ (Discovery, 1997)

worth searching for: *Boozoo Chavis* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra/Nonesuch, 1990, prod. Terry Adams) was part of the inauguration of the Nonesuch/Explorer series. NRBQ's Terry Adams got Chavis to play a bunch of his classic songs and three pieces solo, including a magnificent version of the Creole classic "Bernedette." One thing becomes clear listening to this music: Chavis can swing, and this is one thing most of his young imitators have failed to cop from him. You can feel it on hard-core Chavis tunes like "Gilton," where the band crushes a beat and Boozoo's accordion just glides on top.

influences:
⏪ Amédée Ardoin, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
⏩ Keith Frank, Beau Jocque, Geno Delafose

Jared Snyder

Boozoo Chavis **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Formed in the early 1970s.

Robert Crumb, banjo, vocals; Allan Dodge, mandolin, violin, ukulele, vocals; Robert Armstrong, guitar, accordion, banjo, saw, vocals; Terry Zwigoff, cello, saw, fiddle; Bob Brozman, ukulele, Hawaiian guitar, slide guitar, vocals.

The Cheap Suit Serenaders are an old-timey, acoustic string-band started by underground cartoonists Robert Crumb (*Mr. Natural, Flaky Foont, Fritz the Cat*) and Robert Armstrong (*Mickey Rat, The Tuber's Voice*), with their friend Allan Dodge. Terry Zwigoff (known for his 1995 documentary *Crumb*) and noted historian Bob Brozman became official members after their first LP. The group was formed in part with sincere appreciation for music from the '20s and '30s, and as a form of satirical rebellion against the amplified acid-rock sounds of the late '60s/early '70s. After signing with the Blue Goose label in 1974, the band began recording a mix of pleasingly anachronistic double-entendre novelties, old-time standards, and lengthy waltz-time instrumentals that sounded like back-porch jam sessions from another era. Their first single, "Get a Load of This" (a tribute to the laxative properties of junk food), was issued on a 78 rpm record. True to form, mainstream radio wouldn't touch it, but the disc has been on the playlist of *The Dr. Demento Show* ever since. On subsequent LPs the Serenaders enlisted the aid of several guest musicians on brass and wind instruments, which gave their overall production style more punch and polish but slightly diminished the intimate, subversive feel of their music. Crumb moved to France during the late '80s, but he occasionally plays with various non-recording line-ups of the Cheap Suit Serenaders at folk festivals and college venues, where fans line up backstage, hoping he'll sign some of his artwork.

what's available: The band's second and third Blue Goose LPs have been neatly reissued on *Singin' in the Bathtub* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. various) and *Chasin' Rainbows* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. various), and offer some wonderful home-grown sounds supplemented by a few superior musicians.

worth searching for: The group's first disc, *R. Crumb and his Cheap Suit Serenaders* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Goose, 1974. prod. Nick Perls), features their best known song, "Get a Load of This," and has yet to be reissued. Harder to find are the 78 rpm singles *"Get a Load of This" b/w "Duck's Yas Yas"* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Goose, 1974, prod. Nick Perls) and *Party Record: "Christopher Columbus" b/w "My Girl's Pussy"* ♪♪♪½ (Red Goose, 1976). As you would expect, the cover art on all of these is excellent.

c.j. chenier

influences:

Jim Kweskin's Jug Band, Ukulele Ike, Uncle Dave Macon, Ry Cooder

Tom Marion, Ghost Rockets, Les Primitifs del Futur

see also: *Bob Brozman*

Ken Burke

C.J. Chenier

Born September 28, 1957, in Port Arthur, TX.

C.J. Chenier's father, the legendary Clifton Chenier, was based in Lafayette, Louisiana, and toured constantly. The younger Chenier was able to see his father only a couple times a year. Growing up in Texas, he rarely heard zydeco or his father's music. Instead, he studied piano and alto saxophone and took an interest in jazz and R&B. His favorites at this time included Miles Davis, John Coltrane, James Brown, and the Commodores. He eventually earned a musical scholarship to Texas Southern University. In 1978 his father called him to play saxophone. The experience was a jolt: he wasn't familiar with the beat and didn't know any of the songs. By the early 1980s, C.J. began to learn accordion from his then-ailing father. By then, it was clear Clifton could not continue to tour much longer. He had to sit down to perform and often could not finish the show, leaving it to C.J. to finish. When the senior Chenier died in 1987, C.J. took over the band and has come into his own as an accordionist and singer and all-round performer. He continues to carry on the legacy of Creole music that his father established.

what to buy: The version of the Red Hot Zydeco band on *My Baby Don't Wear No Shoes* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1988, prod. Chris Strachwitz, C.J. Chenier) still featured Clifton's brother Cleveland on rubboard, and there is a feel throughout the record of the torch being passed to the next generation. That doesn't get in the way of excellent zydeco music, though, for there's a moving reading of Clifton Chenier's "I'm Comin' Home" here, a song he often performed at the end of his life with tears in his eyes.

what to buy next: Slash Records was the home of the Blasters and Los Lobos, and *Hot Rod* ♪♪♪♪ (Slash, 1990, prod. C.J. Chenier) was their effort to branch out into zydeco music. An excellent recording that just failed to cross into the mainstream market. Roy Carrier replaces Cleveland Chenier on frattoir, but the band doesn't miss a beat, and C.J.'s accordion playing continues to blossom.

the rest:

I Ain't No Playboy ♪♪♪½ (Slash, 1992)
Too Much Fun ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1995)
Big Squeeze ♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1996)

influences:

Rockin' Dopsie, Clifton Chenier, Buckwheat Zydeco

Nathan Williams, John Delafose, Lynn August

see also: *Roy Carrier*

Jared Snyder

Clifton Chenier

Born June 25, 1925, in Opelousas, LA. Died December 12, 1987.

Clifton Chenier took a backwoods form of Cajun folk music called zodico, hyped it up with elements of jump blues, R&B, and early rock 'n' roll, and created what we know today as zydeco. A versatile musician as well as gifted interpreter, Chenier was proficient on guitar and harmonica, but his lasting fame came via the accordion, an instrument he rescued from perpetual ridicule and made cool once again. Besides being a prolific writer of his own music, Chenier was the ultimate stylist who could take a song from any genre, recast it with French patois, Creole, or English lyrics and transform it into a foot stomping, Mardis Gras party jam. Chenier cut his first sides for the Elko label in 1954 (which were also leased by Imperial and Post), but his first burst of national fame came at Specialty Records the following year. "Ay-Te Te Fee" and "Boppin' the Rock" featured Chenier's stinging guitar work and achieved respectable chart positions, but Specialty was putting all its efforts into the burgeoning rock 'n' roll scene. As a result, Chenier's work was lost in the shuffle. He label-hopped for a few years, cutting excellent tracks for Argo, Checker, Zynn, and Crazy Cajun among others. In 1960, Chenier signed with Arhoolie (which later leased his material to the Bayou, Home Cooking, Blue Star, GNP/Crescendo, and Caillier labels), where he recorded his greatest, most influential body of work and established a base for his growing cult appeal. Along with "Louisiana Stomp" and "Squeeze Box Boogie," he scored dozens of regional hits with his danceable hybrid music, and toured constantly, playing folk festivals and R&B revues, and opening for rock acts both at home and abroad. In later years, diabetes forced the partial amputation of his right foot and sapped his energies. But de-

C.J. Chenier **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

clifton chenier

spite his illness, he is said to have never given a bad show. In his last years, Chenier recorded quality sides for Maison De Soul and Alligator. He died just as the music he pioneered achieved true national prominence. Clifton Chenier was the King of Zydeco Music.

what to buy: The cream of Chenier's Arhoolie work is deftly compiled on *60 Minutes with the King of Zydeco* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1988, prod. Chris Strachwitz), a great intro to this genre. Mon Dieu!

what to buy next: Chenier's best sides for Specialty and Arhoolie have been combined on *Zydeco Dynamite: The Clifton Chenier Anthology* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1993, compilation prod. James Austin), an amazing 40-track, 2-disc set.

what to avoid: Chenier does not sing with Rockin' Dopsie on *Clifton Chenier & Rockin' Dopsie* ♪♪♪ (Paula, 1992, prod. various), so for the price of this two-disc set, you could easily purchase fuller, more satisfying packages by either artist.

the rest:
Zydeco Sont Pas Sale ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1964/1997)
Louisiana Blues & Zydeco ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1965/1991)
Black Snake Boogie ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1966/1994)
King of the Bayous ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1970/1993)
Live at Saint Marks ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1971/1988)
Out West ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1974/1991)
Bogalusa Boogie ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1975/1993)
The King of Zydeco Live at Montreux ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1975/1991)
And His Red Hot Louisiana Band in New Orleans ♪♪♪ (GNP/Crescendo, 1979/1990)
Frenchin' the Boogie ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1979/1994)
Classic Clifton ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1980/1993)
Bon Ton Roulet ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1981/1991)
I'm Here ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1982/1993)
Country Boy Now Grammy Award Winner ♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1984/1989)
Live ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1985/1993)
Live at the Long Beach & San Francisco Blues Festivals ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1985/1993)
Boogie & Zydeco ♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1987/1994)
On Tour ♪♪ (EPM, 1989/1996)
Zydeco Legend ♪♪½ (Maison De Soul, 1989/1993)
Singin' the Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1992)
Zodico Blues & Boogie ♪♪♪♪½ (Specialty, 1993)
We're Gonna Party ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1994)
I'm Coming Home ♪♪♪ (Magnum America, 1996)

worth searching for: Chenier can be seen performing live on *King of Zydeco* ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie Video, 1995, prod. various), a videotaping of a concert from late in his career.

influences:

◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Izeb Laza, Professor Longhair, Louis Jordan, Lowell Fulson

▶▶ C.J. Chenier, Buckwheat Zydeco, Rockin' Sydney

Ken Burke

The Chenille Sisters

Formed 1984, in Ann Arbor, MI.

Connie Huber, vocals; Cheryl Dawdy, vocals; Grace Morand, vocals.

The high-spirited vocal harmonies of the sister singing groups of the swing era are resurrected by Ann Arbor, Michigan-based trio, the Chenille Sisters. Set to Connie Huber's acoustic guitar, Cheryl Dawdy, Grace Morand, and Huber harmonize with heartwarming sensitivity and good-natured wit. The trio's roots go back to a band that featured University of Michigan students Huber and Morand. Shortly after Huber met Dawdy while performing in a community theater musical, she invited her to join the group. When she agreed, however, Huber and Morand fired the rest of the band and, with Dawdy, formed the Chenille Sisters. The decision proved to be fortuitous. At one of their first performances, at the Old Town, the crowd's enthusiasm was so strong that the trio was booked to perform during happy hour every Thursday. The gig lasted a year. A pair of sold-out concerts as opening act for the Persuasions at the Ark and a showcase performance at the Ann Arbor Folk Festival were even more eventful. Their exposure continued to expand. Their second year was marked with important appearances on National Public Radio, *A Prairie Home Companion*, and *Lonesome Pine Special*. The Chenille Sisters have applied their delectable vocals to a variety of formats. In addition to harmonious albums for adults, they've produced two award-winning children's albums, *At the Cod Fish Ball* and *Yabba Dabba Honeymoon*. *Whatcha Gonna Swing Tonight* was recorded with swing jazz pianist James Dapogny and his eight-piece Chicago Jazz Band. The Chenille Sisters take their name from the bedspread and bathrobe fabric and is a take-off on girl groups, like the Chiffons and the Raynettes, who were named after more glamorous material.

what to buy: *True to Life* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994, prod. Darleen Wilson) combines harmony-rich love songs ("Love of Your Life," "I'd Be Lost without You," and "Co-Dependent with You") and a hard-hitting condemnation of alcoholism and child abuse ("I Lie in the Dark") with much-funnier ditties, including a witty look at aging, "Help! I'm Turning into My Parents," and a hilari-

ous ballad about seeing the face of the Virgin Mary in the middle of a pizza, "Pizza Deliverance."

what to buy next: The Chenille Sisters joined with jazz pianist James Dapogny and his Chicago Jazz Band for a swinging album, *Whatcha Gonna Swing Tonight?* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1992, prod. the Chenille Sisters, James Dapogny), dedicated to the music of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s.

the rest:

The Chenille Sisters ♪♪ (Frou-Frou, 1986)
At Home with the Chenille Sisters ♪♪½ (Red House, 1988)
1, 2, 3, for Kids ♪♪½ (Red House, 1990)
Mama, I Wanna Make Rhythm ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1991)
The Big Picture and Other Songs for Kids ♪♪½ (Red House, 1992)
Haute Chenille: A Retrospective ♪♪½ (Red House, 1995)
Teaching Hippopotami to Fly ♪♪½ (Can-Too Music, 1996)

worth searching for: The Chenille Sisters' performance on an edition of PBS-TV show *A Lonesome Pine Special* continues to be aired.

influences:

- The Boswell Sisters, the Andrew Sisters, the Roches, Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks
- Christine Lavin, the Roches, the Burns Sisters

Craig Harris

editor's choice
11 blues albums

Muddy Waters, *His Best: 1947–55* (MCA/Chess)
Keb' Mo', *Keb' Mo'* (OKeh/Epic)
B.B. King, *The Best of B.B. King, Vol. One* (Flair/Virgin)
Memphis Minnie, *Hoodoo Lady (1933–37)* (Columbia/Roots 'n' Blues)
Memphis Jug Band, *Memphis Jug Band* (Yazoo)
Sister Rosetta Tharpe, *Sister Rosetta Tharpe* (Frémeaux & Associates)
Henry Thomas, *Texas Worried Blues* (Yazoo)
Blind Blake, *The Master of Ragtime Guitar: Essential Recordings* (Indigo)
John Cephas & Phil Wiggins, *Dog Days of August* (Flying Fish)
Buddy Guy, *Damn Right, I've Got the Blues* (Silvertone)
John Hammond, *Big City Blues* (Vanguard)

Cherish the Ladies

Formed 1983, in New York City, NY.

Joannie Madden, flute, whistle, vocals; Cathie Ryan, vocals, bodhrán; Aoife Clancy, vocals, guitar; Siobhan Egan, fiddle, whistle, bodhrán; Maureen Doherty Macken, button accordion, flute, whistle; Mary Coogan, guitar, tenor banjo, mandolin; Mary Rafferty, button accordion, flute, whistle; Donna Long, piano, fiddle, vocals.

The original idea behind Cherish the Ladies was simple: a series of concerts highlighting the contributions of women to Irish music in America. In 1983, folklorist and musician Mick Moloney had a brainstorming session with the directors of New York's Ethnic Folk Arts Center, Martin Koenig and Ethel Raim. Moloney drew their attention to the extraordinary number of young American women involved in Irish traditional music, and the three organizers created a concert series featuring some of these women. The resulting concerts left audiences and critics roaring their approval. In 1985, Moloney convinced the National Endowment for the Arts to fund an album, *Cherish the Ladies*. Like the concerts, it featured instrumental soloists with a few duos and trios, plus singing in the Irish language. Like the concerts, it included more than a dozen women, two of whom (flute player Joannie Madden and guitarist Mary Coogan) are still a part of Cherish the Ladies today. Like the concerts, it was a tremendous success; it was chosen by the Library of Congress as one of the best folk albums of 1985. The NEA knew a good thing when they saw it and decided to sponsor a tour for Cherish the Ladies. The paring down of dozens of musicians and singers to a manageably sized touring ensemble was a big step in the group's evolution. Madden, already the group's unofficial leader, was consulted. "Mick called me up, and we went through a few names, and threw a group together," she explains. This line-up of the group included Madden, Coogan, and Maureen Doherty Macken, as well as singer Cathie Ryan and fiddlers Siobhan Egan and Eileen Ivers. The group has been through a few line-up changes down the years. First, Ivers was replaced by Winifred Horan. Eventually, Horan, too, left the band, as did Doherty Macken and Ryan; the three were replaced by Donna Long, Mary Rafferty, and Aoife Clancy, respectively. Despite the

changes, though, their commitment to high-quality music and high-energy fun has never wavered.

what to buy: Cherish the Ladies' sound has never been more confident than it is on *New Day Dawning* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Johnny Cunningham). The lineup changes that ensued between their second disc and this one resulted in no missteps, just a new repertoire of material and a renewed sense of direction. Strong playing from all the lead instrumentalists is matched by a newfound power in the accompaniments; Donna Long's piano fills out the sound beautifully, and Aoife Clancy's guitar playing leaves Mary Coogan freer to play banjo and mandolin without hurting the bottom end. She rises to the occasion marvelously on a set of polkas learned from her father. Clancy's polished voice interprets several lovely traditional songs and a few by such songwriters as Dougie MacLean, Pete St. John, and even Robert Burns. The result is as fresh and appealing a set as you're likely to find in Irish music.

what to buy next: *The Back Door* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Mick Moloney) demonstrated the new group ethic and established the band as a major presence on the American Irish music scene. It features an excellent selection of tunes and songs played with finesse on flute, fiddle, and accordion, with the occasional whistle or banjo, accompanied always by Mary Coogan's expert guitar and often by Cathie Ryan's bodhrán. The sources Cathie Ryan looked to for the songs she sings—Jimmy Crowley, Joe Heaney, Frank Harte—indicate her impeccable taste. The one song she wrote herself—the title track—indicates her songwriting talent. Her lovely, clear voice indicates that the listener's in for a real treat; her singing is sincere and expressive, and the spirit of the song always comes through. The second album, *Out and About* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Johnny Cunningham), contains material near and dear to the group's heart: a polka and several waltzes written in a French style commemorate a trip to Brittany. Ryan's second song about Irish emigration, "Missing Pieces," shows that the sincerity and depth of feeling in her songwriting has continued to grow. This was the last album before the major lineup change. Finally, if solos and duets, rather than a full band sound, appeal to you, you'd appreciate *Cherish the Ladies* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Mick Moloney), featuring Joannie Madden, Maureen Doherty, Mary Coogan, Eileen Ivers, Liz Carroll, and others. Nicely played tunes, plus a few songs; note that only a few of these artists wound up in the band version of Cherish the Ladies.

the rest:
The Best of . . . N/A (Green Linnet, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Mick Moloney, Liz Carroll
▶▶ Solas

see also: *Eileen Ivers, Joanie Madden, Cathie Ryan*

Steve Winick

Chesapeake

Formed 1992, in Silver Spring, MD.

Mike Auldridge, pedal steel, dobro, lap steel, vocals; Jimmy Gaudreau, mandolin, vocals; T. Michael Coleman, bass, vocals; Moondi Klein, vocals, guitar, piano.

If there were such a thing as a bluegrass supergroup, Chesapeake would be the first. Consisting of three former members of the influential Seldom Scene ensemble and one ex-player of the Tony Rice Unit, the group has forged a respectable reputation in the acoustic music world. But some bluegrass purists might call what this quartet does blasphemy. While maintaining its high-lonesome bluegrass foundation, Chesapeake experiments with country instrumentation, bluesy arrangements, and pop harmonies to create a sound less rural than traditional bluegrass. Call it urban grass. Essentially, this fresh approach makes Chesapeake more diverse than, say, a band that steadfastly follows Bill Monroe's muse. Group members can easily put their own stamp on a familiar English ballad like "Blackjack Davey" or such modern-day rock cuts as Van Morrison's "Moondance" and Little Feat's "Let It Roll." Chesapeake's adventurous spirit has not gone unnoticed. Bluegrass and rockabilly great Doc Watson has said that "Chesapeake is one of the best bands I've listened to in a long time. They can take a tune like 'Shady Grove' and make it sound thoroughly contemporary without losing all the original flavor." You can't buy that kind of endorsement.

what to buy: Chesapeake's second album, *Full Sail* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Chesapeake, Bill Wolf), best represents the band's philosophy. The care and innovation that goes into each song makes it a cinch to accept the Carter Family's classic "Are You Tired of Me My Darling" in the same disc with second-generation bluegrass (Ricky Skaggs's "One Way Track") and a bluesy rock tune like Little Feat's "Let It Roll."

the rest:
Rising Tide ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994)

Pier Pressure N/A (Sugar Hill, 1998)

worth searching for: Three out of four members of Chesapeake guest on Doc Watson's jubilant *Docabilly* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. T. Michael Coleman), an album that finds the veteran covering a slew of 1950s songs, from "Walking after Midnight" to "Heartbreak Hotel" to "Train of Love." The record also features supporting performances by Marty Stuart, Junior Brown, and Duane Eddy.

influences:

◀◀ The Seldom Scene, Tony Rice Unit, Ricky Skaggs

▶▶ Front Range, Bad Livers

Mario Tarradell

Vic Chesnutt

Born November 12, 1964, in Jacksonville, FL.

Championed early on by R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe, Vic Chesnutt rose from wholly inauspicious beginnings during the late-1980s Athens, Georgia, scene to gradually become one of the most respected and admired songwriters of his generation. Confined to a wheelchair since an early 1980s car accident, Chesnutt was quite content to play the occasional local gig until Stipe goaded him into the studio in 1988 to record his debut album, *Little*. Chesnutt's minimalist musical tendencies, acute singing drawl, and highly personal lyrical portraits invited comparisons to such Southern Gothic literary figures as William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor. Subsequent albums found him working in more intricate backing instrumentation and crafting music that ranged from folk to country to feedback-buzzed rock 'n' roll. In 1996, Chesnutt made the move from tiny Texas Hotel to Capitol, which issued his major-label debut, *About to Choke*, at the same time Columbia Records released a tribute album, *Sweet Relief II: Gravity of the Situation*. *Sweet Relief II* featured artists from Smashing Pumpkins to Hootie & the Blowfish to Joe Henry and sister-in-law Madonna covering Chesnutt's songs.

what to buy: Like a classic Polaroid snapshot capturing a special moment in time, *Little* ♪♪♪♪½ (Texas Hotel, 1990) remains Chesnutt's most endearing album, recorded almost entirely solo acoustic and full of such singularly engaging character sketches as "Isadora Duncan" and "Danny Carlisle." For those who prefer a bit more musical accompaniment, *Is the Actor Happy?* ♪♪♪½ (Texas Hotel, 1995, prod. John Keane) is the best of the rest, balancing such beautifully lilting ballads as "Sad Peter Pan" and "Guilty by Association" with a few more upbeat yet quirky pop numbers.

what to buy next: *West of Rome* ♪♪♪½ (Texas Hotel, 1992, prod. Michael Stipe) is slightly less consistent but includes some of Chesnutt's finest songs, including "Sponge" and "Stupid Preoccupations." *About to Choke* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1996, prod. various) showed the move to a major label didn't mean a refining of Chesnutt's approach; it's just as gloriously skewed as his other records. *Drunk* ♪♪♪ (Texas Hotel, 1993) is a scattered but occasionally brilliant effort, with Syd Straw guesting on one track.

what to avoid: Chesnutt teamed up with fellow Georgians Widespread Panic for an album under the band-name Brute, titled *Nine High a Pallet* ♪♪½ (Capricorn, 1995); though the full-band backing is a nice change of pace, the material isn't up to Chesnutt's usual standards.

worth searching for: *Sweet Relief II: Gravity of the Situation* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996) showed Chesnutt's songs to be remarkably adaptable to mainstream acts; among the highlights are Garbage's instantly catchy take on "Kick My Ass" and Soul Asylum's emotionally draining rendition of "When I Ran Off and Left Her."

influences:

◀◀ Jack Logan, R.E.M., Nick Drake, Jimmy Webb

▶▶ Live, Mark Eitzel

Peter Blackstock

The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Formed during the mid-1940s, in Moccasin Gap, VA.

Bill Nunley, vocals; Jim Nunley, vocals; Archie Reynolds, vocals; Gale Webb, vocals; Ray Roe, vocals.

Although the Chestnut Grove Quartet was officially formed during the mid-'40s, the original members had been singing together since childhood. After WWII, Bill, Jim, Gale, and Archie regrouped and sang at Chestnut Grove Church in Washington County, Virginia, and sang there on a weekly basis. The church was old, built in 1890 with a wood frame structure and no organ or piano. All singing done there was a capella. The Quartet continued to sing unaccompanied even when modern times began turning its back on the old singing style. Nevertheless, their popularity grew as their intense singing brought out the power in the old religious songs. In the mid-'50s they started

performing on WBBI out of Abingdon, Virginia. They remained there for over 30 years. The reaction was, obviously, overwhelmingly positive. During this time, the Chestnut Grove Quartet sold quite a few LPs. One of the group's great admirers during the late '60s was Ralph Stanley, who had just lost his brother, Carter. When Ralph started singing and playing with his own group, Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, he incorporated a number of a capella mountain gospel numbers into their repertoire in the style of the Chestnut Grove Quartet. In fact, the Quartet was such a huge influence upon Ralph's life that he continues to record in this old style.

what's available: *The Legendary Chestnut Grove Quartet* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1994, prod. Gary B. Reid) is perhaps one of the best recordings you will find of unaccompanied Appalachian gospel singing. The singing and harmonies are very intense.

worth searching for: The Chestnut Grove Quartet recorded and sold a great number of LPs in their times. All of their recordings are now out of print, except for the CD reissue by County, but would be worth picking up if you had the luck of finding one.

influences:

◀◀ Blue Sky Boys, Wade Mainer and Zeke Morris, Shape Note Singing

▶▶ Ralph Stanley, Doyle Lawson, Ricky Skaggs

Steve Gardner

Kathy Chiavola

Born March 7, 1952, in Chicago, IL.

Formerly a professional opera singer, Chiavola (pronounced: *key ah' vo lah*) has sung on albums by Vince Gill, Garth Brooks, Emmylou Harris, Kathy Mattea, and Ricky Skaggs. She's released two self-produced albums in the acoustic country and bluegrass vein.

what to buy: *Kathy Chiavola* ♪♪♪♪ (Demon/My Label, 1995, prod. Kathy Chiavola) contains a much harder bluegrass sound than on her debut recording, but with plenty of twists, like covering John Hiatt's "Thirty Years of Tears" and "Won't Be Long," which kicked off Aretha Franklin's debut album. The album boasts an all-star list of guests, including Bill Monroe, Emmylou Harris, Vince Gill, Béla Fleck, Chet Atkins, and others.

the rest:

Labor of Love ♪♪♪ (My Label, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Doug Dillard Band, Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt

▶▶ Cluster Pluckers, Claire Lynch, Kate McKenzie

Douglas Fulmer

The Chicken Chokers

Formed 1979, in Cambridge, MA. Disbanded 1989.

Chip Taylor Smith, guitar, Hawaiian steel guitar (1979–89); Chad Crumm, fiddle, synthesizer (1979–89); Paul Strother, bass (1980–89); Jim Reidy, banjo-uke, tenor banjo, baritone ukulele, banjo-mandolin (1979–89); Stefan Senders, banjo (1982–88). Other members have included: Mark Graham, harmonica (1984–86); Sandy Stark, fiddle (1981–82, 1984); Joe Fallon, banjo (1979); Mike Donoghue, banjo (1980–81).

The Chicken Chokers' groove-laden mix of driving old-time dance tunes and moody original songs placed them in the vanguard of what has come to be known as progressive old-time music: a fusion of traditional Southern old-time music and contemporary pop styles, including reggae and punk. The Chokers emphasized the percussive qualities of the banjo, employing not only the frailed five-string banjo, but adding other instruments from the banjo family: banjo-uke, tenor banjo, and banjo-mandolin. In 1979, the Chicken Chokers began playing open mikes in exchange for free beer, under a different name each night. They finally settled on the Chicken Chokers, offering a variety of innocent explanations of the name (for example, someone who is driving too slow). Fiddler Chad Crumm and guitarist Chip Taylor Smith had grown up playing music together on Martha's Vineyard, and found themselves both living in the Boston area by the late 1970s. They joined up with banjo-uke maestro Jim Reidy and Joe Fallon on five-string banjo, forming the first version of the Chicken Chokers. Shortly thereafter, the band enlisted bassist Paul Strother, while banjo frailer Fallon was replaced by Mike Donoghue, who was replaced two years later by Stefan Senders. The amazing fiddler Sandy Stark cycled in and out of the Chicken Chokers for several years, but unfortunately never recorded with them. For a few years, harmonica whiz Mark Graham (now with Open House) was a Chicken Choker; he appears on *Chokers and Flies*, recorded in 1985. The Chicken Chokers disbanded in 1989; Crumm now fronts the Hix, while the rest of the Chokers have reunited with fiddler Stark to form the Primitive Characters.

what's available: The Chokers only full album is *Shoot Your Radio* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Chicken Chokers, Karen Kane). It's a short one, with only eleven cuts; the material is divided between obscure traditional tunes ("Blackberry Blos-

som" is not the usual G major tune at all, but a wonderfully spooky modal meditation), and original songs, including the title cut. The instrumentals roll along like a steamroller, sounding like they came straight out of a moonshiner's hoedown, while the songs are more in the alternative rock vein, reflecting contemporary feelings of alienation and attitude, rather than the more old-fashioned topics of goodtime carousing, home, church, and family. *Shoot Your Radio*'s progressive feel is reinforced by the use of synthesizer and Dagomba bass drum on several cuts. The band's debut came on the album *Chokers and Flies* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986, prod. Chicken Chokers, Karen Kane, George Lewis), which they shared with the Tompkins County Horseflies (later just plain Horseflies), with each band contributing one side of the original LP. The six tunes by the Chicken Chokers are considerably more traditional-sounding than those on *Shoot Your Radio*. Mark Graham's harmonica wizardry stays right in the pocket with the fiddle, around every turn and curve. Breakneck tempos on tunes like "Polecat Blues" are interspersed with very slow, draggy tempos (further emphasized by the use of bowed bass) on "Morning Blues" and "Cumberland Blues." The singing on *Chokers and Flies* is rather jolly, whereas the sometimes heavily-processed vocals of *Shoot Your Radio* tend more towards the morose.

influences:

◀◀ Benton Flippen, Tommy Jarrell, Uncle Dave Macon, Doc Roberts, Highwoods String Band, Plank Road, Fat Meat Boys

▶▶ The Hix, Primitive Characters, Horseflies, Open House, Hurricane Ridgerunners, Wildcats, Heartbeats, Bruce Molsky, Freighthoppers

see also: *Primitive Characters*

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

The Chieftains

Formed 1963, in Dublin, Ireland.

Paddy Moloney, uilleann pipes; Martin Fay, fiddle; Sean Keane, fiddle; Derek Bell, harp; Kevin Conneff, bodhrán; Matt Molloy, flute.

Often dismissed as a quaint bunch of old Irish folk musicians, the Chieftains are one of the most remarkably versatile groups around. For a bunch of scholarly looking, middle-aged Irish musicians, they've sure covered a lot of musical ground during their more than three decades together. Formed by Paddy Moloney as a vehicle to preserve Ireland's Celtic music roots, the Chieftains eventually moved away from their traditionalism, finding links past and present and often in such unlikely places as Spain.

what to buy: *The Long Black Veil* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1995, prod. Paddy Moloney), the group's best-selling record, blends country and blues with heavyweight guest shots from the Rolling Stones, Sting, Van Morrison, Ry Cooder, and others.

what to buy next: The Grammy-winning *Another Country* ♪♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1992, prod. Paddy Moloney) fully explores the country-Celtic connection. With help from Emmylou Harris, Willie Nelson, Chet Atkins, and Don Williams, the group tackles "The Wabash Cannonball," "I Can't Stop Lovin' You," "Goodnight, Irene," and even "Cotton-Eyed Joe" with its usual battery of flutes, whistles, harps, fiddles, and pipes.

best of the rest:

Chieftains 1 ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1964)
Chieftains 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1969)
Chieftains 3 ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1971)
Chieftains 4 ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1973)
Chieftains 5 ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1975/1987)
Bonaparte's Retreat ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1976)
Chieftains Live! ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1977)
Chieftains 7 ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Chieftains 8 ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1978/1987)
Boil the Breakfast Early ♪♪ (Columbia, 1980/1987)
The Chieftains 10: Cotton-Eyed Joe ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1981)
Year of the French ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1982/1987)
Ballad of the Irish Horse ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985)
The Chieftains in China ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985)
Celtic Wedding ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1987)
A Chieftains Celebration ♪♪ (RCA, 1989)
The Bells of Dublin ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1991)
The Best of the Chieftains ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1992)
An Irish Evening: Live at the Grand Opera House ♪♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1992)
The Celtic Harp ♪♪♪½ (RCA Victor, 1993)
Film Cuts ♪♪♪½ (RCA Victor, 1996)
Santiago ♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ The Clancy Brothers, Carolan, Ceoltori Chuolann

▶▶ Maura O'Connell, Nanci Griffith, Altan, Clannad

Doug Pullen

Sonny Chillingworth

Born Edward Bradfield Chillingworth, July 14, 1932, in Oahu, HI. Died August 24, 1994.

Along with Gabby Pahinui, Sonny Chillingworth is considered one of the greats of Hawaiian slack-key guitar, a style named

for its retuning (or "slacking") of the guitar's strings. Fittingly for multicultural Hawaii, the slack-key style is influenced by the music of many different cultures, most importantly that of Mexico and Portugal. Chillingworth, who counted the English, Irish, and Hawaiian among his ancestors, fits easily into this melting-pot tradition. Chillingworth was also part of the Purdys, one of the great *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboy) families, and his music drew strongly on that tradition during his four-decade career. He made his first recordings around 1954, and performed with such artists as Gabby Pahinui and the Sons of Hawaii during his career. Chillingworth was so highly regarded in Hawaii that he was awarded the Bank of Hawai'i Na Hoku Lifetime Award for Slack Key Guitar in 1992. He played on more than 30 albums but made his only solo-guitar recordings shortly before his death in 1994.

what's available: *Sonny Solo* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1994, prod. George Winston), released just months before Chillingworth's death, was many people's introduction to his music and to slack-key guitar. Chillingworth's voice imbues the love ballads and *paniolo* songs with all his 60-plus years of experience, and his smoothly flowing picking is both beautiful and deceptively complex. The poor sound quality on *Sonny* ♪♪½ (Mahalo, 1995, compilation prod. John Aeto) sometimes gives Chilllingworth's voice an otherworldly tone that's not unpleasant, but the posthumously released compilation hardly gives Chillingworth's talent its due.

influences:

◀◀ Aunty Vickie I'i Rodrigues, Gabby Pahinui

▶▶ Ozzie Kotani, the Kahumoku Brothers, Rev. Dennis Kamakahi

Brian Mansfield

Harry Choates

Born December 26, 1922, in Rayne, LA. Died July 17, 1951, in Austin, TX.

Cajun music during the 1920s and early 1930s was dominated by the sounds of the diatonic accordion. However, the sounds of hillbilly, swing, and Western swing that were coming in over the airwaves began changing that. Fiddler Harry Choates rode the crest of that changing taste right out of the bayous to the Grand Ole Opry. His light swinging fiddle-based sound slowly evolved away from traditional Cajun tunes to a sound that became indistinguishable from Western swing. The move away from Cajun music meant the increased use of English lyrics and a much wider audience than any prior Cajun musician had found. He was a ground breaker who prepared the way for later Cajun crossover artists like Jimmy C. Newman and Doug Kershaw.

what to buy: *Fiddle King of Cajun Swing* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) contains the classic recordings of Cajun and Western swing Choates made for Goldband records. It does not include his 1946 hit "Jolie Blon," but it has just about every other hit record he had. His band features the wonderful steel work of Julius "Papa Cairo" Lamperez, a true Cajun original.

the rest:

His Original 1946–1949 Recordings (Arhoolie, 1982)
Five-Time Lobster ♪♪♪ (Krazy Kat, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Dennis McGee, Bob Wills, Hackberry Ramblers, Wallace Cheese Read

▶▶ Jimmy C. Newman, Doug Kershaw

Jared Snyder

Frank Christian

Born late 1940s, in Newark, NJ.

Urban imagery and poetic sensitivity place Frank Christian firmly in the modern folk music scene of Greenwich Village. But it is his imaginative guitar playing that sets him apart. Although he's made marks as a songwriter, especially when Nanci Griffith recorded his song "Three Flights Up" on her Grammy award-winning album, *Other Voices Other Rooms*, his greatest success has come as a supporting musician. One of acoustic music's busiest session players, Christian has recorded and/or toured with Griffith, Christine Lavin, Suzanne Vega, John Gorka, and the Smithereens. Beginning his study of guitar with jazz guitarist Roosevelt Spann at age 13, Christian learned his lessons well. By the time he came to the Village to study literature and music at New York University, his playing was attracting considerable attention. Although he recorded an impressive debut album, *Where Were You Last Night*, in 1982, Christian didn't come into his own until recently. His 1995 album, *From My Hands*, features guest appearances by Griffith, Garth Hudson, and Lee Saterfield, while his 1997 recording, *Mister So and So*, showcases his abilities to turn traditional folk, blues, and ragtime songs into personal statements.

what's available: Christian's first solo album in a dozen years, *From My Hands* ♪♪♪♪ (Palmetto, 1995, prod. Matt Balitsaris, Jeff Berman), shows how far he'd grown since his debut recording. Accompanying himself on acoustic six-string and electric 12-string guitars, and accompanied by top-notch New

York musicians and guest performers Nanci Griffith, Garth Hudson, and Lee Saterfield, Christian emerges as an insightful original songwriter as well as an imaginative interpreter of other people's work, notably Yip Harburg's "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" (the only non-original here). Highlights include the original version of Christian's "Three Flights Up," which Griffith later covered. *Mister So and So* ♪♪♪♪ (Palmetto, 1997, prod. Frank Christian) is a virtuoso examination of traditional music. Many of the songs have been staples of Christian's live performances for years. In addition to seven tradition-rooted originals, the collection includes unique interpretations of John Duffey's "Make Me a Pallet on the Floor," Blind Willie McTell's "Statesboro Blues," and Gordon Lightfoot's "Did She Mention My Name."

worth searching for: Christian's debut recording, *Somebody's Got to Do It* ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1982, prod. Matt Balitsaris, Jeff Berman), may have been produced on a very low budget. Behind the rawness, though, is a highly literate songwriter and a virtuoso musician. Accompanied by *Fast Folk Musical Magazine* regulars Jeff Berman (drums, vibes, washboard), Jeff Hardy (acoustic bass), and Bill Ferns (harmonica), Christian stakes an early claim in the evolution of acoustic music.

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Erik Frandsen, Jack Hardy

▶▶ Nanci Griffith, Pete and Maura Kennedy, Five Chinese Brothers, Richard Meyer

Craig Harris

The Chuck Wagon Gang

Formed 1935, in Texas.

David "Dad" Carter, tenor vocals (1935–55); Jim Carter, guitar, bass vocals (1935–53); Rose Carter, soprano vocals (1935–late 1970s); Anna Carter, alto vocals (1935–late 1970s); various other family members including Ruth Ellen Carter; Roy Carter; Jim Carter; Eddie Carter; and others.

Active intermittently from 1935 to the present, the Chuck Wagon Gang is one of the best-loved and best-selling gospel groups of all time. Although they first formed in Texas, their endearing and enduring sound harks back to the singing schools of the Southeastern U.S. Their sound is simple, melodic, and hauntingly plaintive. The earliest and best recordings feature only guitar accompaniment to their beautiful four-part harmonies. For many years the sound remained substantially the same; in fact, it still does, although there is no longer any family connection between the Carters and the group who uses the name. Recording first for ARC (which became Columbia), they recorded over 400 songs between 1936 and 1975, when the Gang severed ties with Columbia. They were active only intermittently until 1987, when remnants of the group, led by Ruth Ellen Carter Yates and her brother, Roy Carter, began to record for Copperfield Records, hewing substantially to the old family sound. Since the early 1990s the group has recorded for the Arrival label.

what to buy: *The Chuck Wagon Gang Columbia Historic Edition* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1984) is the real stuff, reissued from recordings made between 1936 and 1957, featuring mostly the original group. It has 16 tracks, including such Chuck Wagon Gang classics as "We Are Climbing," "The Church in the Wildwood," "After the Sunrise," "A Beautiful Life," and "Get a Touch of Heaven in Your Soul." It is presently available only on cassette, but it's well worth having in any form.

what to buy next: Many of the Copperfield recordings have been reissued by MCA, including *Family Tradition* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1979) and *Keep on Keepin' On* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1983).

the rest:

A Golden Legacy ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1983)
16 Country Gospel Favorites ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1984)
Homecoming ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1986)
An American Tradition ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1988)
Greatest Hits, Volume 1 ♪♪ (Arrival, 1991)
Old-Time Hymns, Volume 2 ♪♪ (Arrival, 1991)
16 Golden Country Gospel Favorites ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992)
Golden Gospel Greats, Volume 1 ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1994)
Golden Gospel Greats, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family

▶▶ The Chestnut Grove Gospel Quartet

Randy Pitts

Cindy Church

Born June 11, in Bible Hill, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Cindy Church began her career as a backup singer for fellow Canadian Ian Tyson. She formed the Great Western Orchestra with another Tyson musician, Nathan Tinkham, when they left the band. As a solo performer she has stayed close to the folk/Western roots of the Tyson fold, and she has also performed with Sylvia Tyson's Quartette group.

what's available: *Love on the Range* ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1994, prod. Nathan Tinkham, Dave Hamilton) is an acoustic-based

1/5/8 *rudy cipolla*

cape breton music

Cape Breton music is characterized by an almost frenetic urgency, an ornate and driving beat, and strong emotionalism. There is a distinct awareness of the roots of the people that comes across in the music, pulling on their Scottish heritage. Characterized by strong bowing of the fiddlers and emotional deliveries by the singers, Cape Breton music stands alone in its musical "guts." This is perhaps strongly influenced by Cape Breton step dancing, which is also believed to have Scottish roots. This tradition is so alive and well in Cape Breton today that no musician in the area would dream of learning to play without also learning to dance. The beats of the dance and the pulse of the music go hand-in-hand.

Why does Cape Breton get lumped into the Celtic cultures? The answer is based on the roots of this people in the northwest of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia ("New Scotland") was so named because the Scottish immigrants that settled there found the landscape so hauntingly familiar. These settlers were highly secluded from the influences of outsiders, and this background has created a geographical time-capsule, presenting a glimpse of what Scotland might be today had it not been constantly invaded and influenced by the English, the Scandinavians, and others. Some scholars believe that Cape Breton music is much closer to that of the original Scottish culture than what you find in Scotland today.

Jo Hughey Morrison

country album that gets into some low-key Western swing at times. In addition to her own songs and the ones by producer Tinkham, Church covers "My Wishing Room," an obscure Lefty Frizzell song. *Love on the Range* generated four hit singles in Canada, one of which, "This October Day," had a video that received some airplay on CMT in the States. Church stretches out a bit on the follow-up, *Just a Little Rain* ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1995, prod. Nathan Tinkham, Cindy Church), but keeps the cowboy and Western themes. This time the country chestnut comes from Floyd Tillman, who wrote "I Gotta Have My Baby Back," which Church turns into a torchy acoustic-blues number.

influences:

◀◀ Ian & Sylvia, Emmylou Harris

▶▶ Lisa Brokop

Brian Mansfield

Rudy Cipolla

Born September 21, 1900, in Calabria, Italy.

Rudy Cipolla and his family moved from Italy to Portland, Oregon, when he was 8. As a child he played mandolin, violin, and trombone, eventually settling on the first as his instrument of choice. He joined a mandolin ensemble called the Rybka's Orchestra during the '20s and later formed the Argentine Trio, in which he played the mandocello. The group (with a new guitarist) moved from the Northwest to San Francisco in 1931 and continued to play in the city's North Beach district until 1940, when the trio disbanded. Cipolla and his brother opened a San Francisco book store in 1941. The Book Nook occupied much of his interest in the following decades, though Cipolla continued to play music, guesting with the San Francisco Symphony during the '50s and the Berkeley Mandolin Ensemble during the '70s. His debut album, *The World of Rudy Cipolla*, was produced by David Grisman for Rounder Records when he was 83.

what to buy: *Portrait of an American Original* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1997, prod. David Grisman) provides a lovingly compiled overview of Cipolla's lengthy (if sporadic) career. Most of the selections were recorded during the '90s with the likes of the David Grisman Quintet, the Modern Mandolin Quartet, and Cipolla's own ensemble providing support on original compositions. Historical works from the '30s by the Argentine Trio anchor the collection.

what to buy next: *The World of Rudy Cipolla* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983, prod. David Grisman) features 11 Cipolla compositions.

influences:

◀◀ Jacob do Bandolim

▶▶ David Grisman, Radim Zenkl, Modern Mandolin Quartet

Steven Stolder

Carolyn Cirimele

See: The All Girl Boys

The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem /Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Formed March 17, 1956, in New York, NY.

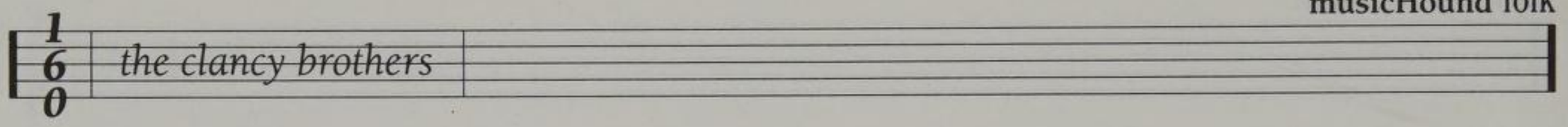
Pat Clancy, vocals; Tom Clancy (died 1990), vocals (1956–90); Liam Clancy, vocals, guitar, concertinas (1956–75); Tommy Makem, vocals, banjo, guitar, whistle (1956–69); Bobby Clancy, vocals (1975–present); Robbie O'Connell, guitar, vocals (1975–90).

The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, along with Sean O'Riada and the Chieftains, are the most important figures in the renaissance of Irish folk music over the last half century. They have spawned thousands of imitative groups, sold millions of recordings, and sparked a renewed interest in Anglo-Irish folk song both in America and in Ireland. Tom and Pat Clancy, from Carrick-On-Suir, in Tipperary, were out-of-work actors during the early 1950s, living in Cleveland and looking for a new start somewhere else. After deciding their old car wouldn't make the trip to California, they headed for New York instead. There they hooked up with younger brother Liam and with Tommy Makem, a fine singer from Armagh, and the son of legendary singer Sarah Makem. They formed a group and began performing at late-night coffee houses in Greenwich Village (their first gig was on St. Patrick's Day, 1956), and were soon making a name for themselves in New York's nascent folk scene. With a style firmly based on the Weavers' lusty sing-along arrangements and a natural stage presence from their time in the theater, the musicians became favorites at concert appearances and released two albums on their own Tradition label. Following a now legendary appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1961 (they played for 16 minutes when a scheduled guest took ill), they were signed to Columbia Records and soon became legends among the Irish in both the U.S. and Ireland. Their natural warmth and easy, singable versions of Irish folk songs made them favorites everywhere they performed. They were soon touring all over the world and recording constantly, becoming the best-known exponents of Irish traditional music in the world. Their early recordings consisted almost entirely of Irish folk songs, presented in a lusty style with simple accompaniment. Later, the group began to feature new songs from their own pens, and a more produced sound which didn't always work, but also resulted in some of their best music. After 10 years of records and tours, Makem left the group in 1970 to pursue a solo career. Liam left the group in 1975, replaced by youngest brother Bobby, and the group sank to the level of an oldies group, recording for smaller labels, and returning to the Irish pubs which they had left behind 15 years before. Although the original group reunited for occasional tours and a reunion album during the 1980s, their days at the forefront of Irish music were long since over. The death of oldest brother Tom in 1990 signaled the final end of the original group, though occasional versions of the Clancy Brothers still record and tour today.

Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy formed a duet during the mid-'70s, releasing several albums together. The duo performed fewer of the traditional Irish songs that had made the Clancy Brothers famous, instead concentrating on the work of young lesser-known songwriters. These tasteful albums were very popular with fans of the older group and introduced such then-unknown songwriters as David Mallett, Eric Bogle, and Gordon Bok, among others, to a new generation of folk fans.

The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem reintroduced traditional Irish music, sung honestly, to Irish-American audiences. Before their Ed Sullivan appearance, Irish music in the U.S. was for the most part a syrupy idealized view of "dear ould Ireland" written by Tin Pan Alley hacks and bearing little relation to real Irish folk music, which bore somewhat painful associations for Irish Americans looking to appear more American. The Clancys and their success made true Irish culture acceptable to Irish Americans, and led the way for the great revival of Irish music in the U.S. during the 1970s and 1980s. The group's great commercial success in the U.S. carried weight in Ireland, where people inspired by the Clancys began to look more closely at their own musical heritage. The later explorations of deeply traditional Irish music by Sean O'Riada, the Chieftains, and those that followed them was made easier by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem's ground-breaking success in the U.S. and Ireland. There are many things the group did poorly or didn't do at all. They were mediocre musicians, at best, and they largely ignored the great traditions of Irish-Gaelic song and traditional dance music. In spite of these criticisms, they have done more to raise the profile of traditional Irish music than any other group during the last 50 years and for that, they deserve praise.

what to buy: The Clancys' live recordings from the early 1960s found them in full flower. Relaxed and comfortable in front of audiences and brimming with good songs, the group recorded a number of great concert albums during their classic early period. *In Person at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1964/1991, prod. Robert Morgan) is as good a starting point as any. Featuring Dominic Behan's moving "Patriot Game," a great children's medley, and plenty of up-tempo favorites like "Reilly's Daughter" and "Johnson's Motor Car," the album captures the group at



their accessible best. The recording is available as an individual CD and in a package with *In Concert* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1991) and *Luck of the Irish* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1992, prod. various), two other great early 1960s albums. *The Makem and Clancy Collection* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1980/1992, prod. Archie Fisher) is a well-chosen collection of Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy's post-Clancy Brothers recordings. Featuring the two Eric Bogle songs "No Man's Land" (called "Willie McBride" on the album) and "The Band Played Waltzing Matilda," as well as a haunting version of "Ar Eirinn ne Neosainn Ce Hi" sung by Liam, this is a good introduction to the duo's 1970s folk albums.

what to buy next: *A Spontaneous Concert Performance* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1961, prod. Robert Morgan) was the Clancys' Columbia debut and is currently available only on cassette. A solid performance, featuring accompaniment by Bruce Langhorne and Pete Seeger on guitar and banjo respectively, the album introduced a number of songs that would be longtime favorites for the Clancy Brothers and their fans. "Finnegan's Wake," "Reilly's Daughter," and "Jug of Punch," all Clancy standards, made their first appearance on this record. The atmosphere is relaxed, the audience in fine voice, and the performers comfortable performing in front of an audience made up largely of their friends. This is a very fine album and would be in the "what to buy" section were it currently available on compact disc.

what to avoid: *Irish Drinking Songs* ♪ (Columbia, 1993, prod. Lawrence Cohn) is a compilation that manages to reduce both the Clancys and the Dubliners to a bunch of drunken buffoons. Yes, both groups sang drinking songs, and both groups are closely identified with the juice of the barley, but to present solely that side of their music is to resurrect a stereotype that has haunted the Irish for centuries and has been used to dehumanize them both here and abroad in the not-so-distant past. Folklorist Mick Moloney, to his credit, deals somewhat with the ambivalence of many Irish towards drink in his liner notes, but by and large the compilation is a celebration of boozing that seems more than a little heavy handed in the 1990s. Columbia Records, one would guess, whipped up this package to take advantage of some dormant back catalog in a spirit of lowest common denominator fun. That's their right, but that doesn't mean you have to buy it. Finally, this recording was penalized one bone for the harsh, abrasive sound quality on about half the tracks.

the rest:

Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem ♪♪♪½ (Tradition, 1958/1996)
Lark in the Morning ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1960/1996)
(With Lou Killen) *Greatest Hits* ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1973)
(With Robbie O'Connell) *Clancy Brothers with Robbie O'Connell* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1982/1991)
Reunion ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1984)
Greatest Hits (Vanguard, 1987)
Live! (Vanguard, 1987)
(With David Hammond) *Irish Traditional Folk Songs* (Legacy, 1993)
Irish Songs ♪♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1993)
Irish Songs of Rebellion ♪♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1993)
(With Tommy Makem) *Irish Songs of Drinking and Rebellion* (Legacy, 1994)
Tunes 'n Tales of Ireland ♪♪ (Folk Era, 1994)
(With Tommy Makem) *Best of the Clancy Brothers* (Legacy, 1994)
Wrap the Green Flag ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994)
Ain't It Grand Boys: Unissued Gems ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1995)
(With Tommy Makem) *Greatest Irish Hits* (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Older but No Wiser ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1995)
(With Tommy Makem) *Home to Ireland: 28 Irish Favorites* (Madacy, 1996)
(With Tommy Makem) *28 Irish Pub Songs* (Madacy, 1996)
(With David Hammond) *The Clancy Brothers and David Hammond* (K-Tel, 1996)
(With David Hammond) *Irish Folk Song Favorites* (Madacy, 1996)
Christmas with the Clancy Brothers ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1997)
(With Tommy Makem) *Songs of Ireland and Beyond* (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: *Home Boys Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Teo Macero) matched the boys with Columbia's great producer Teo Macero (who also produced Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* among many other albums), finally allowing their songs to be framed in less rudimentary settings. This is a great collection of Clancy material, featuring the first appearance of Tommy Makem's classic "Four Green Fields," as well as his beautiful version of "The Bard of Armagh." Macero's use of harp, concertina, and fiddle framed these songs beautifully, providing a subtlety that the Clancy Brothers never had again. It's out of print, regrettably, but used copies are available.

solo outings:

Liam Clancy:

Liam Clancy ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1989)
The Dutchman ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)

Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy:

Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy ♪♪♪½ (Blackbird, 1976/Shanachie 1992)
We've Come a Long Way ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1989)
Live at the National Concert Hall ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1991)
Two for the Early Dew ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992)
In Concert ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)

influences:

The Weavers, Sarah Makem

Dubliners, Wolfe Tones, Fureys, the Pogues

see also: *Tommy Makem*

Tony Ziselberger

Clannad

Formed late 1960s, in County Donegal, Ireland.

Máire Brennan, vocals, harp, keyboards; Ciaran Brennan, vocals, basses, guitar, piano-synth; Paul Brennan, vocals, flute, whistles (1970–89); Padraig Duggan, mandolin, harmonica, guitar, vocals; Noel Duggan, guitar, vocals; Enya Brennan, keyboards, vocals (1980–82).

Clannad took its act to Ireland, and later the U.S., in a totally unconventional way. Siblings Máire, Ciaran, and Paul Brennan teamed up with their twin uncles Padraig and Noel Duggan to form a band. They wanted to play music that echoed the sounds they had grown up hearing in their corner of Ireland. The Brennans' father owned a tavern where he performed, and would send them on to give him a break between acts. They sang in Gaelic, which was not at all popular with the locals there. They took traditional tunes and arranged them for an entire band. This was not the "thing to do" at that time. Their big break came when they won first place (and a contract with Philips Records) at the local Letterkenny Folk Festival in 1970. It took several years to complete the album, however, because of a disagreement over the use of Gaelic lyrics on the record. The group won out in the end, and thus a legend in contemporary traditional music was born.

Clannad's music has gone through substantial changes over the group's lifetime. Even though the group's early work was controversial to the traditional crowd, today it is considered quite traditional. As the members of the band worked together, they experimented, learning what would work for the group, and trying new instrumentations and new sounds. Thus the group has evolved from what we would today term as traditional to a more New Age sort of sound, visiting various pop and rock stops in between. Its best-known song in the U.S. is "Theme from Harry's Game," which first appeared on a British TV show during the early '80s, later won *Billboard* magazine's World Music Song of the Year award, and was picked up for the movie *Patriot Games*. Clannad's popularity soared with this publicity, and its ghostly songs and lyrical voices are now well known to many American audiences. Despite the evolution of the group over the years, one can still hear the rugged hills and warring political factions of their original roots in Ireland through the dark tone and spiritual melodies.

what to buy: For those unfamiliar with Clannad's music, the best place to start would be *Magical Ring* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1983, prod. Richard Dodd). This is where the group makes the biggest transition from the traditional to the contemporary, largely with their original song "Theme from Harry's Game." Combining voices and synthesizers, the band's members developed a modern new sound for themselves. The immediate positive response by British audiences convinced them to continue this trend. If you find you like this style, continue with *Macalla* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1985, prod. Steve Nye), a lush musical offering that is mostly original work. If you prefer the more traditional material, the place to start is *Dulaman* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Blackbird, 1976/Shanachie, 1988, prod. Nicky Ryan), a recording with rich Gaelic songs and delightful Irish rhythms. Follow this with *Clannad 2* ♪♪♪♪½ (Blackbird, 1974/Shanachie 1988, prod. Donal Lunny), steeped in wonderful Irish tradition.

what to buy next: For those interested in more of an overview, Clannad also has a plethora of compilation recordings, all of which, of course, include "Harry's Game." The best of these is *Celtic Collections: Clannad* ♪♪♪½ (K-Tel, 1996), which shows Clannad's wide scope, from the classic traditional "Nil Sen La" to the highly synthesized "In a Lifetime." The main problem with this album is the lack of liner notes or information about the group, leaving new fans to find their own way to more of Clannad's music. A better presentation can be found on *Rogha: The Best of Clannad* ♪♪½ (RCA/BMG, 1997, prod. Ian Kimmer), which is a nice retrospective, but covers material only from *Magical Ring* to the present. *Clannad in Concert* ♪♪♪♪½ (Blackbird, 1979/Shanachie, 1982, prod. Nicky Ryan) is an excellent live recording from the early era.

what to avoid: Whether you are a fan of Clannad's earlier or more contemporary style, *Sirius* ♪½ (RCA/BMG, 1988, prod. Greg Ladanyi, Russ Kunkel) is an Americanized rock departure for Clannad. Only folk fans with heavy rock leanings are likely to appreciate this one. Unless you are interested in only sampling Clannad's music, or in collecting everything in print, the other compilations aren't worth the money: *PastPresent* ♪♪ (RCA/BMG, 1989, prod. various) spans the time from their modern venture with *Magical Ring* to the rock album *Sirius*; *Themes* **woof!** (Celtic Heartbeat, 1995, prod. various) combines a large assortment of movie and TV music Clannad has recorded over the years, including a very sappy version of Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now" and the overly dramatic love song from *Last of the Mohicans* called "I Will Find You."

the rest:
Crann Ull ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1980)
Fuaim ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1982)
Legend ♪♪½ (RCA, 1984)
Atlantic Realm ♪½ (BBC, 1989)
Anam ♪♪ (RCA, 1991)
Banba ♪♪ (BMG, 1993)
Lore ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1996)
Landmarks N/A (Atlantic, 1998)

worth searching for: Lovers of Clannad's more traditional work will enjoy the live album, *Ring of Gold* ♪♪♪♪ (Celtic Music, 1986). If anyone finds the out-of-print recording *Clannad* ♪♪♪♪ (Philips, 1973), buy it even if you don't want it! It is a collector's item, as the original master tapes reportedly have been lost.

solo outings:
Máire Brennan:
Máire ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1992)
Misty Eyed Adventures ♪♪ (Mesa, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Pentangle, the Bothy Band
▶▶ Enya, Loreena McKennit, Sarah McLachlan, Capercaillie

see also: *Enya*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Eric Clapton

Born March 30, 1945, in Surrey, England.

Eric Clapton's reputation as a guitarist and his stature in popular music have made it very difficult to assess his music dispassionately. This may explain why he has remained consistantly revered for the last 20 years, even though his output has been exceptionally mediocre—with occasional forays into outright wretchedness. Clear thinking is also lacking when it comes to Clapton's prowess as a blues guitarist. Although his work on *Bluesbreakers—John Mayall with Eric Clapton* is certainly impressive, it is so, in this writer's opinion, more because it revealed that a young white man could master the past (in the form of Freddie King, for Clapton) than because it broke much new ground. It is Clapton's subsequent work with Cream and Blind Faith that is truly brilliant and groundbreaking, and his sole studio album with Derek & the Dominoes, *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*, is a clear masterpiece. His first few solo albums range from very good to pretty good, as he seemed to be settling into a laid-back, singer-songwriter groove, something which he did pretty well, even if it displeased old fans waiting to hear fiery, innovative guitar soloing. In retrospect, these early and mid-1970s albums, most of which were largely dismissed at the time, sound like high points. Since then, he has made some truly disappointing records. In 1989, Clapton seemed content with the comfortable plateau he had reached, actually titling one album *Journeyman*. His next release, however, *Unplugged*, catapulted him to international stardom greater than any he had previously known. Clapton *can* still play, and he continues to sparkle sporadically, largely on guest appearances, like Chuck Berry's *Hail, Hail Rock and Roll*, Gatemouth Brown's *Long Way Home*, and Jimmie Vaughan's *Tribute to Stevie Ray Vaughan*, but he seems to have long since stalled creatively.

what to buy: Clapton's work on *John Mayall's Bluesbreakers* ♪♪♪♪ (Deram, 1966, prod. Mike Vernon) is explosive. Check it out if you want to hear why British fans at the time claimed—in graffiti all over London—"Clapton Is God." By the mid-1960s young white guitar players on both sides of the Atlantic had discovered the blues; Clapton in England, like Michael Bloomfield in the U.S., represented the best of this movement. On Derek & the Dominoes' *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1970, prod. Tom Dowd), Clapton was spurred to perhaps the greatest playing of his career by the presence of Duane Allman and a host of top-flight musicians. The results speak for themselves—a blues-rock classic. *461 Ocean Boulevard* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1974, prod. Tom Dowd) and *Slowhand* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1977, prod. Glyn Johns) are the best of Clapton's mellow-period albums.

what to buy next: As a career overview, *Crossroads* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1988, prod. Bill Levenson) is pretty much a model boxed set. The fourth CD, however, is filled with padding, illustrating Clapton's decline. Clapton's debut album, *Eric Clapton* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1970, prod. Delaney Bramlett), is loose and filled with great playing, though in many ways it sounds more like a Delaney Bramlett album than a Clapton recording.

what to avoid: *Behind the Sun* ♪ (Duck/Warner Bros., 1985, prod. Phil Collins) and *August* ♪ (Duck/Warner Bros., 1986, prod. Phil Collins) are vile albums: soulless, pandering, overdone, and inexcusable. *From the Cradle* ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1994, prod. Russ Titelman, Eric Clapton) was hailed as Clapton's return to his blues roots and includes lots of great guitar playing. Unfortunately, his all-English backing band can't tell a groove from a hole in the ground, and Clapton's singing is overemotive—patronizing the blues tradition he wants to celebrate. For lessons on how to effectively cover blues classics, he should take another listen to his own versions of Robert Johnson's "Steady Rollin' Man" (on *461 Ocean Boulevard*), Elmore

James's "The Sky Is Crying" (on *There's One in Every Crowd*), and Arthur Crudup's "Mean Old Frisco" (on *Slowhand*). These he took at his own speed and made his own, rather than slavishly trying to mimic the originals.

the rest:
The Rainbow Concert ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1973/1995)
There's One in Every Crowd ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1974)
E.C. Was Here ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1975)
No Reason to Cry ♪♪½ (Polydor, 1976)
Backless ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1978)
Just One Night ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1980)
Another Ticket ♪♪½ (Polydor, 1981)
Timepieces (The Best of Eric Clapton) ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1982)
Money and Cigarettes ♪♪ (Duck/Warner Bros., 1983)
Timepieces Vol. II: Live in the Seventies ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1983)
Journeyman ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1989)
24 Nights: Live From Albert Hall ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1991)
Rush ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1992)
Unplugged ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992)
Hits Of: Volume 1 (Sound Choice, 1993)
The Cream of Clapton (Polydor, 1995)
Crossroads 2 (Live in the Seventies) ♪♪½ (Polydor, 1996)
Early Stages ♪½ (Beacon, 1997)
Pilgrim ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Albert King, Freddie King, Jimi Hendrix, the Band, J.J. Cale
▶▶ Stevie Ray Vaughan, the Allman Brothers Band

Alan Paul

Gene Clark

Born November 17, 1941, in Tipton, MO. Died May 24, 1991.

Best known for his work as singer/songwriter for the original line-up of seminal folk-rock band the Byrds, Gene Clark grew up in the Ozarks playing folk, bluegrass, and surf music. As a member of the New Christy Minstrels, he played on a couple of their albums before moving to Los Angeles and meeting Roger McGuinn. After playing as a duo, Clark and McGuinn were soon joined by David Crosby and the nucleus of the Byrds was formed. Smartly melding the 12-string folky intensity of Bob Dylan with the infectious melodies of the Beatles and the British Invasion, the Byrds pretty much invented the jangly folk-rock sound that continues to thrive today. Clark wrote many of the key tracks on the Byrds' classic first three Columbia albums, including "I Feel a Whole Lot Better," "Set You Free This Time," and "Eight Miles High." The pressures of success were instrumental in Clark's leaving the band in 1966, just as its popularity was peaking, and he went on to record with the Gosdin Brothers (Vern and Rex) in 1967 and for a variety of labels (including A&M, Asylum, and RSO) under his own name during the 1970s. Clark was part of the reunion of the original five Byrds (Clark, McGuinn, Crosby, Chris Hillman, and Michael Clarke) in 1973 and of the short-lived McGuinn, Clark & Hillman in 1979. He continued to record sporadically before dying of natural causes in 1991. Over the years his songs have been recorded by Willie Nelson, the Eagles, Tom Petty, and Dinosaur Jr., to name a few.

what to buy: As part of its ambitious series of Byrds reissues, Columbia/Legacy has released the first eight Columbia Byrds albums, with bonus tracks. The first two, *Mr. Tambourine Man* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1965/1996, prod. Terry Melcher, reissue prod. Bob Irwin) and *Turn! Turn! Turn!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1965/1996, prod. Terry Melcher, reissue prod. Bob Irwin), are full of Clark compositions and his pensive, slightly mysterious vocals.

what to buy next: *Echoes* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1991, Digital producer Bob Irwin) collects the *Gene Clark with the Gosdin Brothers* release with six Clark-penned Byrds songs and three unreleased nuggets and gives a pretty good idea of Clark's considerable contribution to the burgeoning folk-rock movement.

the rest:
Firebyrd ♪♪♪ (Making Waves, 1984)
(With Carla Olson) *So Rebellious a Lover* ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1987/1992)
This Byrd Has Flown ♪♪♪½ (Monster Music, 1996)

worth searching for: *No Other* ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1974, prod. Thomas Jefferson Kaye), originally released by Asylum during that label's hit runs with Linda Ronstadt and Jackson Browne, is a brooding L.A. blend of country, folk, and rock with instrumental accompaniment from Richard Greene, Chris Hillman, Russ Kunkel, Michael Utley, and Stephen Bruton, among others. After topping the best-seller lists with the Byrds, it is the only Clark solo album to even dent the charts. The German label Line reissued the album in 1994.

influences:
◀◀ The Beatles, Bob Dylan
▶▶ R.E.M., Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

see also: *The Byrds*

David Sokol

Guy Clark

Born November 6, 1941, in Monahans, TX.

With a soft, Southern voice and terrific storytelling details that

artfully give the right impression at the right time, Clark has quietly become a hero for a generation of young country-folk songwriters. The key influence for Lyle Lovett, Robert Earl Keen Jr., Nanci Griffith, and many others has never been flashy, but he can knock you over with a rickety four-second lyrical observation. "I Don't Love You Much Do I"—the love song at the heart of *Boats to Build*—is as simple and refreshingly unclichéd as the Beatles' "I Wanna Hold Your Hand." There's a reason he's nicknamed "The Craftsman"; it's easy to picture Clark sanding down a piece of wood in the back yard and humming new songs as he builds a deck or a boat. After a career detour recording for Asylum, Clark has returned to his original label, Sugar Hill.

what to buy: *Boats to Build* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum/Elektra, 1992, prod. Guy Clark, Miles Wilkinson) contains wonderful stories about love, romance, and the folk singer Ramblin' Jack Elliot (a friend and occasional musical guest on Clark's albums). The soft, short songs express a wide range of emotions without much effort or instrumentation. His best-known album remains his debut, *Old No. 1* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1975, recorded by Al Pachucki, Tom Pick, Ray Butts), which features Clark's classic "Desperados Waiting for a Train" and fawning liner notes by pal Jerry Jeff Walker.

what to buy next: On *Dublin Blues* ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1994, prod. Miles Wilkinson, Guy Clark) lines like "I have seen the David, seen the Mona Lisa, too/And I have heard Doc Watson play 'Columbus Stockade Blues'" show that Clark's knack for detail is just getting more potent as he gets older.

what to avoid: *Old Friends* ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988, prod. Miles Wilkinson, Guy Clark) is overly cluttered with star cameos and, despite a few good songs, constrains Clark's natural voice and lyrics.

the rest:
Texas Cookin' ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1976)
The Essential Guy Clark ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1997)
Keepers: A Live Recording ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

worth searching for: Several of Clark's best albums, including *Guy Clark*, *The South Coast of Texas*, and *Better Days*, are long out of print. The two-disc set *Craftsman* ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1995, prod. various) brings them back, even if the experience isn't as rewarding as the concise, cohesive *Boats to Build*.

influences:
◀◀ Jerry Jeff Walker, Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Townes Van Zandt

▶▶ Lyle Lovett, Robert Earl Keen Jr., Emmylou Harris, Nanci Griffith, Rodney Crowell

Steve Knopper

Clawgrass

See: Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Vassar Clements

Born April 28, 1928, in Kincaid, SC.

Fiddler extraordinaire Vassar Clements started out as a session player and, at age 14, got a steady gig with Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. He honed his craft and soon developed a reputation not only for his blazing speed but also for his uncanny ability to make the instrument cry and sing. Other top bluegrass and country artists also enlisted his services, including Jim & Jesse, Faron Young, and the Earl Scruggs Revue. During the early 1970s he turned a newer, younger audience on to bluegrass music when he was featured on the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* and as part of Old & In the Way, a bluegrass outfit formed by the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia. What's unique about Clements is he's never allowed himself to be pigeonholed into performing strictly bluegrass and country. He is equally the master of blues, rock, and jazz and has graced the recordings of such diverse artists as John Hartford, Stephane Grappelli, the Allman Brothers, Paul McCartney, and Woody Herman.

what to buy: *Crossing the Catskills* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1972, prod. Vassar Clements, Mike Melford), *The Bluegrass Sessions* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977/1992), and *Grass Routes* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Bil VornDick) all feature excellent musicianship. In addition, check out Old & In the Way's *Breakdown* ♪♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1997, prod. David Grisman). Especially noteworthy on this release is Clements's fiddle masterpiece "Kissimee Kid" and Peter Rowan's "Midnight Moonlight," which features an extended jam in which Clements does some breathtaking things with the other musicians on a two-chord structure.

what to buy next: *Vassar's Jazz* ♪♪♪ (Winter Harvest, 1996, prod. Vassar Clements) teams Clements with the Dixie Dregs' Stephen Davidowski for some interesting fusion-style jazz. Old & In the Way's *That High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1996, prod. David Grisman) also showcases Clements's genre-bending fiddling antics as he shifts gears from simple folk accompaniment to breakneck bluegrass in a heartbeat.

the rest:
Hillbilly Jazz ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1974/1986)

(With Old & In the Way) *Old & In the Way* ♪♪♪♪ (Grateful Dead Records, 1975)
Hillbilly Jazz Rides Again ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
(With Stephane Grappelli) *Together at Last* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987)
Once in a While ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992)

worth searching for: *Superbow* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1975, prod. Buddy Killen) features some good, 1970-ish country boogie a la Lynyrd Skynyrd.

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Scotty Stoneman
▶▶ Mark O'Connor, Kenny Kosek

Rick Petreycik

Bill Clifton

Born William August Marburg, April 5, 1931, in Riverwood, MD.

Vocalist, guitarist, and autoharpist Bill Clifton is an atypical bluegrass pioneer in that he didn't grow up with the music and he holds an M.B.A. from the University of Virginia. He brought many traditional country songs and tunes into the bluegrass repertoire via his recordings for Starday and Mercury during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Clifton's inclusion of Carter Family material and other traditional fare and his fondness for autoharp, clawhammer banjo, and other traditional influences appealed to folkboomers of the time. Clifton has lived overseas intermittently for long stretches since 1963, when he moved to England; he also lived in the Philippines as a Peace Corps administrator during the late 1960s. He's always served as an ambassador for bluegrass in his travels. He recorded three albums for County Records during the 1970s.

what to buy: *The Early Years, 1957–1958* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Bill Clifton, Don Pierce) compiles many of Clifton's highly influential Mercury/Starday recordings, featuring all-star bands of both bluegrass pioneers (Ralph Stanley, Benny Martin, Curly Lambert) and prominent revivalists (Mike Seeger, John Duffey), as well as a decidedly folk-oriented repertoire that includes "Dixie Darlin'," "Darlin' Corey," and "I'll Be There, Mary Dear."

what to buy next: *River of Memories* ♪♪♪ (Mendota Music, 1994, prod. Bill Clifton) teams Clifton with mandolinist Jimmy Guidreau in an all-gospel effort. The songs are standards and the performances are nicely done. "Brighten the Corner Where You Are" is particularly nice.

the rest:
Where the Rainbow Finds Its End ♪♪½ (Elf Records, 1991)

worth searching for: Any and all of Clifton's LPs would be worth having if you could find them. His *Carter Family Memorial Album* released on Starday in the early '60s is still one of the best in that genre.

influences:
◀◀ The Carter Family, the Stanley Brothers
▶▶ The Country Gentlemen

Randy Pitts

Bruce Cockburn

Born May 27, 1945, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

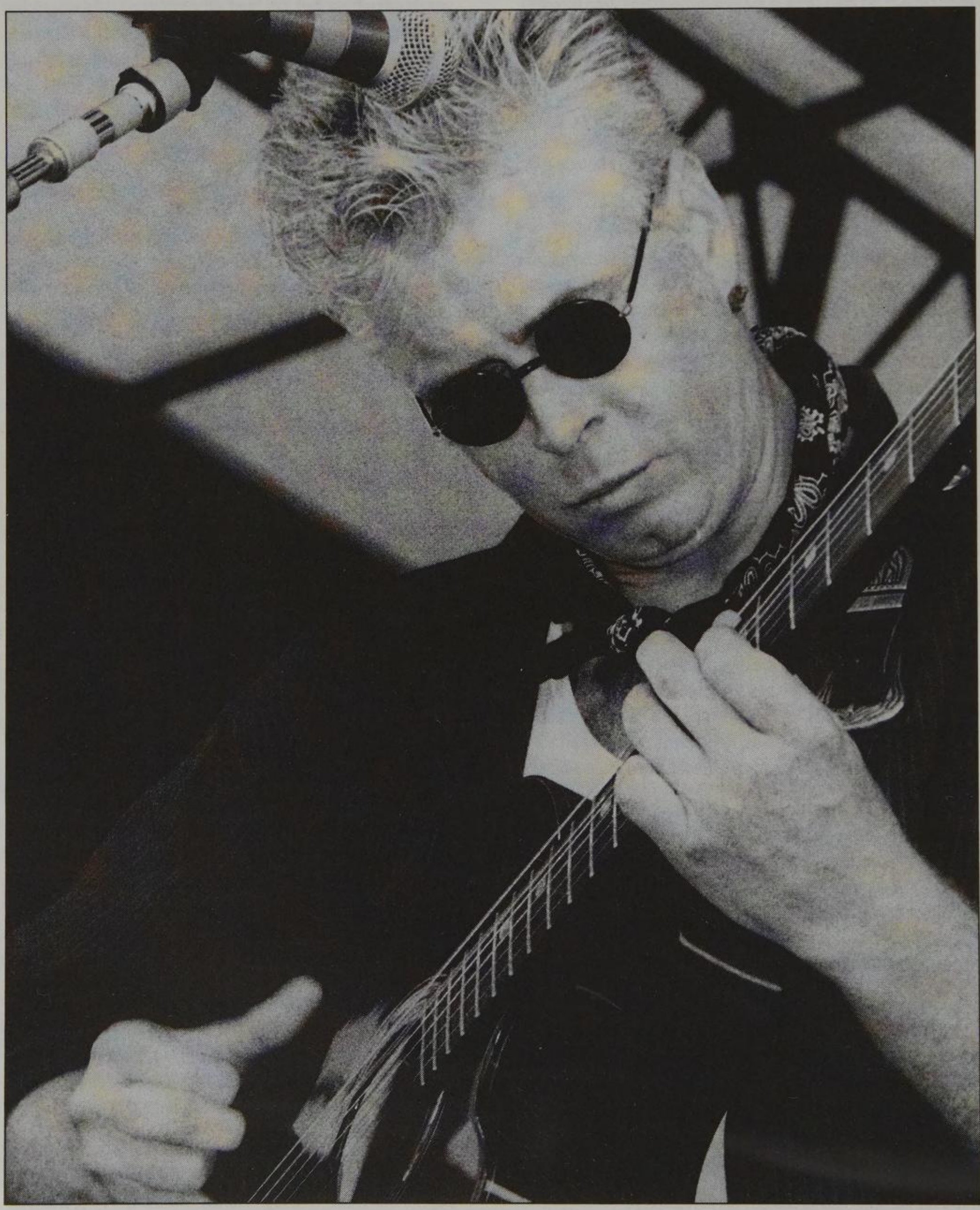
Bruce Cockburn has had a fascinating musical development, starting as a folk singer during the early '70s but eventually incorporating rock and world music elements to create a more complex style. His maturation came on 1979's *Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws*, when he was being influenced by reggae, jazz, and African pop while also discovering world politics (the album also featured his only American Top 40 hit, "Wondering Where the Lions Are"). He fully realized that sound with 1984's *Stealing Fire* and would eventually turn his music inward again to American folk and blues. Cockburn is limited as a vocalist, but his spiritual convictions shine through his music, making him an incredibly emotional singer at times.

what to buy: *Stealing Fire* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1984, prod. Jon Goldsmith, Kerry Crawford), which came out of Cockburn's visits to Central American refugee camps, is one of the most moving works of politically motivated rock ever created. Instead of launching into polemics, Cockburn personalizes the songs, singing about love during wartime in "Lovers in a Dangerous Time" and dreaming visions of vengeance in the shattering "If I Had a Rocket Launcher." Incorporating worldbeat rhythms into his own folk experience, Cockburn makes powerfully emotional melodies, even turning the line "Who put the bullet hole in Peggy's kitchen wall?" into an unforgettable hook.

what to buy next: Working with a band that included Booker T. Jones and Nashville fiddle virtuoso Mark O'Connor, Cockburn did for inner spiritual turmoil what he had done for Latin American politics in *Nothing but a Burning Light* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1991, prod. T-Bone Burnett), weaving original songs and old gospel blues into a phosphorescent statement of faith.

what to avoid: Though the albums aren't bad, Cockburn's two earliest releases—*Bruce Cockburn* ♪♪½ (True North, 1970, prod. Eugene Martynec) and *High Winds, White Sky* ♪♪½ (Columbia,

16 bruce cockburn



1971)—are folk singer/songwriter albums that exhibit little of the eclecticism that would make some of Cockburn's later work so involving.

the rest:
Sunwheel Dance ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1972)
Night Vision ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1973)
Salt, Sun & Time ♪♪½ (True North, 1974)
Joy Will Find a Way ♪♪♪½ (True North, 1975)
In the Falling Dark ♪♪½ (True North, 1977)
Circles in the Stream ♪♪½ (True North, 1977)
Further Adventures Of ♪♪½ (True North, 1978)
Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979)
Humans ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1980)
Inner City Front ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981)
The Trouble with Normal ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
World of Wonders ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1986)
Big Circumstance ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
Bruce Cockburn Live ♪♪♪ (True North, 1990)
Christmas ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1993)
Dart to the Heart ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994)
The Charity of Night ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1997)
You Pay Your Money and You Take Your Chance: Live ♪♪♪ (True North/Rykodisc, 1997)

worth searching for: *Mummy Dust* ♪♪♪½ (True North, 1981), and *Waiting for a Miracle* ♪♪♪½ (True North, 1987), two best-ofs from Cockburn's Canadian label, collect the singer's most popular works from different periods in his career.

influences:
◀◀ Gordon Lightfoot, Bob Dylan, the Weavers
▶▶ Mark Heard, Tragically Hip, Ian Tamblyn

Brian Mansfield

Leonard Cohen

Born September 21, 1934, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Leonard Cohen was a published poet and novelist in his native Canada well before Judy Collins first recorded his songs in 1966. He was 34 years old when his debut album appeared in 1968, and though he was often grouped with songwriters like Joni Mitchell, he seemed more like the wiser, worldlier uncle than one of the gang. His most popular early songs—"Suzanne" and "Bird on the Wire"—stamped him as the ultimate long-suffering romantic and erotic victim of countless beautiful women. Cohen made his great 1960s records largely in Nashville, using the same producer (Bob Johnston) and many of the same musicians as Johnny Cash and Bob Dylan. Although his songs haven't exactly slipped into the easy repertoires of Nashville, Cohen evidently sees himself as working in the great songwriting tradition of the field. As his lyrics grew darker and more obsessive through the '70s, his fans dwindled; he simply was too depressing, many complained. Yet Cohen continues to be rediscovered by younger listeners who are drawn to his poetic artistry as much as his romanticized gloom. And, in fact, his work over the past decade is some of his strongest. Two tribute albums—1991's *I'm Your Fan* and 1995's *Tower of Song* (with Cohen tunes done by R.E.M., Nick Cave, and the Pixies, among others)—revealed his influences on a new generation of songwriters.

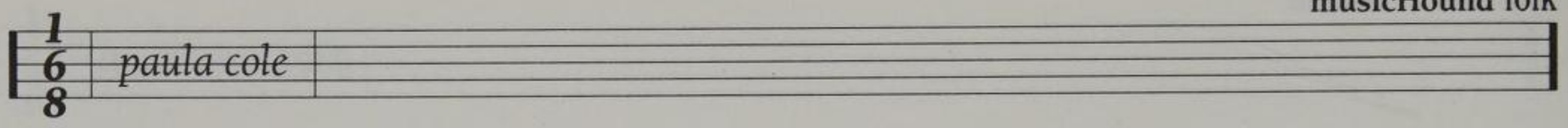
what to buy: The best place to start is with two albums that span nearly 30 years of Cohen's output. His debut, *Songs of Leonard Cohen* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1968, prod. John Simon) immediately established his credentials as an utterly original lyricist, while producer Simon's arrangements gave a romantic shimmer (which Cohen, at the time, detested) to the music's deep melancholia. On *The Future* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1992, prod. various) Cohen casts an unsparing eye toward the state of the world and the hopeless politicians, priests, and lovers who inhabit it. Musically, it's his most adventurous album ever—and it shows his wit is definitely improving in middle age. *Best of Leonard Cohen* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975, prod. various) is a fine introduction to his work, though it covers only his first five albums.

what to buy next: Both of his Nashville albums, *Songs from a Room* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969, prod. Bob Johnston) and *Songs of Love and Hate* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1971, prod. Bob Johnston), sympathetically capture Cohen's unique sensibilities in a spare, almost stark framework that underlines the basic bleak landscape of the songs.

the rest:
New Skin for the Old Ceremony ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975/1995)
Death of a Ladies' Man ♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Recent Songs ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979/1990)
Various Positions ♪♪ (Columbia, 1985/1995)
I'm Your Man ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1988)
Cohen Live ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994)
More Best of Leonard Cohen ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Hank Williams, Leadbelly, Jacques Brel, Bob Dylan

Bruce Cockburn **(© Stephen A. Ide)**



Nick Cave, Sisters of Mercy, R.E.M., Morrissey

Joel Selvin and Doug Pippin

Paula Cole

Born c. 1968, in Rockport, MA.

Singer-songwriter Paula Cole was raised in the kind of family that sang three-part harmony in the car. The daughter of artistic parents who lived in a trailer park, she studied jazz singing at the Berklee College of Music. After leaving Berklee, she pursued music as a livelihood. It didn't take long for her to get a break; in 1992–93, Peter Gabriel featured her on his "Secret World" tour. She released her debut album, *Harbinger*, in 1994. Its follow-up, *This Fire*, was anything but a sophomore slump; the single "Where Have All the Cowboys Gone" was a major hit and helped win Cole the 1998 Grammy for Best New Artist. Many musicians would envy Cole her steady upward path.

Perhaps because of her jazz training, Cole's sound is gutsier than that of fellow Lilith Fair participants Sarah McLachlan and Suzanne Vega, though her compositions are similarly grounded in love and introspection.

what's available: *Harbinger* ♪♪♪♪ (Imago, 1994, prod. Kevin Killen) contains some of Cole's most wrenching compositions, notably "I Am So Ordinary." It's much folkier than its follow-up: Cole puts on the stilettos for *This Fire* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996, prod. Paula Cole), which focuses on the protagonist's darker passions.

influences:

Tori Amos, Chet Baker, Peter Gabriel

Pamela Murray Winters

Michael Coleman

Born January 31, 1891, in Knockgrania, County Sligo, Ireland. Died January 4, 1945, in New York, NY.

Fiddle player Michael Coleman has been called Ireland's most influential traditional musician of this century. Born in an area of southeast County Sligo known for its extraordinary wealth of traditional music, Coleman learned his art from the many local fiddle players whose music was passed down through the generations since the early 1700s. When Coleman followed so many of his compatriots and emigrated to America in the early part of this century, he happened to arrive in New York at the very time when the nascent American record industry was looking to break into the ethnic market by offering recordings of music from the immigrants' native traditions. Along with other recently arrived Irish musicians, Coleman first recorded for small independent labels during the early 1920s, then for the major companies of the day—Columbia, Victor—after 1925, and finally for Decca during the late '30s and early '40s. When his 78-rpm records started to arrive in Ireland, often brought as presents with record players by emigrants returning home, the news of the fiddle player's uncommon abilities and superb artistry spread like wildfire. Reactions to them were varied, ranging from admiration and emulation to discouragement and disgust, as some of the country fiddlers, sensing they could not compete, put their fiddles away forever. However, the news of that success did not escape the attention of British record companies, which soon started recording and distributing "genuine Irish music" on their own labels, thus often rescuing from oblivion some of the regional styles that were threatened by the sudden appetite for Sligo fiddle music. Still, the influence exerted by Coleman and fellow Sligo fiddle players James Morrison and Paddy Killoran through their recordings can be felt to this day in how Irish traditional music is learned, performed, and appreciated.

what's available: Although a few LP and cassette reissues of Michael Coleman's recordings were made available in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, only selected sides can now be found on a few CD anthologies. An early, acoustical recording of "The Monaghan Jig" was included on *From Galway to Dublin* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Dick Spottswood, Philippe Varlet), while Coleman's fiery 1925 version of "Jackson's Reel" can be found on *Milestone at the Garden* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Philippe Varlet, Dick Spottswood). Other great Coleman sides, like "Lord McDonald/Ballinasloe Fair" and the "Tarbolton" medley, are among a slew of other classic recordings of Irish American music from the 1920s and '30s on the wonderful two-CD set *The Wheels of the World* ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1996, prod. Richard Nevins).

worth searching for: The most complete CD reissue of Coleman's recordings currently available is a two-CD set produced in Ireland and carried by some specialized American stores. *Michael Coleman* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn/Viva Voce, 1992, prod. Harry Bradshaw) contains no less than 48 of Coleman's influential instrumental sides. It is packaged with a 113-page booklet, the product of many years of research by RTE producer Harry Bradshaw, on the life and times of the master fiddle player. The detailed biography contains excerpts from interviews of relatives and musical colleagues, a wealth of illustra-

tions, and a complete discography of Coleman's original recordings.

influences:

Philip O'Beirne, P.J. McDermott, James Gannon, Paddy Curley, Johnny Gorman

Kevin Burke, Dervish

Philippe Varlet

Albert Collins

Born October 3, 1932, in Leona, TX. Died November 24, 1993, in Las Vegas, NV.

It's cool to like Texas now, but not long ago much of the U.S. regarded it as a boondock too full of trailer trash and chainsaw murderers to warrant visiting. This, in spite of its being turf to a bluesman the caliber of Albert Collins, who first came to light with "Frosty" (Kangaroo, 1958), a regional hit that established the "cool sound" he got from his Telecaster. He did some more obscure 45s and cut LPs for Imperial and Blue Thumb but didn't really hit his stride until he signed with Alligator in 1978. Collins got most of his press for his shrill, icy guitar tactics, but he also sang well, was a tremendous showman, and wrote some brilliant (and often brilliantly witty) material. Collins and his Icebreakers (who at various times included A.C. Reed, Aron Burton, and Debbie Davies) toured relentlessly, bowling over nation after nation and developing a rep as a bitch to have to play after on a show. Few artists as prolific as Collins have anywhere near his consistency of high quality on their recordings; he simply never recorded a dud. Even on the inevitable live CDs on which his band members were all Euros he'd probably never rehearsed with, *he* sounded great. His death (from cancer) was shockingly premature—but toast his life in the time-honored Texas way: pound down a couple cold ones, give the volume knob an injudicious crank, and groove to his indomitable music.

what to buy: *Frostbite* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1980, prod. Bruce Iglauer, Dick Shurman, Casey Jones) has tons of all the elements that made Collins great: heaps of his vaunted guitar intensity, cool covers (Johnnie Taylor's "If You Love Me Like You Say," which he often performed live, and a killing rendition of Johnny Morissette's "Brick"), and humor ("Don't Go Reaching across My Plate"). There's also an absolute masterpiece called "Snowed In," wherein the Texan describes trying to start his car in an icy Chicago winter. He creates guitar sound effects with jaw-dropping accuracy, particularly that suspenseful grinding you hear when you crank your engine and it sounds like it'll be a no-go. This goes on for 9 minutes and 12 seconds. When Collins finally gets "the car" started, it's an almost orgiastic liftoff—and one of the best items in the Alligator catalog. Blues pundits of yore "dissed" Collins's Imperial output, which is now universally respected for its concise but magnificent instrumentals and sly vocal performances. Beginning in 1969 he cut three LPs for the label, and *Complete Imperial Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1991, prod. Bill Hall), a 100-minute, two-disc set with extensive liner notes and photos, comprises them all. Quintessential Collins in concert is *Frozen Alive!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1981, prod. Bruce Iglauer, Dick Shurman), on which he is backed by a kick-butt fivesome that includes wallpaper-peeling saxophonist A.C. Reed.

what to buy next: Three of the same Icebreakers present on *Frozen Alive!*—Reed, drummer Casey Jones, bassist J.B. Gayten—were on board when Collins cut the torrid Tokyo outing *Live in Japan* ♪♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1984, prod. Bruce Iglauer). "Tired Man" is a standout, and there's a 9-minute version of "Stormy Monday" that's so forceful you forget how shop-worn the song is.

the rest:

Truckin' with Albert Collins ♪♪♪½ (Blue Thumb, 1969/MCA, 1991)
Ice Pickin' ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1978)
Don't Lose Your Cool ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1983)
Cold Snap ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1986)
(With Robert Cray and Johnny Copeland) *Showdown* ♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1986)
Molten Ice ♪♪♪ (Red Lightnin', 1992)
Collins Mix (The Best of Albert Collins) ♪♪♪½ (Point Blank, 1993)
Albert Collins & Barrelhouse Live ♪♪♪½ (Munich, 1995)
Live '92–93 ♪♪♪♪½ (Pointblank, 1996)

influences:

Willow Brown, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, T-Bone Walker

Mark May, Anson Funderburgh

Tim Schuller

Judy Collins

Born May 1, 1939, in Seattle, WA.

Judy Collins seemed to be the great earth mother of folk—yet her roots were in classical music. Collins grew up in Denver and studied piano with the pianist and conductor Antonia Brico. At age 13, Collins gave her debut piano performance with the Denver Businessmen's Symphony. However, at age 16, she gave up classical for folk music. She married Peter Taylor in 1957, and they had a son, Clark. (They divorced in 1962, and Clark Taylor

judy collins

died in 1992.) Soon afterward, she began performing professionally in Boulder. By 1960 the family had moved to Chicago, where she broke into the big time. Later, after she moved to New York and became a part of the Greenwich Village scene, she was signed by Elektra, when it was still the house that Jac Holzman built. Collins always had a good ear for tunes, picking traditional folk songs that she could make her own. By her third album, she was more politically involved and recording protest tunes by the likes of Bob Dylan and Tom Paxton. She quickly became even more stylistically adventurous, opening up her repertoire with theater music and art songs. She championed such then-unknown songwriters as Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell. She made charming albums with classically oriented arrangements, and eventually tried electric back-ups as well. In 1972, she took a year off her musical career to produce and co-direct a documentary on Brico called *Antonia: A Portrait of a Woman*, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 1975. Collins's voice has suffered a bit as the years have gone by, but she continues to exhibit a good ear for songs.

what to buy: *Forever . . . The Judy Collins Anthology* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1997, prod. Judy Collins, others), a two-CD set, sums up Collins's move from folk chanteuse to art-song diva. It's not in chronological order, so there are stylistic shifts from piece to piece, but the song sequences make sense. Although it includes many of Collins's hits and signature tunes, it's not a greatest-hits anthology—"Amazing Grace" and "Hard Times for Lovers" are among the conspicuously absent titles. *Wildflowers* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1967, prod. Mark Abramson) boasts the most interesting song sequence of any Collins album—including "Both Sides Now," "Michael from Mountains," and "La Chanson des Vieux Amants"—bolstered by Joshua Rifkin's rich, baroque-influenced arrangements, which set off Collins's soprano well. *In My Life* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966, prod. Jac Holzman, Mark Abramson) is the album on which Collins first experimented with bigger arrangements and theater music ("Marat/Sade"). The shift from acoustic folk proved perfectly suited to her voice.

what to buy next: With such tasty numbers as Richard Fariña's "Pack Up Your Sorrows," Eric Andersen's "Thirsty Boots," and Gordon Lightfoot's "Early Morning Rain" (as well as a slew of Dylan), *Fifth Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1965, prod. Jac Holzman, Mark Abramson) stands among Collins's best. *Who Knows Where the Time Goes* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1968, prod. David Anderle) is another great collection that includes Cohen's "Bird on the Wire" and Ian Tyson's "Someday Soon." *Whales & Nightingales* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1970, prod. Mark Abramson) is a bit startling in its diversity, containing her hit version of "Amazing Grace" and "Farewell to Tarwathie," a Scottish whaling song that is "backed up" by humpback whale "singing."

what to avoid: On *Hard Times for Lovers* ♪ (Elektra, 1979, prod. Gary Klein), the arrangement for the title song just follows the late '70s crowd, the album reeks of the smug "El Lay" atmosphere, Collins isn't singing well, and the collection seems phoned in.

the rest:
Recollections ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1969)
Living ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1971)
Colors of the Day: The Best of Judy Collins ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1972)
True Stories and Other Dreams ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1973)
Judith ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1975)
Times of Our Lives ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1982)
Home Again ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1984)
So Early in the Spring: The First 15 Years ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1987)
Sanity and Grace ♪♪♪ (Delta, 1989)
Fires of Eden ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1990)
Wind beneath My Wings ♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1992)
Judy Sings Dylan . . . Just Like a Woman ♪♪♪½ (Geffen, 1994)
Shameless ♪♪♪ (Mesa/Bluemoon, 1994)
Come Rejoice! Judy Collins Christmas ♪♪♪ (Mesa/Bluemoon, 1994)
Live at Newport ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1995)
Christmas at Biltmore Estate ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1997)

worth searching for: *Maid of Constant Sorrow* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1961, prod. Jac Holzman), *Golden Apples of the Sun* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1962, prod. Jac Holzman), and *Judy Collins #3* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1963, prod. Jac Holzman, Mark Abramson) are out of print and available only on vinyl. We can hear Collins at her bare essence in the simplest of settings, a woman and her guitar, on her first two albums. On the third album, she uses arrangements by Jim McGuinn (he who became Roger and the master of the Byrds) and begins her experimentation with more contemporary material.

influences:
◀◀ Mimi and Richard Fariña, Joan Baez
▶▶ Joni Mitchell

Salvatore Caputo

Judy Collins **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Lui Collins

Born 1950, in Barre, VT.

The changing seasons of New England are musically captured

by Vermont-born and Connecticut-based songstress Lui Collins. Collins's unique poetic vision, emotional soprano vocals, and tradition-rooted arrangements enable her to make a very personal musical statement. Although she initially sang covers of Joni Mitchell and Joan Baez songs, Collins has continued to expand her sources. Her albums and performances have included memorable versions of songs by Jack Hardy, Greg Brown, Bob Franke, the Incredible String Band, and the late Stan Rogers. Collins, whose own compositions include "Distance," "I'll Know the Time," "Born and Bred," "January Thaw," and "Awaiting the Snow," began performing in Connecticut, where she attended the state's university. In the mid-1970s she appeared frequently on the folk coffeehouse circuit in a duo with Horace Williams Jr. Collins has found her most natural format as a soloist. Her 1978 debut album, *Made in New England*, established her as a major voice in contemporary folk music. Her second album, *Baptism of Fire*, was recorded shortly after marrying stone mason and then-cabinet maker, Rod Zandler, moving to Goshen, Connecticut, and giving birth to the first of three children. *There's a Light*, Collins's third effort, was produced by ex–Silly Wizard fiddler Johnny Cunningham and included a thrilling ballad, "Ballad of the White Seal Maid," which she wrote with fantasy/children's book author Jane Yolen. Collins was at the height of her popularity in 1986 when she announced her retirement from music to help raise her children, including her youngest son, Tim, who was born with a club foot. During her eight-year hiatus, she studied various forms of bodywork and healing techniques at the Centre of Light, a spiritual retreat in western Massachusetts. By 1993, however, she had written enough new songs to record a new album. The result, *Moondancer*, subtitled "The Journey of the Child Within," was a masterpiece of self-exploration and discovery. Collins's first album of children's songs, *North of Mars*, was sparked by her involvement with the Grumbling Gryphons Children's Theater Arts Camp, for whom she had composed two songs—"Peace on Earth" and "Sedna," based on an Inuit myth. The album received a *Parent's Choice* honor award and several tunes were featured on the Fall 1995 issue of *Shoofly*, a children's cassette magazine. With her 1997 album, *Stone by Stone*, Collins again successfully aimed her songs at adults.

what to buy: Collins's return after an eight-year retreat from music, *Moondancer* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Molly Gamblin, 1993, prod. Darleen Wilson) remains her most effective outing. Reflecting on her long absence, Collins takes the listener on a deeply psychological journey through memories of child abuse ("God Bless the Children"), anger ("Invocation"), and spirituality ("Holy Child" and "Move to the Now"). The lightest moments on the album come during "Mermaid's Lullaby," Collins's second collaboration with Yolen.

what to buy next: *Stone by Stone* ♪♪♪½ (Molly Gamblin, 1997, prod. Doug Kupper) continues Collins's multi-ethnic musical exploration. Accompanying herself on acoustic guitar and joined by Jeff Pevar (electric guitar, mandolin, dobro, lap steel), Frank Gravis (fretless bass, 6-string and electric bass), Rob Gottfreid (drums), and guest musicians including David Darling (cello), and Billy Novick (pennywhistle, soprano sax), Collins sets her earth-rooted soprano to a warm, supportive, setting. In addition to a chilling interpretation of Fred Small's ballad, "Guinevere and the Fire," the album includes eleven original compositions and a song based on a Swahili greeting ("Maisha Ni Safi") as well as a song inspired by the plight of the Native Americans.

the rest:
Made in New England ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1978/Green Linnet, 1985)
Baptism of Fire ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1981/Green Linnet, 1985)
There's a Light ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1985)
North of Mars ♪♪♪ (Molly Gamblin, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins, Malvina Reynolds
▶▶ Patty Larkin, Lorraine Lee Hammond, Sally Rogers, Claudia Schmidt, Bob Franke

Craig Harris

Mitzie Collins

Born August 29, 1941, in Dallas, TX.

This New York recording artist is known for her presentations of traditional songs and tunes on the hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer, and banjo. Involved in music since she was five years old, Collins grew up in Dallas, Texas, then attended one year at Southern Methodist University followed by Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where she completed her degree with a major in piano. She also learned to play the organ and took a job as a church organist, which is where she eventually wandered from her classical training into folk music, as the church was taking part in a new trend of offering a "folk mass." Collins saw an advertisement for a mountain dulcimer and promptly ordered one from Jean Ritchie. In 1969 Collins went to the Fox Hollow Folk Festival to see Jean Ritchie perform, and it was there she was introduced to the hammered dulcimer in a performance by Bill Spence and Howie Mitchell.

Since then she has become a nationally recognized performer on the dulcimer, traveling to many festivals. She is also known for her extensive programs for children, which resulted in a 1985 United Way Award for Direct Service in Arts and Culture. Collins's early playing focused on fiddle tunes, but over the years has included many favorite hymns and most recently, a recording of Scottish tunes. In 1976 Collins and her husband, Tom Bohrer, founded Sampler Records Ltd., an independent record label specializing in acoustic folk music. As excellent entrepreneurs who are willing to take chances, the founders of Sampler were among the first label owners to offer folk music on compact disc, in 1985. These days, Sampler Records offers an impressive catalog of recordings representative of a variety of cultures, including the British Isles, Shaker music, and traditional music indigenous to New York state. Their catalog can be orderd by calling 1-800-537-2755, or by writing to P. O. Box 19270, Rochester, NY 14619.

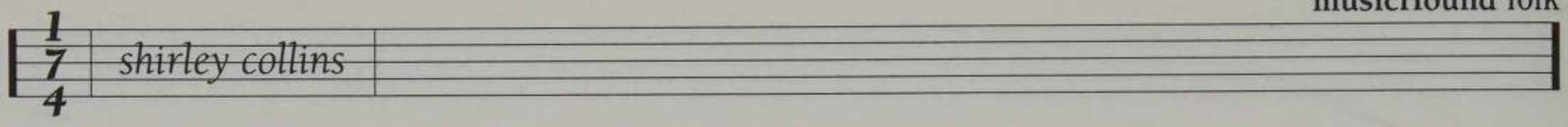
what to buy: *Scotland the Brave* ♪♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1997, prod. Thomas M. Bohrer) is Collins's newest solo hammered dulcimer recording and is a "musical celebration of Scottish history and the indomitable Scottish spirit." Selections include a beautiful rendition of "Amazing Graze" and a spirited medley of jigs, "A Hundred Pipers/My Wife's a Wanton Wee Thing/Cock o' the North." The clarity of this hammered dulcimer recording is exceptional, with Collins occasionally overlaying a second or third hammered dulcimer part. This CD (as well as most Sampler recordings) has comprehensive liner notes about each tune.

what to buy next: Drawing on Collins's love for hymns, *Be Thou My Vision* ♪♪♪½ (Sampler Records, 1991, prod. Sampler Records) is a collection of 23 favorites, played instrumentally with fellow hammered dulcimer recording artist, Esther Kreek, who is from Kansas City, Missouri. In addition to the hammered dulcimer, Collins adds piano and pump organ. Talented musicians Kinlock Nelson (guitar) and Glennda Dove (flute) add accompaniment to a variety of selections, including "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" and a closing medley of "Now the Day Is Over," "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," and "God Be with You Till We Meet Again," all arranged tastefully and played with reverence. *Sackett's Harbor* ♪♪♪½ (Sampler Records, 1988, prod. Jim Kimball, Mitzie Collins) is the result of the work of music historian Jim Kimball, who plays fiddle, pump organ, Jew's harp, and dulcimer on this recording along with Mitzie Collins (dulcimer), Betsy Gamble (fiddle), Glenn McClure (dulcimer), Karen Park (cello), and Eric Rounds (fiddle). Kimball has spent years interviewing traditional performers and studying early tune books, local manuscripts, dance cards, and diaries, and his scholarship gives this recording an authenticity of sound that cannot be found elsewhere. There is a companion tune book available, complete with historic information on each tune.

editor's choice
13 english folk-rock albums

Fairport Convention, *Liege and Lief* (A&M)
Richard & Linda Thompson, *I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight* (Hannibal/Carthage)
Albion Band, *Rise Up Like the Sun* (Hannibal)
Various Artists, *Morris On* (Hannibal)
Linda Thompson, *Dreams Fly Away* (Rykodisc)
Sandy Denny, *The Best of Sandy Denny* (Hannibal)
Fairport Convention, *Fairport Chronicles* (A&M)
The Strawbs, *Hero and Heroine* (A&M)
Steeleye Span, *Commoners Crown* (Chrysalis)
Paul Brady, *Hard Station* (21 Records)
Richard & Linda Thompson, *Shoot Out the Lights* (Hannibal)
Steeleye Span, *Please to See the King* (Shanachie)
Home Service, *Alright Jack* (Fledg'ling)

the rest:
Sounds Like Fun ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1982) (cassette only)
Ornaments ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1985)
Nowell ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1986)
St. Patrick's Day in the Morning ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1989)
Reach to the Sky ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1989) (cassette only)
Rejoice ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1990)
Mark Hamilton, Songs and Tunes from Wolf Run ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1992)
Love Is Little ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1992)
Joy of Angels ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1995)
White Dulcimer Christmas ♪♪♪ (Sampler Records, 1996)



influences:

Jean Ritchie, Bill Spence, Paul Van Arsdale, Roxanne Ziegler

Kendra Ward, Rick Thum, Maggie Sansone

Heidi Cerrigione

Shirley Collins /Shirley and Dolly Collins /Etchingham Steam Band

Shirley Collins born July 5, 1935, in Hastings, Sussex, England. Dorothy (Dolly) Collins born March 6, 1933, in Hastings, Sussex, England; died September 22, 1995, in Balcombe, West Sussex, England. Etchingham Steam Band formed c. 1974, in Etchingham, Sussex, England; disbanded c. 1975.

Etchingham Steam Band: Shirley Collins, vocals, hobby horse; Vic Gammon, vocals, concertina, melodeon, banjo; Ian Holder, accordion; Ashley Hutchings, acoustic bass guitar, vocals, tambourine; Terry Potter, mouth organ.

Shirley Collins is one of Britain's greatest folk singers. Her lilting, wavering soprano epitomizes the spirit of British folk music: unpolished but full of magic and grace. Collins first gained attention as a singer when she worked with Alan Lomax on his collection of southern American ballads (many of which have antecedents in Great Britain and Ireland). Her first album, *False True Lovers* (now out of print), was released in 1959. Sister Dolly joined her as accompanist and arranger for *The Sweet Primeroses*, released in 1967. Her work on Harvest, a label known for progressive rock, indicated the growing fusion of traditional and contemporary elements in British music. Collins contributed directly to this fusion by recording with (and marrying) Ashley Hutchings. After their divorce, she retired from music, only to reappear during the late 1980s. Collins both reinforced and pushed the bounds of tradition throughout her career: singing parodies with Les Barker's Mrs. Ackroyd Band, introducing early instruments in work with David Munrow and Phil Pickett, and contributing to the major folk fusion album with Davey Graham, *Folk Roots, New Routes*.

what to buy: Shirley Collins and the Albion Band's *No Roses* ♪♪♪♪♪ (BBC, 1971/Mooncrest, 1991) is unquestionably a folk-rock album, thanks largely to the presence of such Fairporters and Steeleyes as Richard Thompson, Simon Nicol, Maddy Prior, and Dave Mattacks. In fact, 25 of Britain's best musicians of the time worked on the album, making it an essential for any fan of the genre. The most chilling selection is "Murder of Maria Marten," based on the same nineteenth-century murder case that inspired Tom Waits's "Murder in the Red Barn." For an unplugged experience, try the *Etchingham Steam Band* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fledg'ling, 1995). In the liner notes to the Etchingham Steam Band's only album, Collins recounts how she simulated the sound of morris dancers onstage by sewing bells to her children's hobby horses and shaking them (losing many bells per performance). The band was formed during the power cuts of the mid-1970s as a low-tech performing outfit; this album brings together recordings from various concerts and is a lighthearted ramble through Britain's thicket of dance music, ballads, and wassails.

what to buy next: Phil Pickett, sending liner-note readers to the unabridged dictionary, plays recorders, shawns, curtal, cornett, and gittern on Shirley and Dolly Collins's *For As Many As Will* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1978/Hokey Pokey, 1993, prod. Tony Engle), but one of the best tracks is a moving cover of Richard Thompson's "Never Again" with Shirley on vocals and Dolly on piano. This was the last of the Collins sisters' three albums together, and it's a fitting tribute to Dolly's sensitive keyboard work and arrangements.

the rest:

(With Dolly Collins) *Love, Death and the Lady* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1974)
The Sweet Primeroses ♪♪♪♪

worth searching for: Collins, then recording as Shirley Hutchings, is an important part of the group effort *Morris On* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1972/Hannibal, prod. John Wood). She sings on two tracks: "The Willow Tree" and "Staines Morris," adding class and delicacy to an otherwise rollicking, testosterone-fueled collection.

influences:

Jean Ritchie, Young Tradition

Kate Rusby, Eliza Carthy

see also: *Ashley Hutchings, Young Tradition*

Pamela Murray Winters

Christine Collister

Born December 28, 1961, in Douglas, Isle of Man, United Kingdom.

Best known for her duo work with Clive Gregson, Christine Collister is one of England's best contemporary vocalists. While singing in bars during the early 1980s, she was discovered by Gregson; the two subsequently joined Richard Thompson's band for several powerful tours of the United States and Europe. Gregson and Collister released five albums and were consistently popular live performers until their professional relationship

ended in 1992. Besides her work with Gregson, Collister has sung with other duos and trios, including the Jailbirds with Barb Jungr and Heather Joyce. She has sung on film and television soundtracks (including BBC's *Life and Loves of a She Devil* and *Hard Cash*) and provided lead and backup vocals on albums by Lee Collinson, Loudon Wainwright III, and Bert Jansch.

what to buy: *Blue Aconite* ♪♪♪♪ (Fledg'ling, 1996, prod. Christine Collister) is a superb selection of songs, excellently arranged, that perfectly suit Collister's big, smoked-glass voice. Collister co-wrote two of the tracks, suggesting more original songs to come. *Live* ♪♪♪½ (Fledg'ling/Green Linnet, 1994) is less consistent; Collister seems to be testing her mettle as a soloist. Her tendency to go over the top (but if you had that voice, wouldn't you do the same?) crushes Rickie Lee Jones's "Last Chance Texaco." Her version of "Love Me Like a Man" is spot-on, and "The Bird That I Held in My Hand" and "Warm Love Gone Cold" redeem the rest of the album.

the rest:
Horizon ♪♪♪♪ (Fledg'ling, 1997)

worth searching for: *The World Is a Wonderful Place: The Songs of Richard Thompson* ♪♪♪♪½ (Hokey Pokey/Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Mr. Hokey, Mr. Pokey) includes Collister's marvelous version of Thompson's "How Will I Ever Be Simple Again."

influences:
◀◀ Sandy Denny, Maura O'Connell
▶▶ Sally Barker

see also: *Clive Gregson*

Pamela Murray Winters

Shawn Colvin

Born Shanna Colvin, January 10, 1958, in Vermillion, SD.

Shawn Colvin picked up her first guitar when she was 10, and after high school she chose to pursue music full-time. During the '70s she moved to Texas to join a swing band, the Dixie Diesels, then spent a few years in San Francisco before settling in New York. There she played in the Buddy Miller Band before deciding to start working on her own. Influenced by the likes of Joni Mitchell, and later, Suzanne Vega—a patron of sorts who used Colvin for backup vocals on the hit "Luka" and as an opening act on tour—Colvin's poetic lyrics, flawless finger-picking, and unusual guitar tunings gave her songs a distinctive character; and her voice, breathy and gentle, is capable of swelling with strength and emotion when necessary. An independently released live album in 1988 attracted attention from the record industry, as did persistent gigging on the East Coast club circuit. Though she tends to take her time between albums, Colvin remains a writer and performer of rare and special abilities.

what to buy: Colvin's debut, *Steady On* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia 1989, prod. Shawn Colvin, John Leventhal, Steve Addabbo), offers an excellent balance of Colvin's crystal clear vocals, poetic lyrics, and folk influences, along with the accompaniment of a full band and the contributions of guests David Sanborn, Bruce Hornsby, and Vega. Although nearly every song is a gem, the album closes on a yawn with the string-laden "The Dead of Night"—which was, unfortunately, a sign of things to come.

what to avoid: *Cover Girl* ♪ (Columbia 1994, prod. Shawn Colvin, Steuart Smith, David Kahne) seemed promising on paper, with Colvin covering songs by others, including personal favorites from Bob Dylan, the Police, Talking Heads, and Tom Waits. But she doesn't deliver. The same over-production that burdened "The Dead of Night" hampers Colvin's renditions on this album. Take "Every Little Thing (He) Does Is Magic," in which lush strings divert the ears from her beautiful guitar picking. In concert she has done these songs with just her acoustic guitar, and that's been fine. Sometimes more isn't better.

the rest:
Fat City ♪♪ (Columbia, 1992)
A Few Small Repairs ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1996)

worth searching for: *Live '88* ♪♪♪♪ (Plump Records, 1988/1995, prod. Carol Young) is Colvin's live independent album, which has been reissued on CD. Many of the songs wound up on *Steady On*, and while we miss some of the arrangements from that album, Colvin still carries the songs with the purity of her guitar and vocals.

influences:
◀◀ Tom Waits, Joni Mitchell, Suzanne Vega
▶▶ Jewel, Amanda Marshall, Natalie Merchant

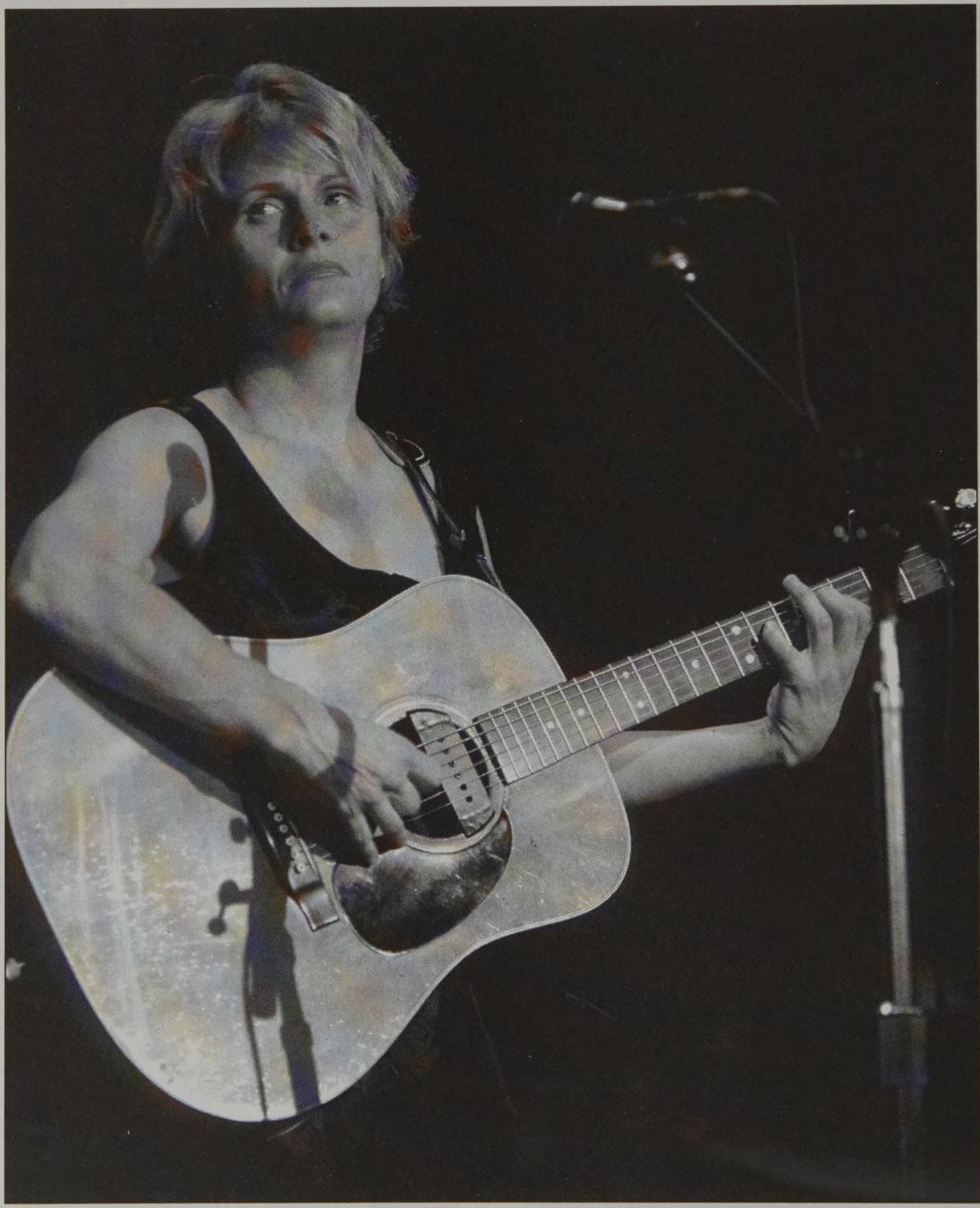
Joshua Zarov

Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Formed 1967, in Ann Arbor, MI.

Commander Cody (George Frayne), piano, vocals; John Tichy, guitar; West Virginia Creeper, steel guitar (1967–70); Billy C. Farlow, harmonica, vocals (1968–76); Bill Kirchen, guitar (1968–76); Bruce Bar-

17 commander cody & his lost planet airmen



low, bass (1968–76); Lance Dickerson, drums (1968–76); Andy Stein, fiddles, saxophone (1968–76); Bobby Black, steel guitar (1970–76); others.

A band before its time, Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen can be seen as the precursor to the Austin music scene of the 1980s. In fact, Austin kingpins first moved to San Francisco under the influence of the Cody outfit and worked clubs there as a kind of satellite of the pioneering rockabilly/Western swing revivalists. The band's first four classic albums laid the groundwork for a whole wing of retro-revisionists in country-rock, as far away stylistically as possible from the slick Los Angeles hybrid practiced by the Byrds, Poco, and others. Cody's crew specialized in a loose-jointed, rollicking brand of barroom boogie that sounded like it had been steeped in beer fumes in front of rowdy crowds as ready to fight as dance. Despite scoring a Top 10 hit ("Hot Rod Lincoln") off its debut album, Cody's band was never accorded appropriate acclaim, and the original players splintered in disarray in 1976—though the Commander continues to record and tour with an always changing squadron of Airmen.

what to buy: The first three albums have been cannibalized by an inconsistent collection, *Too Much Fun: The Best of Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1990, prod. various).

what to buy next: The fourth album, a jaunty concert recording originally titled *Live from Deep in the Heart of Texas* has been reissued as *Sleazy Roadside Stories* ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1995, prod. S. Jarvis), hard evidence of the original lineup's swinging brand of country and rock 'n' roll.

what to avoid: Without the balance of the Lost Planet Airmen personalities, Cody's solo albums have suffered from contrivance and the unmitigated dominance of his personality, none more so than *Let's Rock* ♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1987), despite the presence of Airmen Barlow and Kirchen.

the rest:
We Got a Live One Here ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976)
Lost in Space ♪♪ (Relix, 1995)
Best of Commander Cody ♪♪½ (Relix, 1995)

worth searching for: The first two long-deleted albums, *Lost in the Ozone* ♪♪♪½ (Paramount, 1971) and *Hot Licks, Cold Steel and Trucker's Favorites* (Paramount, 1972), qualify as certified classics in the field. During that period, the band cut a spectacular Christmas song, "Daddy's Drinking Up All Our Christmas," which has been rescued from obscurity by *Hillbilly Holiday* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1988, prod. various).

solo outings:
Commander Cody:
Ace's High ♪♪♪½ (Relix 1990)

Bill Kirchen:
Tombstone Every Mile ♪♪♪ (Black Top, 1994)
Have Love, Will Travel ♪♪♪ (Black Top, 1996)
Hot Rod Lincoln ♪♪♪ (Black Top, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Wills, Moon Mullican, Dave Dudley
▶▶ Asleep at the Wheel, Nick Lowe

Joel Selvin

Shawn Colvin **(© Ken Settle)**

Connemara

See: Grace Griffith

Rita Connolly

Born in Dublin, Ireland.

Perhaps best described as a dynamic singer avoiding a niche, Rita Connolly has failed to gain the popular acclaim she deserves due to her wide-ranging interests in music and her refusal to settle down in one specific genre. The Irish singer seemed to many to appear out of nowhere in 1985, when she earned critical acclaim for her work with husband Shaun Davey in *Granuaile*, a showcase of talent tailored around the story of Grace O'Malley, seventeenth-century pirate queen. In actuality, however, she had already been working in low-profile positions, from her start with Midnight Well (unfortunately, after they recorded their only album), to her work with Davey on his musical tour of the Celtic lands, *The Pilgrim*, to her voice-for-hire work in commercials. Rita's true talent lies mostly in her amazing voice and her ability to be highly expressive without overwrought emotional overtones to her vocals. Her repertoire ranges from pop to jazz to traditional folk, with all manner of things in between. This variety may both make and break her career, since no one knows how to market her work. Despite this, combining her clear, lilting voice with her natural feel for folk music, Rita Connolly has been winning the hearts of listeners across the world.

what's available: *Rita Connolly* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1992, prod. Shaun Davey, Rita Connolly) starts off strong with "Venezuela," a wonderful rendition of a sea chantey. A couple of traditional work

songs highlight the album, with bold harmonies: "Factory Girl" and "Same Old Man." The traditional material on the album is only a small portion of the offering, however, with the others bordering a bit on '70s pop. The exceptions are "Alice in Jericho," a Middle-Eastern style ballad, and a beautiful closing lullaby called "Close Your Eyes." There are also a couple of nice jazz numbers. *Valparaiso* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1995, prod. Shaun Davey) is not as strong in musical content as the first, following more of the rock/pop style, with fewer jazz and folk selections. The album does contain Rita's beautifully reworked "The Quiet Land of Erin." Especially nice on this album is an upbeat remake of Irving Berlin's "Shakin' the Blues Away," and the haunting title song, "Valparaiso," an original by Connolly. Not much else stands out on this recording, but these three songs alone make the album worth the price.

worth searching for: Shaun Davey's *Granuaile* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1985) showcases Rita's vocal talents, along with the excellent piping of Liam O'Flynn.

influences:

⏪ Joni Mitchell, Shaun Davey

⏩ The Fallen Angels, Loreena McKennitt

Jo Hughey Morrison

Stompin' Tom Connors

Born Charles Thomas Connors, February 9, 1936, in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada.

The man has written more than 300 songs, his 40 albums have sold more than 3 million copies, and his autobiography recently soared high up the best-seller lists. He has been the subject of at least one master's thesis, been awarded an honorary Doctorate of Laws degree, received a citation from Queen Elizabeth as well as the prestigious Order of Canada . . . he even got married live on national television. But chances are you have never heard of, much less *heard*, Stompin' Tom Connors. For the man has never performed outside of Canada and never had a single record released outside of Canada in his 30-some-odd-year career. You see, after winning an unprecedented six consecutive "Canadian Grammys" as Male Country Singer of the Year, Stompin' Tom defiantly returned all these Juno Awards in 1978 as a protest against "border jumpers": Canadian artists who no longer live and rarely perform in their home and native land. Soon afterwards, at the peak of his initial stardom, he enacted—by *himself*—a one-year live performance boycott to further draw attention to Canada's mistreatment of its native artists. Interestingly, this fervent, stubborn nationalism didn't help Connors's own career at home, as he inexplicably has yet to place a solitary song on a Canadian country music chart ("They told me in 1964 I didn't fit the format. They told me that in 1974. In 1984, they told me that again," Tom says. "I guess the format hasn't changed that much.") That Stompin' Tom has not only survived but actually *thrived* under such adverse conditions (by the way, that one-year boycott? It lasted 10) is a testament not only to the man's abundance of talent, but his self-described "to-it-and-at-it-iveness." Born to an unwed teenager, raised in an orphanage, he began writing songs at 11 and spent his teen years on the run—and on the high seas (illegally working as an underage merchant seaman). Once back on dry land, he indulged his Woody Guthrie fantasies and hitchhiked the length and breadth of Canada, guitar in hand, and in 1964 found himself at the Maple Leaf Hotel in Timmins, Ontario . . . a nickel short of a 40-cent beer. Agreeing to sing for his supper, he ended up on stage at the Maple Leaf for the next 14 months straight (where a bartender nicknamed him "Stompin' Tom" after his penchant for keeping time pounding his boot on the stage floor). He cut his first single the following year, signed to the tiny Dominion label in 1969, and formed his own label, Boot, two years after that. Between '68 and '73 he released six albums, which are today rightly considered the Holy Grail of Canadian Country. Rich in character studies as vivid as those of Hank Williams, but etched as always with Connors's fierce sense of Canadiana, the classic tone poems that fill these records ("Bud the Spud," "Big Joe Mufferaw," "Sudbury Saturday Night," and "The Hockey Song," to name only four) stand today as nothing less than national totems, part of the Canadian cultural lexicon, yet still perversely receive little if any radio airplay. Finally ending his decade-long exile in 1989 (singing a tribute to his most high-profile prodigy, "Lady k.d. lang"), Connors continues to tour and record proud and unbowed, continues to remain stubbornly loyal to his beliefs and ideals, and *still* hasn't had an album released outside of Canada. This should not for one second deter you from seeking out any of his two dozen releases newly available on CD from Capitol/EMI Canada, and all produced by—who else?—Stompin' Tom Himself.

what to buy: The 20-song "hits" compilation *A Proud Canadian* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1990, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors) is the place to start, though with a legacy—and catalog—as vast as Tom's, this will only serve to scratch the surface and, hopefully, whet your appetite.

what to buy next: *On Tragedy Trail* ♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1968, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *Bud the Spud* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capi-

tol/EMI Canada, 1969, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *Stompin' Tom Connors Meets Big Joe Mufferaw* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1970, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *My Stompin' Grounds* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1971, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *Stompin' Tom and the Hockey Song* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1972, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), and *To It and At It* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1973, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors) is an astounding six-LP cycle-in-song which remains an unparalleled achievement in Canadian music. His "comeback" album, *Fiddle and Song* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1989, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors) shows an artist refreshed, vibrant, yet still as joyously cantankerous as ever. And *More of the Stompin' Tom Phenomenon* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1991, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *Believe in Your Country* ♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1992, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), *Dr. Stompin' Tom . . . Eh?* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1993, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors), and *Long Gone to the Yukon* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol/ EMI Canada, 1995, prod. Stompin' Tom Connors) (the latter co-written by an old friend from the Maple Leaf Hotel by the way) demonstrate conclusively that the phenomenon known as Stompin' Tom thankfully shows no sign of abating any time soon.

the rest:
Northland's Zone ♪♪♪ (1967)
Merry Christmas Everybody ♪♪½ (1970)
Live at the Horseshoe ♪♪♪♪ (1971)
Stompin' Tom and the Moon-Man Newfie ♪♪♪½ (1973)
Stompin' Tom Meets Muk Tuk Annie ♪♪♪ (1974)
The North Atlantic Squadron and Other Favourites ♪♪♪ (1975)
The Unpopular Stompin' Tom ♪♪♪½ (1976)
At the Gumboot Cloggeroo ♪♪♪ (1977)
Once Upon a Stompin' Tom ♪♪♪♪½ (1991)
Kic Along with Stompin' Tom* ♪♪♪♪ (1993)
The Confederation Bridge ♪♪♪♪½ (1997)

influences:
⏪ Wilf Carter, Hank Snow, Sir John A. MacDonald
⏩ Steve Earle, k.d. lang, Tylin Whaler

Gary Pig Gold

Ry Cooder

Born Ryland Peter Cooder, March 15, 1947, in Los Angeles, CA.

Like so many of his guitar-playing contemporaries—Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, and Eric Clapton among them—Cooder started his career playing blues and folk songs in the early 1960s. Instead of becoming a rock 'n' roll superstar, though, he slowly developed his skills and built his reputation as a thorough musicologist and reputable session musician. He was in a few bands early in his career, including one with soul singer Jackie DeShannon, another—the short-lived-but-influential Rising Sons—with fellow blues fanatic Taj Mahal, and one with the musically complex lunatic Captain Beefheart (around 1967). Cooder's many solo albums, particularly 1976's *Chicken Skin Music* and 1974's *Paradise and Lunch*, have a raw, refreshing sense of humor, and they're almost always rooted in 1950s rockabilly and harder-than-they-sound guitar licks. Cooder has never been willing to stick to one style for very long, even his beloved blues and rockabilly, and he has stretched out considerably on the movie soundtracks he has written. Master of slide guitar, mandolin, banjo, and plenty of other more exotic instruments, Cooder's interests lurched from American rockabilly to Tex-Mex to Hawaiian slack-key guitar music, and he expanded his breadth with each new style. Beginning with the Rolling Stones's landmark *Let It Bleed* album—Cooder claims to have come up with the "Honky Tonk Women" riff—he became a prolific sideman, working on albums by Little Feat, Randy Newman, John Hiatt, Arlo Guthrie, and Van Dyke Parks. He delved into soundtrack albums, most notably *Paris, Texas*, *The Long Riders*, and *Trespass* (in which he plays behind Ice Cube and Ice-T in what could be the first example of rap-blues fusion). He served dutifully in Little Village, a quick-lived supergroup featuring fellow session musician extraordinaire Jim Keltner, bassist Nick Lowe, and Hiatt, and he collaborated with West African guitarist Ali Farka Toure on 1993's superb *A Meeting by the River*. The Rising Sons never led to superstardom like the Yardbirds and Led Zeppelin did for Jimmy Page and the Rolling Stones did for Keith Richards, but Cooder nevertheless has managed to build a long career with great respect from his peers.

what to buy: *Paradise and Lunch* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1974, prod. Lenny Waronker, Russ Titelman) includes the heart warming "Mexican Divorce" and a fun, definitive version of "Ditty Wa Ditty." *Chicken Skin Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1976, prod. Ry Cooder) predated Paul Simon's *Graceland* by incorporating Tex-Mex accordion hero Flaco Jimenez (who helps with a killer "Stand by Me") and Hawaiian slack-key guitarist Gabby Pahinui into Cooder's more American-sounding rock 'n' roll. Both *Into the Purple Valley* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1972, prod. Lenny Waronker, Jim Dickinson), with its Johnny Cash, Woody Guthrie, and Jackie Wilson songs, and *Bop Till You Drop* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979, prod. Ry Cooder), with "Down in Hollywood," showcase Cooder's fun-loving history-of-rock side. Finally, his collaborations with world-music heavies V.M. Bhatt on *A Meet-*

ing by the River ♪♪♪♪ (Water Lily Acoustics, 1993, prod. Kavichandran Alexander) and with Ali Farka Toure on *Talking Timbuktu* ♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1994), round out any full Cooder collection.

what to buy next: The two-disc *Music by Ry Cooder* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1995, prod. Ry Cooder, Joachim Cooder) is such a thorough collection of Cooder's movie music it saves you the trouble of combing through his uneven soundtrack albums. Individually, his better soundtracks are *Paris, Texas* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1984, prod. Ry Cooder), *Johnny Handsome* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1989, prod. Ry Cooder), *The Long Riders* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980, prod. Ry Cooder), *The Border* ♪♪♪½ (Backstreet, 1981), with interesting collaborations with Hiatt, Freddie Fender, and the long-lost Sam Samudio, and the much-maligned *Crossroads* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986, prod. Ry Cooder), a terrible movie which features great Cooder pure-blues slide work with fellow string enthusiast David Lindley.

what to avoid: Cooder's experiments and ambitions occasionally backfire, especially on the tedious *Jazz* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1978, prod. Ry Cooder, Joseph Byrd), which has interesting ideas, like a cover of the 1880 folk song "The Dream," but nothing else to recommend it. He sounds plain bored on *Get Rhythm* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987, prod. Ry Cooder), despite the presence of old friend Jimenez and the always-unusual Van Dyke Parks. Also not up to snuff is his solo debut, *Ry Cooder* ♪ (Reprise, 1970, prod. Van Dyke Parks, Ry Cooder).

the rest:
Boomer's Story ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1972)
Show Time ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1977)
Borderline ♪½ (Warner Bros., 1980)
The Slide Area ♪½ (Warner Bros., 1982)
Alamo Bay ♪♪ (Slash, 1985)
Blue City ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986)
Geronimo: An American Legend ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1993)
Trespass ♪♪½ (Sire, 1994)
Buena Vista Social Club ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra/Nonesuch, 1997)

worth searching for: The Little Village debut, *Little Village* ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Little Village), contained a few funny, rocking moments, including the nice "Solar Sex Panel" and the John Hiatt vehicle, "She Runs Hot," but it didn't come close to matching the Hiatt-Cooder-Nick Lowe-Jim Keltner inspiration on Hiatt's *Bring the Family* album. And the long-collected rarity, *Rising Sons* ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, prod. Terry Melcher), puts Cooder's legendary band with Taj Mahal in a nice historical light, with some great blues-rock cuts like "Statesboro Blues"; but there's also a lot of unfocused messy stuff.

influences:
- Elmore James, Charlie Christian, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Tampa Red, the Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Buddy Guy, Taj Mahal
- Sonny Landreth, Bonnie Raitt, Rory Block, Daniel Lanois, Robbie Robertson

Steve Knopper

Spade Cooley

Born Donnell Clyde Cooley, February 22, 1910, in Grand, OK. Died November 23, 1969, in Oakland, CA.

Cooley's tragic personal life—he was convicted in 1961 for the first-degree murder of his second wife, largely on the testimony of his 14-year-old daughter whom Cooley had forced to witness her mother's fatal beating—tends to overshadow the "King of Western Swing"'s abundant musical achievements. Of Scottish-Irish and Cherokee descent, Cooley came from a musical line—both his father and grandfather were fiddlers of renown, and young Donnell's first musical instrument, not surprisingly, was the cello. As so many did during the Depression, the Cooleys headed west in 1931, and Hollywood beckoned Spade like the proverbial moth to the flame: soon he was hired by Republic Pictures as a stand-in for the latest Singing Cowboy sensation, Roy Rogers. So impressed was Rogers by Cooley's fiddling ability that he quickly hired the would-be thespian to tour with his band between pictures. Later, Spade joined Cal Shrum's combo, and made his first-ever trip to the recording studio with them in 1941. It was really only a matter of time, though, before Cooley formed his own band: a monstrous (up to 22 members at times) aggregation that brought its own unique blend of country, jazz, and pure wartime dance music to the booming Southern California ballroom circuit, drawing crowds of 5,000 a night at their regular Santa Monica residency. His first session for Columbia Records in December 1944 produced his biggest-ever hit, "Shame on You," and Cooley also found time to appear in several motion pictures and even hosted his own highly rated local television series well into the '50s. A long-time investor in California real estate, his plan to develop a mammoth recreational park called Water Wonderland in the middle of the Mojave Desert (go figure) was derailed when he discovered his wife bragging of an affair with old pal Roy Rogers. Roy survived this incident relatively unscathed; Spade, however, didn't let his wife off so easy. On August 22, 1961, the King of Western Swing was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of young Ella Mae Cooley. Due to be paroled for good behavior from Vacaville Prison in 1970, he died several weeks prior to his

release of a massive heart attack following a benefit performance he'd just given for the Alameda Deputy Sheriff's Association.

what's available: Although he later recorded for RCA and Decca, Spade's legend rests with his OKeh and Columbia recordings from the mid-'40s, the best of which are lovingly restored, annotated, and compiled on *Spadella!: The Essential Spade Cooley* ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1994, prod. various). Although the biggest hits, crooned for the most part by vocalist Tex Williams, are somewhat lackluster, the instrumentals jump and cook as few others of their ilk did, or could, in their day.

influences:

◀◀ The Cass County Boys, Riders of the Purple Sage, Jimmy Wakely

▶▶ Western Caravan, Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks, Ray Condo and his Rickochets

Gary Pig Gold

Dana Cooper

Born in Independence, MO.

Dana Cooper's varied career has taken him from Missouri to California, from Texas to Tennessee. Cooper grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, but sought his fortune in California, where he recorded his debut album for Elektra Records during the '70s. When his solo career didn't pan out, he moved to Texas and joined forces with fellow singer-songwriter Shake Russell. Their folk-rock band became a huge regional attraction, recording albums during the late '70s and early '80s and even sneaking one of them onto the *Billboard* sales chart. He then recorded two independent albums with another rock band, Dana Cooper's DC3, before returning to the solo route. He released his first CD, *Stone by Stone*, in 1992; it's now unavailable, except from Cooper himself.

Cooper's reputation is once again on the rise following the 1997 release of *Miracle Mile* on the Nashville-based Compass Records. Cooper has had songs recorded by Russell, Maura O'Connell, Trout Fishing in America, Rex Foster, and Christine Albert.

what's available: *Roughly Speaking* ♪♪♪ (Skram, 1994, prod. Dana Cooper, Nick Carlton) is a modest album consisting mostly of Cooper accompanying himself on guitar. It contains some good tunes ("Walkin' Waste of Time," "I Had That Comin'") but in this form, nothing matches the magic of his second album. Working with a full band and one of Nashville's more pop-influenced producers brought the best out in Cooper's material. *Miracle Mile* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1997, prod. Josh Leo) features many of the same songs as *Roughly Speaking*, but the arrangements make all the difference. Josh Leo brings out the most imaginative parts of Cooper's lyrics and melodies—it's the kind of sympathetic production solo singer-songwriters get all too rarely. "In My Living Room" is the musical defining point, as Cooper imagines the Beatles in a private showcase with *Magical Mystery Tour*–era accompaniment. Maura O'Connell contributes vocals to the title tracks; Lyle Lovett sings on "Too Deep a Sorrow."

influences:

◀◀ The Beatles, Don Dixon, Marti Jones

▶▶ Richard Buckner

Brian Mansfield

Roger Cooper

Born in Kentucky.

Roger Cooper is a Kentucky fiddler in the tradition of such regional legends as Buddy Thomas, Morris Allen, and Jimmy Wheeler. He has won numerous fiddling contests in Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee, and he is also an accomplished guitarist and banjo player.

what's available: *Going Back to Old Kentucky* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. John Harrod, Mark Wilson) is a fine collection of 25 fiddle tunes, many of them traditional, in the old-time Lewis County fiddling style. Cooper is accompanied by guitarist Mike Hall.

influences:

◀◀ Bob Prater, Buddy Thomas, Jimmy Wheeler

▶▶ Charlie Walden, Chirps Smith, Jeff Goehring

Brian Mansfield

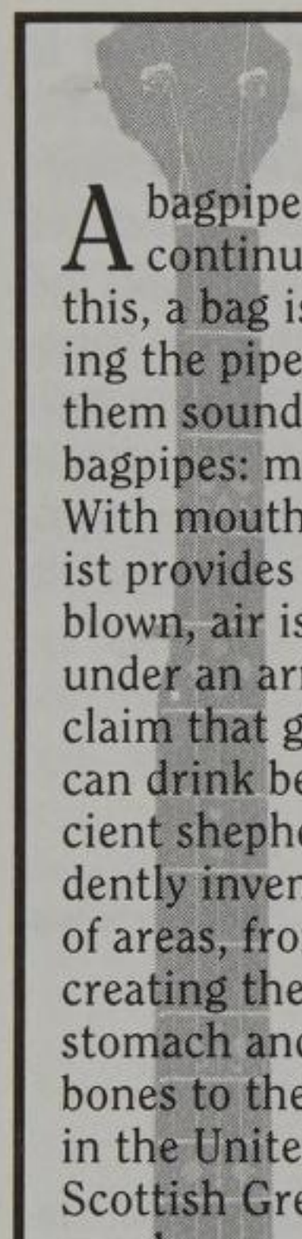
Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper

Formed 1940s, in WV.

Wilma Lee Cooper (born Wilma Lee Leary, February 7, 1921, in Valley Head, WV), vocals, guitar, banjo, piano; Dale T. "Stoney" Cooper (born October 16, 1918, in Harmon, WV; died March 22, 1977), vocals, fiddle.

This West Virginia husband-and-wife duo and their band, the Clinch Mountain Clan, helped keep alive the raw, acoustic hard-country sound popular in the Southeast during the 1930s for

182 *the copper family*



bagpipes

A bagpipe is known for one basic thing—continuous sound. In order to achieve this, a bag is inflated and squeezed, supplying the pipes with the air required to let them sound. There are two basic types of bagpipes: mouth-blown and bellows-blown. With mouth-blown pipes, the instrumentalist provides the air; while in the bellows-blown, air is pumped from a bellows, held under an arm. Bellows-blown pipers like to claim that given a table and a straw, they can drink beer while playing their pipes. Ancient shepherds are credited with independently inventing the instrument in a variety of areas, from India to Ireland to Hungary, creating the bag from an animal's hide or stomach and connecting hollow sticks or bones to the bag. The best-known bagpipes in the United States are Celtic in origin: the Scottish Great Highland bagpipes, commonly seen at parades and funerals, and the Irish uilleann pipes, as played by the Chieftains. Bagpipes vary in sound based on the type of reeded pipes attached to the bag. Most bagpipes have some form of a drone; the number of drones varies. Drones may all have the same pitch or be tuned at varying intervals. The other pipe attached to the bag is a chanter, similar to a reeded recorder, which is used to play the tune.

Jo Hughey Morrison

worth searching for: *Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper and the Clinch Mountain Clan—Early Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1979), a reissue of Columbia recordings from 1949–53, is their prime stuff, including the classics "Thirty Pieces of Silver," "Sunny Side of the Mountain," "You Tried to Ruin My Name," and nine more.

solo outings:

Wilma Lee Cooper:

Wilma Lee Cooper ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)

Classic Country Favorites ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Molly O'Day, Roy Acuff

▶▶ Carl & Pearl Butler, Delia Bell

Randy Pitts

The Copper Family

Formed c. 1951, in Rottingdean, Sussex, England.

The Copper Family, often called a "living museum of music," has been singing for centuries. The first member to come to prominence was James "Brasser" Copper, born in 1845, who had learned songs from his father. The English Folk Song Society was formed in 1889 after Kate Lee copied down the songs of Brasser and his brother Tom and brought her discovery to London. The songs were passed down to Copper's son Jim and grandson Bob. In the 1950s, Jim and Bob presented their unaccompanied songs on the BBC. Some credit the Coppers with thus beginning the folk revival in Britain. The best-known version of the group included Bob Copper, his cousin Ron (who died in 1978), and Bob's son and daughter John and Jill. The group now includes Jill's husband Jon. Bob's grandchildren are continuing the singing tradition, a century after their great-great-grandfather sang his songs to Kate Lee. Before a recent concert, John Copper reflected: "These songs came from an era when music wasn't performed, it was enjoyed." The songs are mostly about farm work, hunting, and other aspects of rural life.

what to buy: *Coppersongs 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Coppersongs, 1995, prod. Piers Bishop) is not polished and prettified; instead, it's a sterling collection of the "living museum" at work. Songs include "Twanky Dillo" and "Banks of the Sweet Primroses."

the rest:

(Bob and Ron Copper) *English Shepherd and Farming Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1964)

what's available: The gospel set *Walking My Lord up Calvary Hill* ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1974?), the only Wilma Lee & Stoney readily available on CD, is a fair indicator of what they sounded like. Their style never changed much, but this isn't their best material.

influences:

- Jim Copper (Bob's father)
- Watersons, Young Tradition, Shirley Collins

Pamela Murray Winters

Cordelia's Dad

Formed c. 1989, in Northampton, MA.

Tim Eriksen, guitar, banjo, bass, vocals; Peter Irvine, drums, vocals; Tom King, guitar (1989–93); Cath Oss, vocals, mountain dulcimer, accordion (1995–present).

Cordelia's Dad started as a loud rock band that played only traditional material, thus introducing many college rock fanatics of the early '90s to the world of folk and traditional music. Over the years they started to pick up acoustic instruments more and more and play them in a traditional style. They never did put down their electric instruments, however. The fascinating thing about this group is that they can do everything well: rock and traditional. Today the band has taken on some more influences, such as Appalachian fiddle, clawhammer banjo, and shape note singing to create an interesting cocktail of new-traditional music. In 1996 the band also separated their electric side from the acoustic band and formed a second band; the rock band *Io*. Both bands have new recordings in the works with production from Steve Albini.

what to buy: *Comet* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1995, prod. Cordelia's Dad, Mark Alan Miller), the band's third full length CD, is the highlight of the band's career. Its combination of shape note singing, banjo playing, Tim Eriksen's fabulous unaccompanied singing, and the band's unique arrangements of old traditional songs rescued from junk shops and university archives presents to the listener one of the most powerful and exciting contemporary takes on traditional music. Cordelia's Dad has rescued these songs from the history books without sacrificing them to contemporary music of the 1990s.

what to buy next: *How Can I Sleep?* ♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1992, prod. Dave Schramm) is a snapshot from the time when Cordelia's Dad played and recorded both acoustic and electric material. Their acoustic take on "Sweet William," "Little Margaret," and Tim's unaccompanied "Farewell to Old Bedford" from Lee Monroe Presnell make this an album not to miss. *Cordelia's Dad* ♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1990, prod. Cordelia's Dad), their debut CD, is essential for the people who want to view the band in its full electric regalia. This is the album to buy your rock and roll friends that you hope to drag into the world of folk music someday.

the rest:
Roadkill ♪♪♪ (Scenescof, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Joy Fun Garden* ♪♪♪♪½ (Return to Sender, 1993, prod. Cordelia's Dad) is a nine-song EP that was released in a limited edition in Germany only. If you see this one, snatch it up. It contains a few songs not found anywhere else, such as Tim Eriksen's take on the unaccompanied "Johnny Oh Johnny" and "Drowsy Sleeper" by Lee Monroe Presnell. For a deeper look into their shape note singing check out the CD by Northampton Harmony, *The Hookes' Regular Sing* ♪♪♪ (Hazmat, 1996, prod. Northampton Harmony). Half of this shape note quartet is made up of Cordelia's Dad members Tim Eriksen and Cath Oss.

influences:

- Dwight Diller, Lee Monroe Presnell, Sacred Harp Hymnal, the Ramones
- Salamander Crossing

Steve Gardner

Larry Cordle

See: Lonesome Standard Time

Sheryl Cormier

Born March 15, 1945, in Grand Coteau, LA.

Although Cleoma Breaux Falcon had recorded back in the 1920s, there have been no female Cajun band leaders. While it was not uncommon for women to play music at home or to know the old, traditional ballads, it is only recently that a woman could both play accordion and lead a popular band. The woman who epitomizes this change is Sheryl Cormier. She was the oldest of four children and started playing the Cajun accordion at age 7. Her father, Andrew Guilbeau, was the leader of the Sunset Playboys and her mother was the drummer. Sheryl occasionally played with the group, but gave it up when she was married to Russell Cormier. Even after her son was born she continued to sit in and play a little on weekends with different bands. Her initial band included her husband on vocals and her son Russell Jr. on drums. This is the band that is heard on her first album, *La Reine de Musique Cadjine (The Queen of Cajun Music)*. Not satisfied with leading a group of male musicians, she also put together the first all-female Cajun

band. Regardless of gender, her sound is the classic Cajun dance band and her popularity continues unabated.

what to buy: *La Reine de Musique Cadjine (Queen of Cajun Music)* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1990, prod. Lee Lavergne) was her first LP with additional cuts added to the CD. It has a solid dance sound and a strong influence of Aldus Roger, which you can hear particularly on Roger's "Louisiana Waltz." "Laccasine Special" and "Valse de Pont D'Amour" demonstrate that Sheryl has the chops to handle tunes associated with Iry Lejeune. Her husband Russell shares the vocal duties with Ivy Dugas.

what to buy next: *Sheryl Cormier and Cajun Sounds* ♪♪♪ (1992, Swallow, prod. Lee Lavergne) exhibits more of the real Cajun dance sound that Sheryl can get out of a band. There are standards like "Bosco Stomp" and tunes with a more country sound, which are not uncommon in the repertoires of modern Cajun groups. A solid record to dance around the living room to.

influences:

◀◀ Aldus Roger, Sundown Playboys, Paul Daigle

▶▶ Kristi Guillory, Magnolia Sisters

Jared Snyder

Scott Cossu

Born 1951, in WV.

Pianist and composer Scott Cossu was at the peak of his career on September 5, 1989. His album *Switchback* had reached the fourth spot on the New Age music charts, and he was preparing for a 40-city world tour, after which he was to be married. Just as it looked as though he was destined for a great future, he was struck by a car while crossing a southern California street. The accident resulted in a traumatic brain injury; his doctors predicted there was only a 40 percent chance that he would survive. Cossu was, however, not ready to give up. While the injury required four operations, two months of hospitalization, and four months of intensive rehabilitation, he was ready to resume his musical career within 18 months. Although the injury cost him his right eye as well as significant portions of memory, Cossu's comeback recording, *Stained Glass Memories*, picked up where he had left off. Recorded with previous collaborators Van Manakas (guitar), Dave Valentin (flute), Mark Egan (bass), and Robbie Ameen (drums), the album sparkles with the emotional jazz-funk-blues-folk intensity of his previous work. Cossu, who grew up in Ohio and now lives in Olympia, Washington, studied classical piano as a youngster. His love of rock and roll, however, was equally strong and his early influences ranged from Bach and Beethoven to Pink Floyd and the Beatles. After studying classical piano, music theory, and composition at the University of Ohio, he transferred to the University of Washington to study ethnomusicology. Besides studying the musical traditions of China, Rumania, Thailand, and India in college, he explored the music of the Andes during a 1977 trip to South America. After settling in Washington, he met traveling guitarists Will Ackerman (founder and then-CEO of Windham Hill) and Alex de Grassi and was invited to record for the Windham Hill label. His debut album, *Wind Dance*, was produced by George Winston. Cossu has composed several pieces for movies, documentaries, and industrial films and has hosted a weekly syndicated radio show, *Wind Dance*.

what to buy: Reprising cuts from Cossu's first six albums, *A Windham Hill Retrospective* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1992, prod. Robert Duskis, Dawn Atkinson, Will Ackerman) features his atmospheric piano melodies set to arrangements ranging from duets—played with guitarist Alex de Grassi ("Purple Mountain") and cellist Eugene Friesen ("Gwenlaise")—and trios played with such expressive instrumentalists as electric guitarist Van Manacas, flautist Dave Valentin, and cellist Friesen to full-blown sextets featuring Valentin, Mark Egan (bass), Danny Gottleib (drums), and Robert Squitero (percussion).

what to buy next: Although he had explored large band arrangements on his 1984 album *Islands*, Cossu's return to small ensemble playing, *Reunion* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1986, prod. Alex de Grassi), is a masterpiece of melodic intimacy. While arrangements focus on Cossu's piano and Friesen's cello, additional tonal colors are provided by Alex de Grassi on acoustic guitar and Shadowfax violinist Charles Bisharat.

the rest:

Still Moments ♪♪½ (Lost Lake Arts, 1980)
Spirals ♪♪ (Music Is Medicine, 1983)
Islands ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1984)
Wind Dance ♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1984)
Switchback ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1989)
She Describes Infinity ♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1992)
Stained Glass Memories ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ Paul Winter, Oregon, Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven

▶▶ George Winston, Alex de Grassi, Eugene Friesen, Will Ackerman

Craig Harris

Elizabeth Cotten

Born January, 1893, in Chapel Hill, NC. Died June 29, 1987, in Syracuse, NY.

Elizabeth Cotten was just 12 years old when she wrote one of the most enduring folk-like songs, "Freight Train," in 1905. Although it took another four decades before her music was widely heard, her melodic Piedmont blues-style fingerpicking (on a standard right-handed guitar or banjo turned upside-down and played left-handed), influenced everyone from Odetta and Taj Mahal to the Grateful Dead and Tracy Chapman. For most of Cotten's life, music remained a childhood memory. Married at the age of 15, she traded her guitar for the church and didn't play for a quarter of a century. Her return to music was sparked by a chance meeting with influential folk musicologists Charles and Ruth Crawford Seeger and their young children, Peggy and Mike. An employee of a department store in Washington, D.C., where she had moved in the early 1940s, Cotten found and helped to calm a "lost" Peggy. When she returned the young girl to her mother, she was offered a job as a domestic in the Seeger home. Her songs and stories became an influential presence in the lives of the Seeger children, who later encouraged her to perform and produced her early albums. Cotten continued to work as a domestic until 1970 when Traditional Arts Service began to book her performances. Buying a house in Syracuse, New York, in 1978, she continued to perform until shortly before her death in 1987.

what to buy: *Freight Train and Other North Carolina Folk Songs and Tunes* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1958/Smithsonian Folkways, 1989, prod. Mike Seeger) features intimate solo versions of Cotten's best known songs, including "Ain't Got No Honey Babe Now," "Here Old Rattler Here," "Oh Babe It Ain't No Lie," "Spanish Flang Dang," and the title track.

what to buy next: Although she was in her late 80s when she recorded *Live* ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1983, prod. John Overton), Cotten's irresistible charm and musical sensitivity are as effective as ever. Cotten's first album in more than two decades, *Live* remains her only live-in-concert recording.

the rest:

Folksongs and Instrumentals with Guitar ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1958/Smithsonian Folkways, 1989)

influences:

◀◀ Piedmont Blues, African American folk songs

▶▶ Peter, Paul & Mary, Mike Seeger, Peggy Seeger, the Grateful Dead, Odetta, Tracy Chapman

Craig Harris

James Cotton

Born July 1, 1935, in Tunica, MS.

Chicago-style harmonica player James Cotton's mentors were two titans of the blues, Muddy Waters and Sonny Boy Williamson. He tracked down Williamson (Rice Miller, not John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson) after listening to his Helena, Arkansas-based *King Biscuit Time* radio show in the 1940s; he traveled with the harp master and proved a quick learner. He recorded a few singles around 1953, but his most significant work was with other people; he and Junior Parker were Howlin' Wolf's main harmonicists, and those are Cotton's precise tones in the background of Wolf's Sun singles. Waters invited Cotton to replace George "Harmonica" Smith in his band in 1955, and the partnership lasted through 1966, when Cotton left to form his own band. He frequently worked with young white blues-rock performers like Steve Miller, Paul Butterfield, Johnny Winter, Elvin Bishop, and many others, often opening for them at San Francisco's Fillmore auditorium. A master showman who pranced around the stage and worked his harps to the limit, he built a minor audience in the 1970s, but his rough voice (especially after severe throat problems) was never a match for his fantastic harmonica playing. But as the blues cult audience began to grow into a significant fraction of the music industry, Cotton became one of the club circuit's shining lights. Of all the living bluesmen who served in Muddy Waters's bands, Cotton summons his former boss's spirit with the most reverence and credibility.

what to buy: Though Cotton has been recording for almost three decades, his best work came after the blues labels started picking him up again in the mid-1980s. *High Compression* ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1984, prod. Bruce Iglauer, James Cotton) includes two backup combos, the best of which features Pinetop Perkins on piano and Magic Slim on guitar. *Harp Attack!* ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1990, prod. Bruce Iglauer) unites Cotton with fellow blues harp greats Junior Wells, Billy Branch, and Carey Bell. *Mighty Long Time* ♪♪♪ (Antone's, 1991, prod. Clifford Antone) spotlights the bandleader on "Baby Please" and "Call It Stormy Monday" despite the presence of Perkins, guitarist Matt Murphy, and (on one track) ex–Fabulous Thunderbird Jimmie Vaughan.

what to buy next: The early solo material is uneven, but the best is clearly the rock 'n' roll–heavy *100% Cotton* ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1974), with explosive versions of "Boogie Thing" and "Rocket 88."

what to avoid: Sadly, Cotton's voice has deteriorated, and it shows on *Living the Blues* ♪♪ (Verve, 1994, prod. John Snyder), which is overloaded with guests.

the country gentlemen

best of the rest:
Chicago/the Blues/Today!, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964)
Live & on the Move ♪♪♪½ (One Way, 1966)
Cut You Loose! ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
The James Cotton Blues Band ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1967)
Cotton in Your Ears ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1968)
Take Me Back ♪♪♪½ (Blind Pig, 1980)
Live from Chicago Mr. Superharp Himself ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1987)
Two Sides of the Blues ♪♪♪ (Quicksilver, 1992)
Dealing with the Devil ♪♪♪½ (Quicksilver, 1992/Aim, 1997)
Live at Electric Lady ♪♪♪ (Sequel, 1993)
3 Harp Boogie ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)
Best of the Verve Years ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1995)
Deep in the Blues ♪♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1997)

influences:

- Muddy Waters, John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson, Little Walter, Sonny Boy Williamson (Rice Miller)
- Junior Wells, Billy Branch, Charlie Musselwhite, Paul Butterfield, Sugar Blue, the Rolling Stones

Steve Knopper

The Country Gentlemen

Formed 1957, in the Washington, DC area.

Charlie Waller, guitar; John Duffey, mandolin, dobro (1957–69); Bill Emerson, banjo (1957–58, 1969–72); Larry Leahy, bass (1957); Tom Morgan, bass (1957); Jimmy Gaudreau, mandolin (1969–72, 1981); Doyle Lawson, mandolin (1972–79); Rick Allred, mandolin (1979–81); Pete Kuykendall, banjo, guitar, bass, fiddle (1958–59); Tom Morgan, bass (1957–59); Jim Cox, bass (1959–60); Tom Gray, bass (1960–64); Ed Ferris, bass (1964–69); Bill Yates (1969–80); Eddie Adcock, banjo (1959–70). Other members have included: Ricky Skaggs; Jerry Douglas; Mike Lilly; Walt Hensley; Kevin Church; Jimmy Bowen; Keith Little; Norman Wright.

The first really influential urban bluegrass band, the early Country Gentlemen featured John Duffey's tart tenor voice and amazing range (his father was an opera singer), guitarist Charlie Waller's pleasantly light baritone lead vocals, Eddie Adcock's banjo virtuosity, fine three- and four-part harmonies, innovative choices of material, imaginative arrangements, and humorous, friendly stage banter. They made bluegrass more immediate and more accessible to a large, young, urban audience, and their presence is felt today. Waller, the only remaining original member, leads the band into its fourth decade in 1997.

what to buy: *Country Songs Old and New* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1960, prod. Mike Seeger) provides a full dose of tough, progressive bluegrass by this highly influential group early in their careers. *Folk Songs and Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1961, prod. Pete Kuykendall, John Duffey) was the first album for Folkways by what came to be known as the "Classic Country Gentlemen," as bassist Tom Gray joins Duffey, Waller, and Adcock; it features extremely tight harmonies and innovative vocal arrangements of traditional songs. *25 Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1982, prod. Dave Freeman) is a good overview of the band in various groupings and includes many favorites and a fair number of obscurities.

what to buy next: *Calling My Children Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1977, prod. Charles Freeland) is wonderful gospel from a group that included Doyle Lawson and features several a cappella gospel quartets.

the rest:
Nashville Jail: Classic Country Gentlemen ♪♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1964/1990)
The Award-Winning Country Gentlemen ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1971)
Live in Japan ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1972)
Featuring Ricky Skaggs on Fiddle ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1987)
Return Engagement ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1988)
Classic Country Gents Reunion ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
New Horizons ♪♪ (Rebel, 1992)
Souvenirs ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1995)
Sugar Hill Collection ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995)

worth searching for: *Folk Session Inside* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1963, prod. Pete Kuykendall), an outstanding and very popular album in its time, features the "Classic" configuration of the band and great versions of "This Morning at Nine," "I Am Weary, Let Me Rest," and "Can't You Hear Me Calling." This is a big favorite of urban folkniks. *Bluegrass at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1962) is a great album by the early group recorded for Starday. (The title is a bit confusing, though, because it isn't a live album.)

solo outings:
Eddie Adcock:
Eddie Adcock & His Guitar ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1988)
(With Talk of the Town) *The Acoustic Connection* ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1988)
Dixie Fried ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1991)
(With the Eddie Adcock Band) *Talk to Your Heart* ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1994)

influences:

- The Stanley Brothers, Bill Monroe
- The Seldom Scene, Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Randy Pitts

Country Ham

Formed 1975, in Washington, DC.

Carl Pagter, banjo, lead and harmony vocals; Judie Cox Pagter, guitar, autoharp, lead and harmony vocals; Jerry Tuckett, fiddle, mandolin, harmony vocals (1975–90); Paul Reed Berkstresser, rhythm guitar, bass, bass vocals, (1975–90); Jim Sayles, acoustic bass (1975–79); Bob White, acoustic bass (1979–present); M.D. Mallory, rhythm guitar, (1990–present); Joe Meadows, fiddle (1990–present); Jerry Lundy, fiddle (1980s); Jeff Wisor, fiddle; Jake Quesenberry, guitar, lead and harmony vocals; James Bailey, guitar, mandolin, fiddle, harmony vocals.

Country Ham is a bluegrass and old-time string band with some 13 recordings on both Vetco and their own Country Ham label. The group has always revolved around the clawhammer banjo, autoharp, and singing of husband-wife team Carl and Judie Pagter, who are the only original members still with the group. Carl Pagter works as a lawyer and business executive in Walnut Creek, California, while Judie resides on the Pagter farm in Barboursville, Virginia. Joe Meadows, the band's fiddler, lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, and works on the staff of Senator Robert Byrd. Bob White plays bass and lives in Frederick, Maryland, where he is a legislative advocate for the National Electrical Contractors Association in Washington. M.D. Mallory plays guitar and works for an air conditioning manufacturer in Dyke, Virginia. Somehow, the group soldiers on despite the geographic separation of its members and has not had a personnel change for the past six years or so. Perhaps the fact that they rarely see each other explains it. Regardless, after a recording hiatus, they now have two new albums in the works. Look for *The Old Cane Press* and *Carpenter's Mill* in 1998.

what to buy: Either *I'll Be Leaving* ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1991, prod. Country Ham) or *Where the Mountain Laurel Blooms* ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1979, prod. Country Ham) would be excellent introductions to the band's winning combination of up-tempo mountain and bluegrass standards and heartfelt ballads from the tradition. Judie Pagter's voice is reminiscent of Molly O'Day, Rose Maddox, and Wilma Lee Cooper. It's a signature sound of the band. The instrumental mix is solid, if not spectacular, and Carl Pagter's banjo playing drives things nicely. His playing is in the clawhammer or frailing style of Grandpa Jones, so the group usually sounds more like Wade Mainer than Bill Monroe. Their vocal harmonies and tune selection, complemented by Joe Meadows's bluegrass-style fiddle, makes them welcome at any bluegrass festival. Judie Pagter's autoharp playing stands out on the slower numbers, when the band takes on more of a Carter Family feel.

what to buy next: *Sounds of Yesterday* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1983, prod. Country Ham), *My Old Paint Mare* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1980, prod. Country Ham), and *Songs of Mother and Home* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1984, prod. Country Ham) are all excellent albums with fine singing and competent picking. You can't go wrong with any of them. Joe Meadows's solo fiddle album, *Fiddle Instrumentals Featuring Joe Meadows* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1992, prod. Country Ham) is excellent as well.

what to avoid: *Music for Clogging* ♪♪ (Vetco, 1982, prod. Country Ham) is somewhat atypical of the band's approach to recording, and, while not bad in any sense, you'd have to be a clogger to really appreciate it.

the rest:

Old Time Mountain Music ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1976)
Country Ham ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1977)
The Old Country Church ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1980)
Anchored in Love ♪♪♪½ (Vetco, 1989)

solo outings:

Joe Meadows:

Portrait of a Fiddler ♪♪♪½ (Old Homestead, 1974)
West Virginia Fiddler ♪♪♪½ (Old Homestead, 1977)
Two O'Clock in the Morning ♪♪♪½ (Old Homestead, 1977)
Super Fiddler ♪♪♪½ (Old Dominion, 1978)

Judie Pagter and Joe Boucher:

Fifty Miles of Elbow Room ♪♪♪ (WEBCO, 1987)

influences:

- The Carter Family, Rose Maddox, Wilma Lee Cooper, New Lost City Ramblers
- Dry Branch Fire Squad, Piney Creek Weasels

Neal Walters

Country Joe and the Fish

Formed 1966, in Berkeley, CA. Disbanded 1970. Re-formed 1977.

Country Joe McDonald, vocals, guitar; Barry Melton, guitar; David Cohen, keyboards, guitar (1965–69); Bruce Barthol, bass (1965–68); John Francis Gunning, drums (1965–66); Paul Armstrong, washboard (1965–1966); Chicken Hirsh, drums (1965–69); Mark Ryan, bass (1968–69).

Largely forgotten as one of the giants of psychedelic rock, Country Joe and the Fish towered over their contemporaries and left behind one masterpiece album, their first—*Electric Music for the Mind and Body*—one of the definitive albums of American acid rock. Like the psychedelic scene itself, the album mixed the trippy and bizarre with the jocular and whimsical, and crafted

folk-pop with adventuresome experimentation, electric blues with political satire. Both McDonald and Melton, who grew up next door to Woody Guthrie in Brooklyn, brought decided folk backgrounds with them to the free-wheeling band they founded. The Berkeley-based group qualified as one of the original five Fillmore headliners, although these days the Fish are not regarded in the same breath as the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane. The original, high-spirited group of hippies began to dissolve after its third album; by the time the group made its famous appearance at the 1969 Woodstock Festival, only McDonald and Melton remained. The group disappeared altogether the following year, although McDonald continued a fruitful and active musical career. Melton was recently appointed a public defender attorney in Mendocino County, California.

what to buy: Even the official greatest-hits collection includes seven of the 11 tracks from the band's 1967 debut, *Electric Music for the Mind and Body* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967, prod. Sam Charters), one of the first albums to carry the sound of the San Francisco ballrooms across the country.

what to buy next: The band's second album was recorded so quickly after the debut that the group made do with less potent pieces from its existing repertoire. At least it saved the Vietnam era's #1 anthem, "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag," for this album. Coupled with McDonald's elegant elegy to his romance with the girl singer from Big Brother and the Holding Company, "Janis," the two side-openers lifted *I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967, prod. Sam Charters) above the ordinary.

what to avoid: By the time the original group started to fall apart, the band had recorded three albums, and nothing on the subsequent two albums, *Here We Are Again* ♪½ (Vanguard, 1968) and *C.J. Fish* ♪ (Vanguard, 1970, prod. Tom Wilson), added anything to the band's repertoire.

the rest:
Together ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)
The Life and Times of Country Joe and the Fish ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1971)
The Collected Country Joe and the Fish ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1987)

worth searching for: Two authentic Country Joe and the Fish psychedelic artifacts have been brought into the digital domain. *Collectors Items: The First Three EPs* ♪♪♪½ (One Way, 1994) captures the early Berkeley records that launched the band in the Bay Area, while *Live! At the Fillmore West* ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1996, prod. Bill Belmont) may want for superb sonics but contains the rare sound of a genuine ballroom jam—a free-for-all celebrating the original group's final performance with such guests as Steve Miller, Jerry Garcia, Jorma Kaukonen, Jack Casady, and Mickey Hart joining the fray.

solo outings:
Country Joe McDonald:
Thinking of Woody Guthrie ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970)
Tonight I'm Singing Just for You ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1970/One Way, 1995)
Paradise with an Ocean View ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1975)
Into the Fray ♪♪½ (Rag Baby, 1981)
Peace on Earth: The Vietnam Experience (Rag Baby 1985/One Way 1995) ♪♪½
Country Joe Classics ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1989)
The Best of Country Joe 1969–1975 ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1990)
Superstitious Blues ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1991)
Carry On ♪♪♪ (Line, 1994/Shanachie, 1996)
Vietnam Experience ♪♪½ (Line, 1994/One Way, 1995)
War War War ♪♪ (One Way, 1995)
Hold On—It's Coming ♪♪½ (One Way, 1995)
Country Joe ♪♪½ (One Way, 1996)
Paris Sessions ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1996)
On My Own ♪♪½ (One Way, 1997)
Child's Play ♪♪½ (One Way, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Reverend Gary Davis, Big Brother and the Holding Company

▶▶ B-52's, Boomtown Rats, Tom Robinson Band

Joel Selvin

County Down

See: Anne Dodson

Cowboy Junkies

Formed 1979, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Margo Timmins, vocals; Michael Timmins, guitar; Peter Timmins, drums; Alan Anton, bass.

Folk singer Luka Bloom once said he'd never opened for so many people making so little noise on stage. The Cowboy Junkies are usually stamped with such labels as "Valium-enhanced" and "narcoleptic," which is true on their most boring songs. They're slow, of course, but when they're good, you barely notice the tempo. The band merges songwriting styles culled from country (most notably Townes Van Zandt and Hank Williams), blues, and punk (their cover of the Velvet Underground's "Sweet Jane" is what first got the group on college radio), and at best the results are charming and hypnotic. At worst, when the Junkies start to rely on their sound and let their considerable songwriting qualities play a lesser role, you really can't get through an album or concert without developing a yawn addiction.

cowboy junkies

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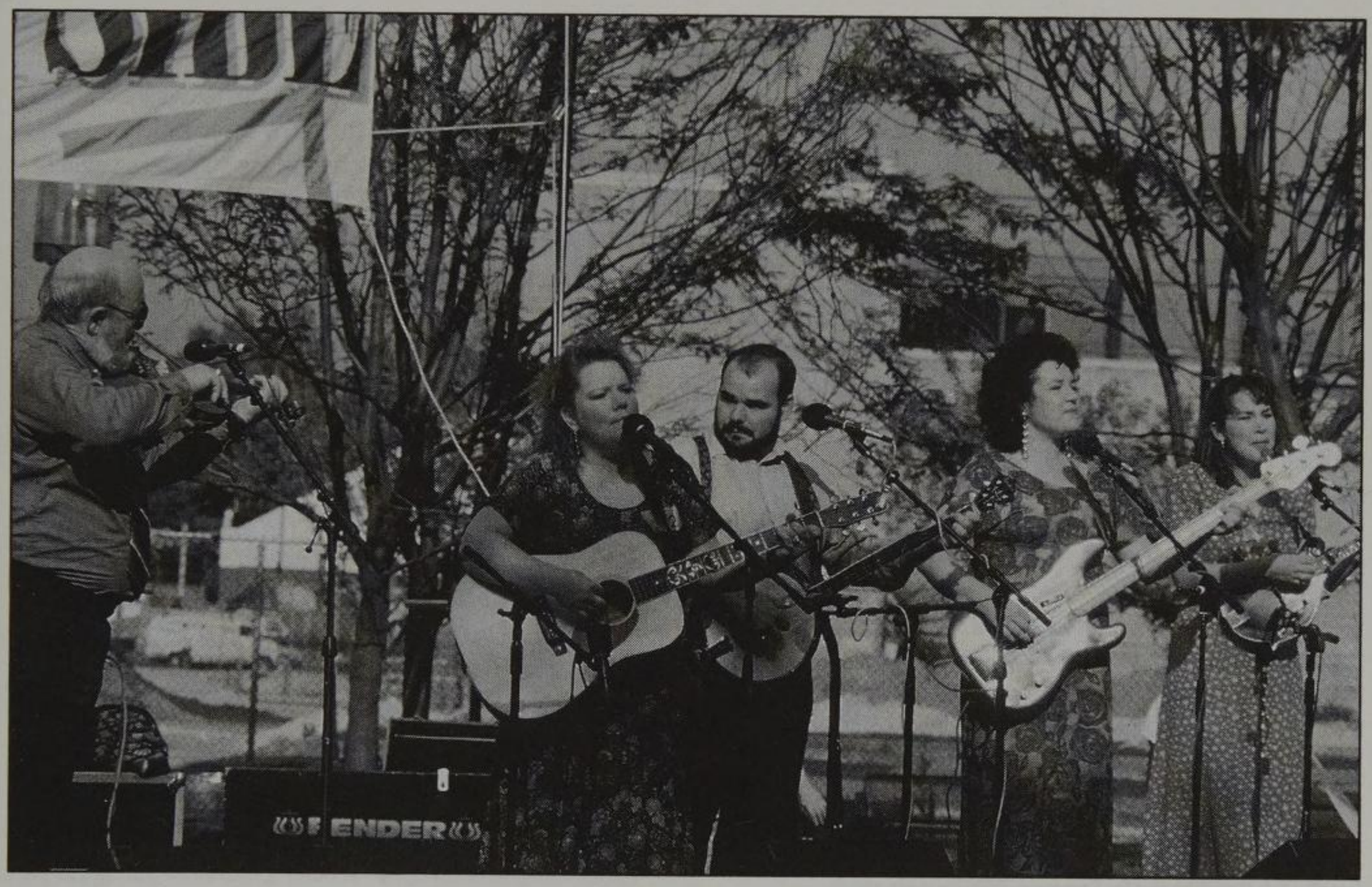


The Cox Family **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what to buy: *The Trinity Session* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1988, prod. Peter Moore) is the perfect starting place, mostly because its cover songs ("Sweet Jane," Patsy Cline's "Walking after Midnight," and Hank Williams's "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry") ease you gradually into the Junkies' slow-motion world. *Black Eyed Man* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1992, prod. Michael Timmins), their best and most underrated album, succeeds because of its reverence for true country music; John Prine makes a terrific duet appearance on the romantic ballad "If You Were the Woman and I Was the Man," and Van Zandt's influence is obvious in both the style and name of "Townes' Blues."

what to buy next: *Whites Off Earth Now* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1990) is full of slow and tortured versions of familiar songs, including Bruce Springsteen's "State Trooper" and Robert Johnson's "Crossroads" and "Me and the Devil." The Junkies, perhaps overly aware of their reputation for leisure, accelerated to rock speed on *Lay It Down* ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1996, prod. Michael Timmins, John Keane).

what to avoid: *Caution Horses* ♪♪ (RCA, 1990, prod. Peter Moore, Michael Timmins) was supposed to be the band's triumphant leap from college cult heroes to mainstream country-rock hitmakers, but it was so blandly written and overproduced it sent the Junkies reeling commercially for most of the 1990s.

the rest:

Pale Sun, Crescent Moon ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1993)
200 More Miles: Live Performances 1985–1994 ♪♪ (RCA, 1995)

worth searching for: A haunting treatment of another sacred country-rock cow, the Rolling Stones's "Dead Flowers," turns up on the 12-inch promotional single for "'Cause Cheap Is How I Feel" (RCA, 1990).

influences:

◀◀ John Prine, Townes Van Zandt, Bruce Springsteen, Lou Reed, Patsy Cline, Hank Williams

▶▶ Mazzy Star, Lisa Germano

Steve Knopper

The Cox Family

Formed 1976, in Cotton Valley, LA.

Willard Cox, fiddle, vocals; Evelyn Cox, guitar, vocals; Suzanne Cox, mandolin, vocals; Evelyn Cox Hobbs, guitar, vocals; Sidney Cox, guitar, dobro, banjo; Lynn Cox Thurman, bass, vocals.

Cotton Valley is an oil town about 40 miles north of Shreveport—not exactly a hotbed of bluegrass music. But for Willard Cox and the rest of his musical family, it was as good a place as any to carry the torch while adding a few touches of their own, such as Western swing. Though they've worked the festival circuit for years, the Coxes manage to make their shimmering harmonies and traditional sound fresh, attracting the attention of Alison Krauss, who has recorded some of Sidney's songs. She, in turn, has produced some of their albums.

what to buy: *Just When You're Thinking It's Over* ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1996, prod. Alison Krauss) is a rarity that manages to update traditional bluegrass in a way that should not disturb purists. Grammy-winning buddy Krauss steers them on a course that keeps one foot rooted firmly in the past, the other charging into the future.

the rest:

Everybody's Reaching Out for Someone ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)
(With Alison Krauss) *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
(With Krauss) *Beyond the City* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Chuck Wagon Gang, Mac Wiseman, Bill Monroe

▶▶ Alison Krauss

Doug Pullen

Dan Crary

Born 1940, in Kansas City, MO.

Dan Crary began playing guitar at age 12. In 1970, he released perhaps the first bluegrass album to feature the flatpicked guitar as the lead instrument. *Bluegrass Guitar* was a landmark album and firmly established Crary as one of the most skilled and innovative guitarists in bluegrass. Although he credits Doc Watson and Clarence White as primary influences, his move from Kansas City to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1968 and his subsequent teaming with fiddler Lonnie Peerce in Bluegrass Alliance may have been the real catalyst behind his interest in playing fiddle tunes on the guitar. Bluegrass Alliance was also home to Tony Rice and to Sam Bush subsequent to Crary's tour with the band. He left the Bluegrass Alliance in 1970 to move back to Kansas City and pursue a graduate degree, dropping out of sight for nearly seven years. Following graduation, he accepted a job teaching speech communications at Cal State University in Fullerton, California, and re-surfaced with fiddler Byron Berline as part of the country rock band, Sundance, which also featured John Hickman on banjo. The group remained together until 1978, cutting an eponymous album in 1976 and a live album in 1977. Subsequently, Crary teamed again with Berline and banjo player John Hickman as a trio specifically formed to play a tour of Japan. The group sounded so good that they stayed together and recorded three albums as the trio Berline-Crary-Hickman, later adding bass player Steve Spurgin (also an alumnus of Sundance) and calling themselves simply BCH and then changing again to California. Over the years, Crary has managed a good number of solo albums, recording for Sugar Hill and other labels, and has certainly carved a niche for himself as a distinctive interpreter of traditional material for both six-string and 12-string guitar. He also has composed a fair number of original compositions that add spice to his recordings.

what to buy: *Guitar* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1983, prod. Dan Crary) teams Crary with a crew of second-generation bluegrass immortals who have since become household words in their own right. Sam Bush, Mark O'Connor, Béla Fleck, and T. Michael Coleman help Crary blow the lid off in a sparkling session that delivers a tribute to Carter Stanley's banjo playing, a Mozart piano sonata adapted for guitar, an eight-minute Bill Monroe medley, and a marvelous Irish medley played bluegrass style.

what to buy next: *Lady's Fancy* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977/1994, prod. Dan Crary) is a delightful combination of traditional tunes done in the unique Crary style coupled with two original compositions for his daughters, Julie and Jenny. Byron Berline, Sam Bush, Skip Conover, John Cowan, Herb Pedersen, and Béla Fleck are among the guests.

the rest:

Bluegrass Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1970)
Thunderation ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1981)
(With John Hickman) *Double Trouble* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1986/1995)
Sweet Southern Girl ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
(With California) *Traveler* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992)
Lady's Fancy ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Jammed If I Do ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)
Holiday Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

worth searching for: *Take a Step Over* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989, prod. Dan Crary, Jim Emrich) has yet to be re-released on CD, but it's another great set of tunes that you don't ordinarily hear played on the guitar.

solo outings:
Berline-Crary-Hickman:
Night Run ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1984)
B-C-H ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987)
Now They Are Four ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)

influences:
◀◀ Doc Watson, Clarence White
▶▶ Steve Kaufman

see also: *Byron Berline*

Neal Walters

Crash Test Dummies

Formed late '80s, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Brad Roberts, vocals, guitar, piano; Benjamin Darvill, mandolin, harmonica; Ellen Reid, piano, keyboards, accordion, vocals; Dan Roberts, bass; Michel Dorge, drums.

Although the band hails from Winnipeg, which spawned the Guess Who and Bachman-Turner Overdrive, it owes more stylistically to XTC, Leonard Cohen, and Talking Heads. Songwriter-leader-singer Brad Roberts possesses a lush baritone with remarkable range and sounds a bit like Bauhaus vocalist Peter Murphy.

what to buy: With the release of the second album, *God Shuffled His Feet* ♪♪♪♪ (Arista, 1993, prod. Jerry Harrison, Crash Test Dummies), the group scored a pair of international hits—"MMM MMM MMM MMM" and "Afternoons & Coffee Spoons"—that boosted its stature beyond its homeland.

what to buy next: This folk-influenced pop outfit took Canada by storm in 1991 with its debut album, *The Ghosts That Haunt Me* ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1991, prod. Steve Berlin), which featured the Canadian smash hit "Superman's Song."

the rest:
A Worm's Life ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ XTC, Leonard Cohen, R.E.M., Talking Heads
▶▶ Talking Heads, Camper Van Beethoven

William Hanson

Kevin Crawford /The Moving Cloud /Grianan /Raise the Rafters

Born in Birmingham, England.

Kevin Crawford is one of Ireland's most outstanding young traditional flute players. Born in England to Irish parents steeped in the traditional music of their native west Clare, Crawford grew up surrounded by traditional Irish music and learned to play the flute as a teenager. After moving to Ireland during the late 1980s he settled in Ennis, County Clare, a longtime center of traditional Irish music. There he joined up with the great but short-lived band Grianan, and later with the dance band the Moving Cloud, with whom he continues to perform. Crawford's style is solid, rhythmic, fast-paced, and a little showy, a perfect reflection of this friendly, gregarious man's personality. Crawford has made few appearances in the U.S. and as a result has a somewhat lower profile than he deserves. He is one of the bright lights in contemporary Irish music and fans are urged to seek out his recordings and hear him in concert.

what to buy: *D Flute* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Kevin Crawford), Crawford's first solo album, is a stunning debut. By turns lyrical and fiery, Crawford explores a range of traditional reels, jigs, and hornpipes, as well as a fine slow air of his own composition. The accompaniment provided by pianist Carl Hession and guitarist Donal Clancy is tasteful and spare, allowing the listener to focus on the mighty flute playing. Crawford is indeed an exciting player, strong in rhythm and not afraid to show off his awesome technique. His power is, however, wedded to a fine sense of taste, and he never shows off at the expense of the music. Like Matt Molloy, whom he slightly resembles stylistically, Crawford is an aggressive player who makes the listener sit up and take notice. This is a strong debut album, auguring well for Crawford's future.

what to buy next: *The Moving Cloud* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. the Moving Cloud) is the first album from the Clare-based Ceili band of the same name. Drawing heavily on a repertoire from the "golden age" of recorded Irish music during the 1920s, the Moving Cloud plays solid dance music and features repertoire not commonly found in modern Irish music (flings, clogs, and barn dances, for example). The band has a stellar membership including Crawford, mighty

box player Paul Brock, pianist Carl Hession, and fiddlers Maeve Donnelly and Manus McGuire. In concert or at a dance this collection of musicians can be breathtaking, producing some of the most elegant yet driving Irish dance music ever heard. Sadly, the album fails to capture that intensity, sounding flat and listless. One of these days, someone will record this awesome band in a live setting and produce the great record they deserve.

worth searching for: During the early 1990s a group of young County Clare musicians seemed set to take the Irish music world by storm. The group Grianan grew out of a vibrant session scene in Ennis and featured some of the best young players to be found in Ireland at the time, including Kevin Crawford, fiddler Siobhan Peoples (daughter of the legendary Tommy Peoples), and box player P.J. King. The group recorded one album, *The Maid of Eirin* ♪♪♪♪ (West Winds, 1993, prod. Grianan, Martin Murray), which captured their driving, solid playing in fine form. Unfortunately, the incompetence of the record company and the Byzantine recordings distribution system in the British Isles combined to ensure that very few people would hear, or even know about, the recording. Soured by the experience, and with no tours, reviews, or gigs to show for the album, the group broke up. Following Grianan's demise, Crawford and box player P.J. King teamed with guitarist and singer Martin O'Malley to form a new group. *Raise the Rafters* ♪♪♪½ (Celtic Prime Leisure, 1995, prod. Martin Murray), their eponymous debut, is a nice collection of tunes and songs played on flute, accordion, and guitar. As with *D Flute*, the playing is showy yet tasteful and Crawford and King have a nice rapport on a pair of instruments rarely heard together. Two albums featuring Crawford that show off the legendary session scene around Ennis in County Clare are *The Sanctuary Sessions* ♪♪♪½ (CCD, 1994, prod. P.J. Curtis) and *Maiden Voyage* ♪♪♪♪ (Celtic Music, 1991, prod. Paraic MacDonnchadha, Kevin Crawford). The first features a number of the younger musicians, including the wonderful box player Josephine Marsh and concertina player Dympna O'Sullivan. *Maiden Voyage* features many of the same musicians as *The Sanctuary Sessions* plus a few wonderful appearances from older musicians Tommy Peoples, Joe Bane, and the great sean-nos singer Sean MacDonnchada.

influences:

◀◀ Matt Molloy, Joe Bane, Martin Rochford

▶▶ Josephine Marsh, Martin Hayes

Tony Ziselberger

Critton Hollow String Band

Formed 1974, in WV.

Joe Herrmann, fiddle, guitar, banjo, accordion, vocals; Sam Herrmann, hammered dulcimer, mandolin, vocals; Joe Fallon, banjo, bass, guitar, vocals (1981–present); Paul Kovac, guitar, banjo, vocals (1981–present).

Critton Hollow took its name from the local West Virginia geography near its members' homes. The original band consisted of Joe Herrmann, Sam Herrmann, and guitarist Michael Kline. In 1977, Kline moved away and the band took on Sam's brother Arnold Kempton and his wife Patti Galatis Kempton. The Kemptons retired in 1981 and were replaced by Joe Fallon and Pete Gordon. Subsequently, in 1994, Pete Gordon left the band and was replaced by Paul Kovac. Throughout these personnel changes, the band has retained its old-time string-band sound and orientation. Most of their material is traditional, frequently arranged by them to accommodate the hammered dulcimer, with a fair number of contemporary folk pieces thrown in. Their concert appearances have ranged from coast to coast in the U.S. and into Canada. A favorite of many square and contra dancers, they play at dance camps throughout the Mid-Atlantic States, and the individual members teach frequently at various music camps.

what to buy: The band's only CD to date is *Cowboys and Indians* ♪♪♪½ (Yodel-ay-Hee Records, 1995, prod. Joe Herrmann, Mark Schatz). Nearly all of the 18 tracks on this disc have a Western theme, or at least a Western title. Half are traditional old-time tunes, the other half come from sources ranging from Woody Guthrie ("The Ranger's Command") to Dolly Parton ("Coat of Many Colors"). Instruments get passed around quite a bit, but the basic core consists of the fiddle, hammered dulcimer, banjo, and guitar. When you want to discuss the things that this band does well, it's hard to decide where to start. One of their strengths is the mix of Joe and Sam Herrmann's voices. Individually, each has a vocal style that is straightforward and refreshingly unaffected; they fit together seamlessly and the combination melds effortlessly with the other members. The instrumentation is just as coherent. Not many old-time bands have used the hammered dulcimer, but they didn't have Sam Herrmann. Whether it's a slower piece like Mark Schatz's "Samolynn Waltz," or a hard-driving fiddle tune like "Indian Nation," she plays with a precision and tastefulness that shares the stage with the fiddle without competing with it. Joe Fallon provides rock solid backup on banjo, guitar, and bass. Paul Kovac is equally solid on guitar and banjo and, on this disc, bass virtuoso Mark Schatz makes a guest appearance on two

tracks. Everybody in this band is a multi-instrumentalist, and there are no weaknesses. There's a variety of material on the disc, including a song by Earl Montgomery called "Where Grass Won't Grow" that sounds so good with the Critton Hollow stamp on it that you wonder if it was written with them in mind. All in all, it's a great recording from one of the most popular bands on the traditional music scene today. Their recordings might be hard to find in a record store, but can be obtained from the band at Route 1, Box 167, Paw Paw, WV 25434.

what to buy next: *By and By* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish Records, 1985, prod. Cathy Fink, Critton Hollow String Band) is available on LP or cassette and is also a mix of traditional and contemporary pieces. Pete Gordon (guitar, vocal) was in the band when this recording was made and Paul Kovac was not. The sound of the band is much the same as on *Cowboys and Indians*. Utah Phillips's "Room for the Poor" is a standout, and it's worth the price of the album just for the Critton Hollow version of "A Mother's Parting Words to Her Daughter."

the rest:

Poor Boy ♪♪♪½ (Yodel-ay-Hee Records, 1979)
Sweet Home ♪♪♪½ (Yodel-ay-Hee Records, 1983)
Great Dreams ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish Records, 1988)

influences:

◀◀ Highwoods String Band, Hotmud Family
▶▶ Karen Ashbrook, Walt Michael

Dave Shombert

Jim Croce

Born January 10, 1943, in Philadelphia, PA. Died September 20, 1973, in Natchitoches, LA.

Unlike many of his singer-songwriter contemporaries who got their starts on the coffeehouse circuit, Croce didn't pride himself on earnestness, and social change wasn't at the top of his lyrical agenda. He showed a sense of humor and knack for storytelling that Will Rogers would have appreciated. The stogie-chomping, mustachioed artist populated his unforgettable story songs with rugged characters, and infused his conventional yet poignant love songs with sincerity. That combination landed him several Top 40 hits, which were recorded in between 1971 and 1973. Many of his songs became posthumous hits after his death in a plane crash.

what to buy: *Photographs & Memories: His Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1974, prod. Terry Cashman, Tommy West) is the essential Croce hits collection, including the chart-topping "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown" and "Time in a Bottle."

what to buy next: *You Don't Mess Around with Jim* ♪♪♪½ (ABC, 1972, prod. Terry Cashman, Tommy West) offers the sage wisdom of the title track, along with "Operator (That's Not the Way It Feels)."

what to avoid: *Faces I've Been* ♪♪ (Lifesong, 1975, prod. Jim Croce) comprises material from Croce's pre-major-label signing. He hasn't found his niche, sounding too similar to that oh-so-serious folk crowd he had yet to distinguish himself from.

the rest:

I Got a Name ♪♪♪ (ABC, 1973)
Time in a Bottle: Greatest Love Songs ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1976)
Live: Final Tour ♪♪♪ (Saja, 1980)
50th Anniversary Collection ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1992)
Gold in a Bottle ♪♪♪♪ (DGC Gold, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Paul Simon, Gordon Lightfoot, Cat Stevens, James Taylor
▶▶ Dan Fogelberg, Suzanne Vega, Lyle Lovett

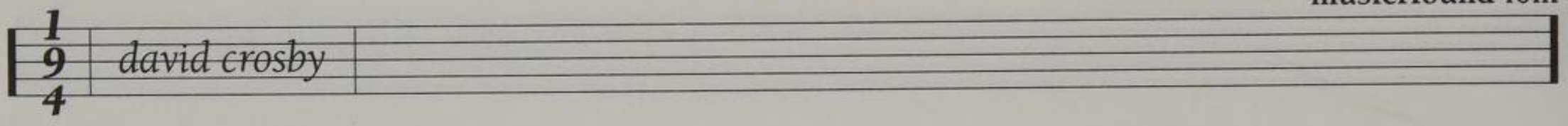
Jay Dedrick

Carrie Crompton

Born October 30, 1952, in Northampton, MA.

Carrie Crompton has enchanted audiences all over the country with her "Barolk Folk" style of hammered dulcimer playing, blending the elegance of Baroque music with the energy of the folk dance. Her recordings with Barolk Folk have won awards from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors (now known as Association for Independent Music) and from *Parents Choice*. The inspiration for her repertoire comes from playing the treble viol, an early bowed string instrument, as well as from English country and contra dancing. This Connecticut artist, who plays both fretted and hammered dulcimer, has published several books of her dulcimer arrangements through Mel Bay.

what's available: On *Bach Dances* ♪♪♪♪ (Barolk Folk, 1996, prod. Seth Austen), Carrie Crompton is joined by Sue Cryan on violin, Celia Wyckoff on recorder, Michael Rose on piano, Seth Austen on steel-string guitar, and Dana Mayo on classical guitar. This group of Barolk Folk has skillfully taken Bach's solo dance movements and added wonderful counter melodies and chordal harmonies for a complete chamber folk ensemble sound. These Bach dances are pared with complementary dance tunes such



as "Shawbury Park" and "Sun Assembly." Crompton's hammered dulcimer playing is precise, sounding much like a harpsichord, as she takes inspiration from recordings by the likes of Andres Segovia, Henryk Szeryng, Pierre Fournier, and Pablo Casals. *Come Let Us Be Merry* ♪♪♪♪ (Barolk Folk, 1989, prod. Seth Austen) is a collection of traditional Christmas carols and dances from Scotland, Ireland, England, Brittany, and France that are played in an elegant Baroque style. Some of the carols are paired with such traditional dances as "The First Nowell/Hewlett," a traditional English carol combined with a Turlough O'Carolan piece. Barolk Folk musicians on this recording are Carrie Crompton (hammered dulcimer, fretted dulcimer, treble viol), Michael Rose (guitar, piano), and Celia Wyckoff (recorders). These recordings are available from Barolk Folk Music, 11 Center Street, Andover, CT 06232.

worth searching for: *Girls and Boys, Come Out to Play* ♪♪♪♪ (Barolk Folk, 1991, prod. Seth Austen), though out of print, is worth going out of your way to find. In addition to the Barolk Folk, it includes Madeline MacNeil and Barbara Hess in a collection of familiar nursery songs.

influences:

◀◀ John Renbourn, Andres Segovia, the Chieftains, Bare Necessities

▶▶ Steve Schneider, Walt Michael, Madeline MacNeil

Heidi Cerrigione

David Crosby

See: Crosby, Stills & Nash

Crosby, Stills and Nash /Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young /David Crosby /Crosby & Nash /Graham Nash /Stephen Stills

Formed 1968, in Los Angeles, CA.

David Crosby (born August 14, 1941, in Los Angeles, CA), guitar, vocals; Stephen Stills (born January 3, 1945, in Dallas, TX), guitar, bass, keyboards, vocals; Graham Nash (born February 2, 1942, in Blackpool, England), guitar, keyboards, vocals; Neil Young (born November 12, 1945, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada), guitar, vocals.

One of the most celebrated and enduring of the late '60s supergroups, Crosby, Stills and Nash—with and without Neil Young—continued and built on musical foundations initiated with their previous bands. Crosby was in the Byrds, Stills and Young formed Buffalo Springfield, and Nash was a signature voice in the Hollies. The decision to use their last names, in fact, stemmed from the desire not to be thought of as just another band but as a group of individuals who worked together when it felt right. Formed as a trio to record their first album, the blend of CSN's voices combined with the songwriting skills of each—as well as Stills's musical proficiency—became a cornerstone of the Southern California folk-rock movement. With the addition of Young and his darker, more contemplative songs, CSNY became a powerful voice of the times, infusing desperate love songs and political theory with the same emotional harmonies. Though dogged by periodic personality conflicts and assorted substance abuse addictions (which necessitated Crosby's liver transplant in 1994), the original trio seems inextricably drawn together, though their last work with Young was in 1988. In 1997, feeling neglected by their record company, the group broke off their longtime relationship with Atlantic Records in search of a new home for future recordings.

what to buy: *Crosby, Stills & Nash* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1969, prod. CSN) is an impressive blend of voice and guitar, beginning with Stills's complex and timeless "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" and continuing through Nash's bouncy "Marrakesh Express," Crosby's paean to Robert Kennedy, "Long Time Gone," and the apocalyptic fairy tale, "Wooden Ships." The first album with Young, *Deja Vu* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1970, prod. CSNY), solidified the quartet's status as *the* superstar American band of the Woodstock generation. With a hippie anthem by Crosby ("Almost Cut My Hair"), Stills's guitar heroics ("Carry On"), Nash's sing-along tunes ("Our House," "Teach Your Children"), and Young's introspective "Helpless," they still found room for another songwriter's work (Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock"). *So Far* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1974, prod. CSNY, Bill Halverson), a greatest-hits package after only two albums, contains the high points of the first two releases as well as the scathing single that came out in the wake of the Kent State shootings, "Ohio/Find the Cost of Freedom."

what to buy next: The four-CD box set *CSN* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1991, prod. Graham Nash, Gerry Tolman) is filled with strong material from all of the musicians' incarnations—solo and apart—but may be for serious fans only. The first two discs are essential; it's the final one, comprised of latter-day solo and CSN recordings, that's hard to listen to all the way through. The live *4 Way Street* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1971, prod. CSNY) became more attractive after it was expanded with four more songs on

the 1992 CD reissue, but it may put off casual listeners who prefer the polish of the group's studio work. Crosby, Stills and Nash's solo albums have seldom been as satisfying as the group efforts, but a few are worthwhile, notably: Crosby's *If I Could Only Remember My Name* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1971, prod. David Crosby); Stills's *Stephen Stills* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972, prod. Stephen Stills, Bill Halverson) and *Manassas* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972, prod. Chris Hillman, Dallas Taylor, Stephen Stills); and the short-lived Stills-Young Band's *Long May You Run* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1976, prod. Stephen Stills).

what to avoid: *Live It Up* ♪ (Atlantic, 1990, prod. CSN, Joe Vitale, Stanley Johnston), a phone-in effort where the voices sound as synthetic as the layered keyboards backing them up. The exception: Stills's "Haven't We Lost Enough?"

the rest:
CSN ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1977)
Replay ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1980)
Daylight Again ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1982)
Allies ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1983)
(With Neil Young) *American Dream* ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1988)
After the Storm ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1994)

worth searching for: The promotional CD single for *Chippin' Away* ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1989, prod. CSN, Stanley Johnston, Craig Doerge) is a song the trio—with guest James Taylor—recorded in reaction to the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was rush-released to radio but never made it on a CSN album.

solo outings:
David Crosby:
Oh Yes I Can ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1989)
Thousand Roads ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1993)
It's All Coming Back to Me Now ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1995)
King Biscuit Flower Hour Presents David Crosby ♪♪ (King Biscuit Flower Hour, 1996)

Crosby & Nash:
Graham Nash/David Crosby ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972)
Wind on the Water ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1973)
Crosby-Nash Live ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1975)
Whistling Down the Wire ♪♪ (ABC, 1976)
Best of Crosby & Nash ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1978)
Another Stoney Evening ♪♪♪½ (Grateful Dead Records/Arista/BMG, 1997)

Graham Nash:
Songs for Beginners ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1972)
Wild Tales ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1974)
Earth and Sky ♪♪ (Capitol, 1980)
Innocent Eyes ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1986)

editor's choice
5 celtic folk-rock albums

Moving Hearts, *The Storm* (Son, Ireland)
Silly Wizard, *So Many Partings* (Shanachie)
Van Morrison & The Chieftains, *Irish Heartbeat* (Mercury)
The Bothy Band, *Old Hag You Have Killed Me* (Green Linnet)
Dick Gaughan, *Handful of Earth* (Green Linnet)

Stephen Stills:
Stephen Stills 2 ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1971)
Down the Road ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1973)
Stills ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975)
Illegal Stills ♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
The Best of Stephen Stills ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1977)
Thoroughfare Gap ♪♪ (Columbia, 1978)
Live ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1979)
Right by You ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1984)
Stills Alone ♪♪♪ (Vision, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ The Beatles, Bob Dylan, the Everly Brothers, Fred Neil
▶▶ America, the Eagles, Poco, Michael Hedges

see also: *Neil Young*

Brian Escamilla

Mike Cross

Born 1946, in Maryville, TN.

Mike Cross came to music at a late age, not playing guitar until he was a student at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. But in the years since, he's more than made up for lost time. Accompanying his Southern-tinged vocals on acoustic guitar and fiddle, Cross has drawn from traditional folk music, Delta blues, and the fiddle tunes of Appalachia and the Celtic Isles. His turbo-paced performances have made him a favorite at folk festivals throughout the United States. Cross has successfully written a number of serious songs including the romantic tune, "Not for the Love I Can Take," and the down-and-out anthem, "Hard Times (Trouble and Strife)." But his ability to write funny songs has been his true calling card. Many of his

1976 j.d. crowe

funniest songs, including "Mountain Mean," "Liquor in the Well," "Rocky Top Bar-B-Que," and "Elma Turl" take a Lil' Abner-esque view of the southern Appalachian region and address such issues as in-breeding and moonshining. "The Great Strip Polka Massacre" tells of an ill-fated card game. "The Scotsman," which was a novelty hit for Bryan Bowers, answers the question of what's beneath a Scottish kilt. Cross's ballad, "Leon McDuff," was used by the Dirt Band as their theme song at Farm Aid. His spiritual hymn, "The Twelve Disciples," is used by Sunday school teachers to teach the names of the Apostles. Cross's future releases include a collection of children's music and an album, *Somewhere at Large in This World*, which includes "Graveyard of the Atlantic," which he wrote for a recent public TV documentary about the North Carolina coast.

what to buy: *Creme De La Cross: Best of the Funny Stuff* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994) reprises 14 humorous tunes from Cross's first eight albums and includes hillbilly classics—"Liquor in the Well," "Mountain Mean," "Elma Turl," and "Granny's Milk Cartons"—and the original version of "The Scotsman."

what to buy next: *Live & Kickin* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1981, prod. Mike Cross, David McGinley) and *Solo at Midnight* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1985, prod. Mike Cross) capture the excitement of Cross's concert performances. Both albums show the range of his material with the centerpieces being a lightning-fast rendition of the classic train song, "The Panama Limited," on *Solo at Midnight*, that blends earlier versions by Bukka White, Mississippi John Hurt, and Tom Rush, and "Good Night Medley," a foot-tapping olio of Celtic fiddle tunes on *Live & Kickin*.

what to avoid: *Carolina Sky* **woof!** (Sugar Hill, 1983, prod. Mike Cross, David McGinley) is devoid of humor and finds Cross at his weakest. Although "Not for the Love I Can Take" is a heartfelt romantic ballad, the remainder of the album is marked by darkness and sorrow.

the rest:
Child Prodigy ♪♪½ (Ghe, 1978)
The Bounty Hunter ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1979)
Born in the Country ♪♪½ (Ghe, 1980)
Rock 'n' Rye ♪♪½ (Ghe, 1980)
Prodigal Son ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
Irregular Guy ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
High Powered, Low Flying ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bukka White, Mississippi John Hurt, Tom Rush, Doc Watson, the Chieftains
▶▶ Bryan Bowers

Craig Harris

J.D. Crowe /J.D. Crowe and the New South

Born August 27, 1937, in GA.

J.D. Crowe, banjo, vocals; Tony Rice, guitar, vocals; Ricky Skaggs, fiddle, mandolin; Keith Whitley, guitar, lead vocals; Doyle Lawson, mandolin, vocals; Jerry Douglas, dobro; Phil Leadbetter, dobro; Curt Chapman, bass; Greg Luck, guitar, lead vocals; Darrell Webb, mandolin, lead vocals; others.

Incorporating songs from country and rock sources and employing sidemen the likes of Ricky Skaggs, Tony Rice, Keith Whitley, Doyle Lawson, and Jerry Douglas, J.D. Crowe & the New South became major trend-setters in contemporary bluegrass. Their self-titled 1975 album is rightly considered an all-time classic. Crowe himself came from a traditional background, appearing with Mac Wiseman and Jimmy Martin during the 1950s. Crowe all but retired from the music business during the late 1980s but returned to touring with a new version of the New South in 1994 (earning the International Bluegrass Music Association's "Banjo Player of the Year" award despite not releasing an album) and released *Flashback* the following year. Crowe has also played with the Bluegrass Album Band.

what to buy: The classic *J.D. Crowe & the New South* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1975) features one of the best line-ups of musicians ever assembled on a bluegrass album: Ricky Skaggs on mandolin and fiddle; Tony Rice on lead vocals and guitar; and Jerry Douglas on dobro. There is some fabulous instrumental work here, and Rice's lead vocals never sounded better.

what to buy next: *Flashback* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. J.D. Crowe), Crowe's comeback album, is a backward glance at his developmental years with Jimmy Martin and the Osborne Brothers and the early days of the New South.

the rest:
Blackjack ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1978)
Model Church ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1978)
Straight Ahead ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986)

influences:
◀◀ Country Gentlemen, Jimmy Martin
▶▶ Ricky Skaggs, Boone Creek, Tony Rice, Jerry Douglas

Douglas Fulmer

Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin

Formed 1992, in Cherokee, NC.

Josh Crowe, vocals, guitar; David McLaughlin (born February 13, 1958, in Virginia), vocals, mandolin, guitar.

Josh Crowe left Raymond Fairchild to strike out on his own in 1992. He invited David McLaughlin, the mandolin player for the Johnson Mountain Boys, to appear with him in a two-guitar and voices arrangement at a North Carolina bluegrass festival. They sounded like they had been singing together for years and decided to turn the one-time appearance into a regular arrangement.

what's available: On *Going Back* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Nancy McLaughlin), close harmonies and intricate acoustic guitar work characterize the 14 songs, including the Louvin Brothers' "Are You Wasting My Time," the Everly Brothers' "All I Have to Do Is Dream," and McLaughlin's fine original "Going Back to Old Virginia."

influences:

- The Everly Brothers, the Louvin Brothers, the Delmore Brothers
- The Gibson Brothers, the Whitstein Brothers

Douglas Fulmer

R. Crumb

See: Cheap Suit Serenaders

Johnny Cunningham

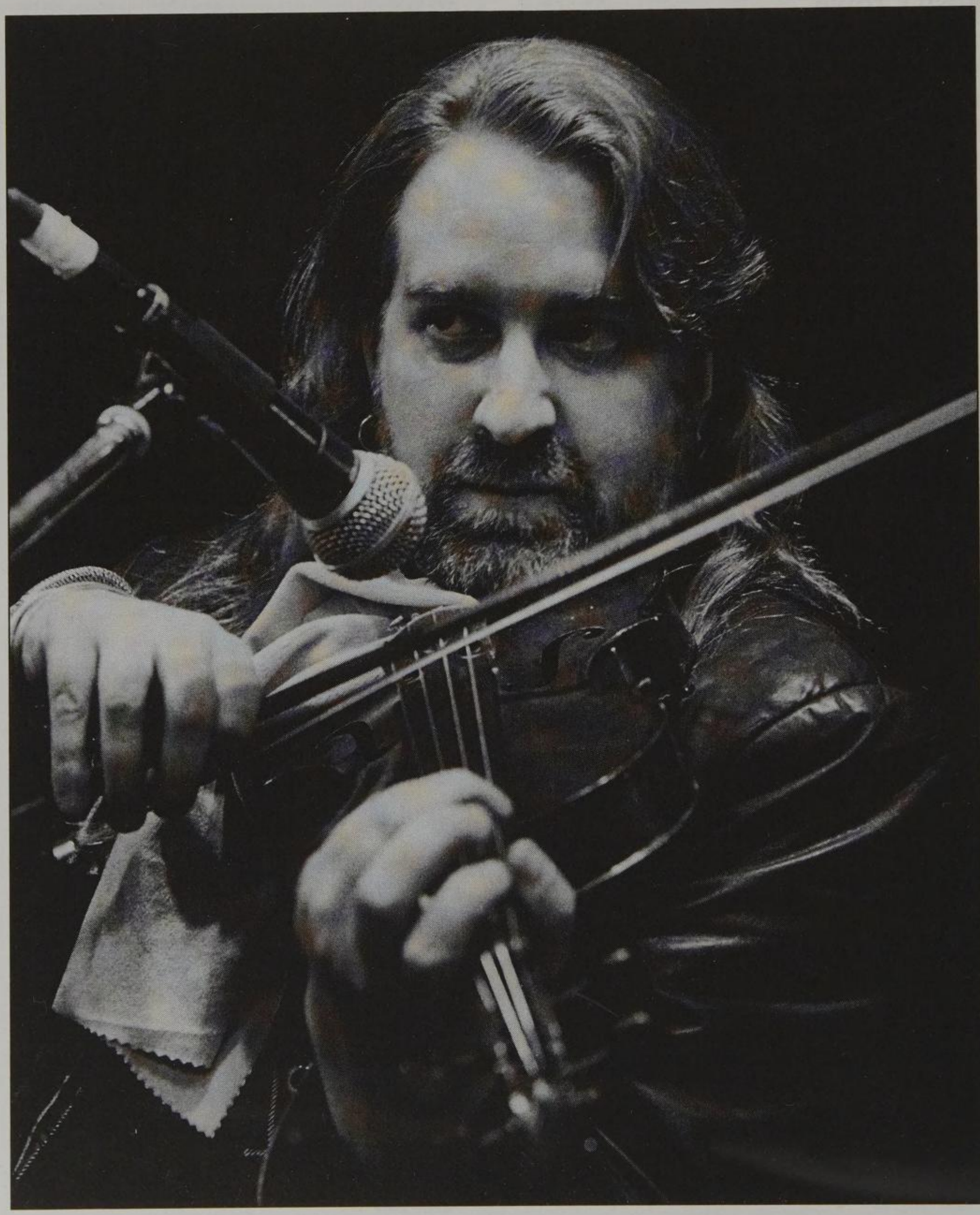
Born August 27, 1957, in Portobello, Scotland.

Johnny Cunningham is among the most talented and exciting musicians in contemporary Scottish music. He has, over the past 25 years, infused this somewhat hidebound style with a much-needed burst of energy and creativity. After a brief childhood in a musical family where he was surrounded by accordionists and pipers, Cunningham left home at age 14 to seek a life as a professional musician. Moving from one squalid Edinburgh flat to another, he met up with musicians Gordon Jones and Bob Thomas and the trio eventually formed Silly Wizard. After several personnel changes and years of destitution, the band took off, becoming a mainstay of the Scottish folk revival and performing all over the world. Their driving dance tunes and sweet songs helped to shake the cobwebs off of Scottish music during the 1970s and '80s, and led to years of tours and albums. Since leaving Silly Wizard, Cunningham has performed with Relativity, Nightnoise, and the rock band Raindogs. He has toured as a solo artist and as a member of the Celtic Fiddle Festival, and has produced numerous albums. Cunningham is a largely self-taught musician, who drew inspiration from the musicians he grew up around and avoided the Scottish fiddle scene with its restrictive emphasis on written collections and classical techniques. When pressed to choose a musical influence, Cunningham has named Tommy Potts, the Irish fiddler who, on his album *The Liffey Banks*, pulled, pushed, and stretched traditional Irish music as far as it would go without breaking. Cunningham is the same type of musician, well schooled in the traditional roots, carrying the music forward to new places.

what to buy: *Peter and Wendy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Alula Records, 1997, prod. Johnny Cunningham) is by far the most important, serious, and developed work of Cunningham's career. Written as the music for the Mabou Mines Theater Company's production of the 1911 J.M. Barrie novel *Peter and Wendy,* Cunningham's music successfully weds the sound of traditional Scottish music to the theater stage. Although all of the music for the show was written by Cunningham, it is built on a strong foundation of traditional Scottish music, liberally borrowing forms, progressions, and even whole sections of tunes from the repertoire. In order to bring his musical ideas to their fullest fruition, Cunningham surrounded himself with the cream of Irish-America's musicians including Seamus Egan, Solas's accordionist Mick McAuley, harpist Jay Ansill, and heavenly singer Susan McKeown. The result is a masterful soundtrack at once contemporary and rooted in tradition, full of beautiful playing and heartfelt singing. Sold in an attractive box with a beautiful full-color book inside, the packaging reflects the awesome care and effort that went into this production.

what to buy next: Kevin Burke, Johnny Cunningham, and Christian LeMaître's *The Celtic Fiddle Festival* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. John Cunningham) features Cunningham alongside Irish master Kevin Burke and Breton fiddler Christian LeMaître. In a program split between solos and group playing, the three push each other forward, each showing off their awesome technique and mastery of their related yet different styles. Highlights include Burke's set of three reels from County Clare, Cunningham's sweet "Mist Covered Mountains of Home," and the trio's ferocious attack on two French-Canadian reels, "The Dionne" and "The Mouth of the Tobique." The tasteful accompaniment by guitarist John McGann allows each of the fiddlers to shine to the fullest. This is a great album for any fan of fiddle music, and could serve as an excellent introduction to these re-

198 johnny cunningham



lated musical styles. *Fair Warning* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1983, prod. Johnny Cunningham, Vincent Moos) is a solid Scottish fiddle album, featuring some nice reel sets and a few beautiful slow airs. Accompanied by uilleann piper Tim Britton and guitarist Zan McLeod, among others, the playing is always solid but lacks a little of the fire of his Silly Wizard days. The highlights are the slow air "Logan Water," and the closing set of reels.

what to avoid: *The Soul of Christmas: A Celtic Music Celebration with Thomas Moore* ♪♪ (Upaya, 1997, prod. Johnny Cunningham) is a two-disc set containing one disc of New Age guru Thomas Moore discussing the nature of Christmas and one disc of performances of some well-known carols in a Celtic/New Age style. The musical performances feature Cunningham and many of the same musicians from the *Peter and Wendy* album as well as Kathy Mattea, Cathie Ryan, and vocalist Liam Tiernan. The songs are warm and comfortable but lacking in fire, especially those from Tiernan whose languid delivery slows everything it touches to an uncomfortable, glacial crawl. The instrumental settings are also slow and New-Agey for the most part, allowing only rare flashes of brilliance from these awesome performers (the one exception being a somewhat rousing "In Exelcis Deo" featuring Cunningham on fiddle). The most noticeable performances come from Cunningham who sings(!) the carol "I Saw Three Ships" and recites a couple of poems. The set is attractively packaged in a thick book containing Moore's discussion in essay form with some attractive, homey illustrations.

worth searching for: Cunningham's first solo album, *Thoughts from Another World* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1982), is now out of print. It's a slightly surreal recording, but indicative of Cunningham's musical restlessness and willingness to experiment.

influences:

◀◀ Aly Bain, Chuck Fleming, Tommy Potts

▶▶ Old Blind Dogs, Shooglenifty, Alisdair Fraser

see also: *Silly Wizard, Nightnoise, Phil Cunningham*

Tony Ziselberger

Phil Cunningham

Born January 27, 1960, in Portobello, Scotland.

Phil Cunningham is a tremendous musician, composer, arranger, and producer who has been at the very center of Scottish music for close to thirty years. An outstanding accordionist, whistle player, and keyboardist, Phil got his start with the mighty Silly Wizard, whose high-energy recordings of traditional jigs, reels, and songs jump-started Scottish music in the 1970s and '80s. After that group's demise, Phil and his brother John joined with Micheal and Triona O'Dhomhnaill to form Relativity, whose sedate, somewhat experimental sound was a precursor to many of the more ethereal Celtic bands of the 1990s. Since Relativity's disbanding, Phil has recorded and toured as a solo artist and with Shetland fiddler Aly Bain, written his first classical composition, *The Highlands and Islands Suite*, and produced countless albums for artists ranging from folk-rockers Wolfestone to singer Connie Dover to Altan. He currently lives on the Isle of Skye where he and his wife Donna run a recording studio.

what to buy: Cunningham's second solo project, *The Palomino Waltz* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1989, prod. Phil Cunningham), is a wonderful display of his writing and recording skills. He claims composer's credits on six of the album's nine tracks and writes variations for another. Among his outstanding compositions are the beautiful "Donna's Waltz," now a standard at sessions everywhere, and the sad slow air "The Ross Memorial Hospital." A lyrical album with four slow airs and a set of waltzes among the recording's nine tracks, the CD showcases Phil's outstanding, underrated whistle playing alongside his justly admired accordion work. For those of us who like Phil's killer accordion playing on dance tunes, there are a few sets of reels and some tricky strathspeys in which we can admire his outstanding technique. This is a well-produced album, with tasteful electric keyboards (also played by Mr. Cunningham) augmenting but not upstaging the tunes, and some nice guest appearances from fiddler Aly Bain and piper Finlay MacRae.

what to buy next: *Airs and Graces* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1984, prod. Phil Cunningham, Neil Ross) was Cunningham's first solo recording, and shows off his awesome accordion playing to great effect. Another showcase for Cunningham's own tunes, this one includes his famous air "Miss Rowan Davies" and a whole bunch of great reels, including "Andy Stewart's" and "Hogtie's Reel." In addition to the accordion, instruments played by the multitalented Cunningham on this recording include, whistle, keyboards, guitar, and cittern. The accompaniment is a little more traditional than on his second recording, with the synthesizer used more selectively and sparingly, and the piano and guitar filling the gaps.

what to avoid: In the world of Scotch whiskey, a blend can be pleasant, solid, tasty, even charming, but the true treasures are

Johnny Cunningham **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

2000

catie curtis

to be found among the single malts where the individual character of the whiskey stands out. So it is with this duet between Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham. When this awesome duo recorded *The Pearl* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Phil Cunningham) expectations ran high. After all, here were two of the great kings of Scottish music working together, pushing each other to greater and greater musical heights. Shetland-born Aly Bain is a great fiddler with a host of rare tunes who can alternately rev it up on the reels or make you cry with the airs. Phil Cunningham can also stir it up or tone it down with the best of 'em, plays everything, and writes all those beautiful tunes. So how come this record never gets going? The reels are all solid, the slow pieces are pretty, but outside of a reprise of "The Pearl," which Phil wrote and recorded back in his Silly Wizard days, nothing stands out. These guys are both masters, but they seem to hold each other back, settling for a pleasant middle ground, when they could have done so much more. As is the case with fine Scotch whiskey, stick with the solos and leave this disappointing blend alone.

worth searching for: *Against the Storm* (Shanachie, 1984) is a now out-of-print album featuring Phil and his brother John. It featured some tasty playing, and Shanachie's reluctance to reissue it is a mystery. Phil also has a tunebook, *The Phil Cunningham Collection, Vol. 1*, which includes many of his fine compositions.

influences:

⏪ Jimmy Shand

⏩ Shooglenifty, Wolfestone, Old Blind Dogs, Karen Tweed

see also: *Silly Wizard*

Tony Ziselberger

Catie Curtis

Born in Maine.

Catie Curtis began playing drums in her teens but soon picked up a guitar and began playing in her hometown of Saco, Maine, moving on to coffeehouses during her years in college at Brown University. She moved to San Francisco after graduating and worked as a waitress while working on her playing and songwriting. She toured nationally for several years, playing folk clubs, theaters, and bars before being signed by Guardian in 1995. Curtis's early experience with drums is evident in her rhythmic, often percussive style. Curtis has been described as a story collector and her songs gather poignant slices of life and make them universal and accessible. Her often soaring, always warm vocal style is the perfect vehicle to channel songs of social justice, family, friendship, and love. She values truth and dignity both in her own life and in the music she creates, a music that is intensely personal and vulnerable.

what to buy: *Truth from Lies* ♪♪♪♪ (Guardian, 1995, prod. Darleen Wilson, David Kershenbaum) represents Curtis's major label debut and is a fine collection of stories and personal vignettes. "Troubled Mind" is a sensitive plea for closeness as Curtis opens up to reveal her feelings. "I'm tired from all the weight/I'm tired from being strong/So won't you come and stay and let me lay down in your arms/Down in your arms." "Dad's Yard," an eloquent, moving tribute to her father, brings goosebumps to the skin and tears to the eye. "So if you need something when times get hard/You can probably find it in my dad's yard/And if you need hope/If you're coming apart/You can surely find it in my dad's heart." Making a powerful and affirming statement on alternative relationships, "Radical" is a strong statement that love will win out over prejudice.

what to buy next: On *From Years to Hours* ♪♪♪♪ (Mongoose Music, 1991, prod. Darleen Wilson) Curtis mixes the personal and the political, the local and the global, and brings the sensibility of someone who has been in the trenches (she was a former social worker) with people with colorful and sometimes desperate stories. On the personal side, the songs are mainly of relationships that didn't make it and the title song, "Mine Fields (From Years to Hours)," is a perfect vehicle for Curtis's soaring, expansive vocals. "It don't matter how I walk/I could get blown away/Underneath the soil and the flowers/I can hear a ticking down/from years to hours." Another, "Got Me Wondering," takes a dissolving relationship and defiantly tells it like it was. Liz Hamill's bluesy, in-your-face harmonica defines the mood of this no-apologies song. "You'd think I'd miss the letters and the conversation/You'd think I'd miss a good friend but I don't know if you were one/Still I liked your style and the way you looked at me/Got me wondering if the love was all that deep." "Hole in the Bucket," inspired by Curtis's observations, is a universal theme for folks that depend on a system that doesn't always work the way it should. "There's a hole in the bucket and the people fall out/There's money underground but you can't get it out." The production of Darleen Wilson is also notable on *From Years to Hours*. Wilson has brought in a fine group of musicians and mixed drums, sax, bass, piano, and others together in arrangements that never overpower Curtis's jazz influenced vocals. This is the sort of production that can take simple folk songs and, without diminishing them, make them much more accessible and interesting.

the rest:
Catie Curtis ♪♪♪ (Guardian, 1997)

worth searching for: *Dandelion* ♪♪♪ (1989) is an early self-produced cassette that contains a couple of gems that Curtis still performs occasionally in concert, including the title cut and "Backbone."

influences:
◀◀ Melanie, Bonnie Raitt, James Taylor, Greg Brown, John Gorka

▶▶ Cheryl Wheeler, Anne Hills

Denise Sofranko

Cusan Tan

See: Robin Huw Bowen

Paul Daigle

Born April 2, 1958, in Church Point, LA.

Paul Daigle is a uniquely Cajun performer. He was a solid traditional Cajun accordionist by age 14, but refused to form a band or record for 11 years. Not a singer, Daigle found Robert Elkins to handle vocal chores in 1984. Even more important has been Paul's long collaboration with Pierre Daigle (no relation). Pierre is a school teacher and the author of *Tears, Love, and Laughter: The Story of the Cajuns and Their Music*, a self-published history of Cajun music and musicians. Additionally, though he is not a musician, Pierre is a songwriter, and his songs—as performed by Paul Daigle and his group Cajun Gold—simply dominated the local Cajun music scene for much of the 1980s. The combination of new songs sung in Cajun French, with a strong traditional quality to them, and Paul Daigle's wonderful accordion playing proved overwhelmingly popular. These records broke ground that would be followed by younger songwriters like Christine Balfa and Kristi Guillory.

what to buy: *Paul Daigle—Robert Elkins & Cajun Gold* ♪♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1996, prod. Pierre Daigle) mixes together the elements of Paul Daigle's music that has made it so popular in Louisiana. There are his superb accordion chops, highlighted on "Two-Step a Paul Daigle (Paul Daigle Two-Step)," and the songs of Pierre Daigle that have become standards, including "Valse De La Vie (The Waltz of Life)," "Lumiere Dans Ton Chassis (The Light in Your Window)," and "Georgia Lou." The record also features two of the best fiddlers anywhere, Michael Doucet and Ken Smith.

what to buy next: *Est-Ce Que Tu Pleur* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1990, prod. Pierre Daigle) has more of Pierre Daigle's songs, notably the popular "Heritage Waltz." It is hard to ignore the way that Paul Daigle can rip through a Cajun classic like the "Perridon Two Step" or squeeze every last soulful note out of the "Evangeline Waltz."

worth searching for: Pierre Daigle's *Tears, Love, and Laughter: The Story of the Cajuns and Their Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow Publications, 1987) was the first readily available book in English on Cajun music. The first part of the book is a history of the Cajuns, ending with a list of Revolutionary War soldiers. The second half of the book is devoted to short biographical sketches with photos of Cajun musicians. Some are fairly well known in Cajun music; others are extremely obscure.

influences:
◀◀ Aldus Roger, Lawrence Walker, Nathan Abshire

▶▶ Sheryl Cormier, Kristi Guillory

Jared Snyder

Bruce Daigrepont

Born July 11, 1958, in New Orleans, LA.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Bruce Daigrepont was first drawn to the sounds of bluegrass and learned to play Scruggs-style banjo. He became interested in Cajun music while attending the Festival Acadien in Lafayette. The festival included young performers like Michael Doucet and Zachary Richard, who were updating traditional styles and singing in Cajun French. Daigrepont learned the language as a child during summers spent with his grandparents in rural Avoyelles Parish. He taught himself to play accordion and began playing around New Orleans. Interestingly, until Daigrepont came along, New Orleans was not particularly appreciative of Cajun music or Cajun dancing. Daigrepont is a good songwriter and his albums are packed with original songs, which stick close to Cajun tradition. You can hear the history in some of his best songs, like "Disco et Fais Do-Do" and "Acadie a la Louisiane," which broke ground for the "Jeune" generation of songwriters (Kristi Guillory, Christine Balfa, Horace Trahan).

2002 *malcolm dalglish*

what to buy: On *Stir Up the Roux* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Bruce Daigrepont), the sound fidelity of the recording is so good it's shocking. Perhaps Daigrepont's perspective as a New Orleans Cajun helped him develop a sound that could compete with the sonic quality of the rock and country records that Cajuns were listening to. Think of Daigrepont as the John Fogerty of Cajun music. There is drive and authenticity in his songs, as well as a modern sensibility clearly aware of other music.

what to buy next: *Coeur Des Cajuns* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Bruce Daigrepont) features "Acadie a la Louisiane," which has turned out to be a hit for Daigrepont in New Brunswick amongst the Acadian people. Daigrepont's production flourishes are meant to bring non-French speakers into the music in as comfortable a way as he can create.

the rest:
Petit Cadeau ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Aldus Roger, Iry Lejeune
▶▶ Horace Trahan, Steve Riley, Kristi Guillory

Jared Snyder

Malcolm Dalglish

Born August 14, 1952.

Malcolm Dalglish is a hammer dulcimer player and composer from Bloomington, Indiana, whose work draws on his diverse background in choir, theater, and folk music. A soprano during the early 1960s, Dalglish toured the U.S. and Europe as a vocal soloist with the Columbus Boychoir (now the American Boychoir). Acting became the focus of his secondary education and he took on numerous leading roles in both school and community productions. Dalglish heard his first hammer dulcimer in Tennessee in 1972, and an infatuation snowballed into a music career. During his college years he designed, built, and sold more than 60 different hammer dulcimers, some of them experimental in construction. This enabled Dalglish to support himself while studying at the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Starting in the summer of 1975, he staged 10 street dance festivals in Appalachian neighborhoods throughout the city with his Cincinnati Country Dance Orchestra, founded the Cincinnati Folklife Center, and successfully completed a year-long project entitled *Traditional Ethnic Music and the Elderly,* resulting in numerous concerts and a recording by elderly masters in the region. Throughout this time he amassed a large collection of vocal folk music from around the world. It is this repertoire of songs from the aural tradition that provides the context for all of his compositions. He formed a folk duo that became the trio, Metamora, with multi-instrumentalists Grey Larsen and Pete Sutherland. This collaboration produced six albums, including the musical score for the Disney feature film *Tuck Everlasting*. Metamora enjoyed frequent appearances on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* and Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. Dalglish also contributed to albums by Claudia Schmidt, John McCutcheon, and Debby McClatchy. During the late '80s he wrote numerous innovative dulcimer works, many of which were released as his contributions to the various Windham Hill seasonal samplers. He also won the *Frets* Magazine Instrumentalist of the Year award, which led to commissions from George Winston, the Pilobolus Dance Theater, the Mary Blackburn Dance company, and others. Beginning in the '90s, realizing the power of the voice and the word from his earlier work in choir and theater, Dalglish started to write material that would be more accessible to young singers and family audiences. He is presently a contributing composer for the American Boychoir, the St. Olaf Choir, Henry Leck's Choral Series with Plymouth Music, and Mary Goetze's Choral Series with Boosey & Hawkes. His theatrical, folk-oriented approach to music learning and choral composition has made him a featured guest at numerous music educator conventions around the country.

what to buy: *Hymnody of Earth* ♪♪♪♪ (Ooolitic Music, 1997, prod. Malcolm Dalglish, David Weber) is a ceremony of songs for choir, hammer dulcimer, and percussion, composed and arranged by Dalglish, featuring the poetry of Kentucky farmer and writer Wendell Berry. He is joined by the Ooolites, young singers ranging in age from 14 to 20, whose extraordinarily fresh and engaging voices are underscored by frame-drum virtuoso Glen Velez. According to Dalglish, "an oolite with two 'o's is a small egg-like fossil formation found here in southern Indiana limestone. Ooolite with three 'o's is a mouth and sound formation that begins with an exciting discovery and ends with a grin." Selections on this recording include "Over the River," about the flight of a few swallows over a flooded river, and "For the Future," a five-part round connecting trees, birds, singing, and the future. The second recording featuring Dalglish with the Ooolites is *Pleasure* ♪♪♪♪ (Ooolitic Music, 1997, prod. Malcolm Dalglish, David Weber). This album features songs of birds and critters, story ballads, mouth music, lullabies, laments, spirituals, and dance songs. Outstanding selections include "A Psalm of Life," with words by Henry W. Longfellow,

setting and arrangement by Dalglish, and "Woody Knows Nothin'," an American folk song arranged by Dalglish, commissioned by the Indiana University Children's Choir. These two recordings are available directly from the artist at Ooolitic Music, 1111 East Wylie Street, Bloomington, IN 47401; and from Alcazar at (800)541-9904.

what to buy next: *Jogging the Memory* ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill Records, 1985, prod. Elliott Mazer, William Ackerman, Malcolm Dalglish) is Dalglish's only other solo recording and is more typical of his earlier work with both Grey Larsen and with Metamora.

solo outings:

Malcolm Dalglish & Grey Larsen:

Banish Misfortune ♪♪♪½ (June Appal Recordings, 1977)
The First Autumn ♪♪♪ (June Appal Recordings, 1978) (cassette only)
Thunderhead ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1982)

Metamora:

Root Crops and Ground Cover ♪♪♪ (Tarquel Music, 1984) (cassette only)
Metamora ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill Records, 1985)
The Great Road ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill Records, 1987)
Morning Walk ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill Records, 1988)

influences:

◀◀ Eric Leinsdorf, Bill Irwin, Julie Taymour

▶▶ Dan Duggan, Joemy Wilson

see also: *Pete Sutherland*

Heidi Cerrigione

Jackie Daly

Born June 22, 1945, in Kanturck, County Cork, Ireland.

Accordionist Jackie Daly is among the most widely known performers of the distinctive Sliabh Luachra style of Irish music. Closely associated with the wild, hilly region between counties Kerry and Cork, the Sliabh Luachra style is music for set dancing, marked by strongly rhythmic fiddle and box playing and a reliance on polkas and slides, as opposed to the reels and jigs more common in the rest of Ireland. Daly grew up in this region, learning music from his father and from local masters Jim Keefe and Sean Lynch. He developed a rhythmic style of box playing well-suited to the Sliabh Luachra style and won the All-Ireland title in 1974. After a short stint playing with fiddler Seamus Creagh, he was asked to join the supergroup De Dannan in 1975. He toured with De Dannan for close to 10 years, appearing on some of that storied band's finest recordings. In 1986, he joined Kevin Burke, Andy Irvine, and Arty McGlynn to form Patrick Street, with whom he continues to tour and record. Daly has also been a member of Arcady and has toured widely with fiddle player Maire O'Keefe.

what to buy: Although the music of Kerry is by now well known to Irish music fans, this was by no means the case in 1977, the year *Music from Sliabh Luachra* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1977/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Tony Engle) was originally issued. Here was a revelation, a powerful young box player with a collection of tunes largely unknown outside of his hometown playing with verve and drive in a style different from every other accordion player of the time. Featuring a great collection of slides and polkas from his native Sliabh Luachra, along with some fine slow airs, the album has lost none of its appeal in the intervening 20 years and was rightly among the first four titles issued by Green Linnet in its Celtic Classics series. For serious fans of Irish music this album is required listening.

what to buy next: *Eavesdropper* ♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1981/Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Kevin Burke, Jackie Daly), a duet album made in 1979, features some of the closest duet playing one is likely to hear, with sparse guitar or piano accompaniment (or none at all), and an eclectic repertoire of lesser-known tunes. Among the latter, a beautiful arrangement with guitar of an uncommon version of "The Blackbird" stands out. Cork flute player Conal Ó Gráda guests on a few tracks, and so does Paul Brady on piano.

worth searching for: *Jackie Daly Agus Seamus Creagh* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael Linn, 1977, prod. Jackie Daly, Seamus Creagh) is another outstanding album from Daly, this time playing duets with fiddler Seamus Creagh. Ably accompanied by bodhrán player Colm Murphy, the boys tear through another fine collection of dance tunes and one song. This is a great collection of music, and for fans of the Sliabh Luachra style, it, too, is essential. When you've recorded a classic in your first attempt in the studio, then go join De Dannan for *The Mist Covered Mountain* and *Star Spangled Molly*—arguably the two finest albums that group has made—then go and form Patrick Street, and finally join Arcady, what happens if you make an album that's just okay? Well, *Many's a Wild Night* ♪♪♪ (Gael Linn, 1995, prod. Jackie Daly) is the answer. It's not a bad collection of tunes, the playing is good, though a little lacking in fire, and the production is the best of any of his solo albums. It's a solid album but pales a little in comparison with the recordings discussed above. Both of these albums are imports but can occasionally be found on this side of the Atlantic.

influences:

◀◀ Dennis Murphy & Julia Clifford, Padraig O'Keefe, Johnny O'Leary

▶▶ The Smoky Chimney, Sliabh Notes, Maire O'Keefe

see also: *De Dannan, Patrick Street, Arcady*

Tony Ziselberger

Darby and Tarlton

Formed c. 1927, in Columbus, GA.

Tom Darby (born 1890?, in Columbus, GA; died 1971, in Columbus, GA); Jimmie Tarlton (born May 8, 1892, in Chesterfield County, SC; died November 29, 1979, in Phenix City, AL).

In 1924, Vernon Dalhart's hit Victor recording of "Wreck of the Old 97"/"The Prisoner's Song" convinced the young recording industry that there was money to be made in producing "hillbilly" material, and within a few years the hunt was on in earnest throughout the South for new talent, with makeshift studios springing up in hotels and warehouses, and posters announcing auditions plastered on every telephone pole in town. The most famous of these sessions took place during the summer of 1927 in Bristol, on the Tennessee/Virginia border, where Victor's Ralph Peer first recorded both Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family. During April of that year, however, an earlier session in Atlanta marked the recording debut of Tom Darby and Jimmie Tarlton, and although they faded during the Depression years and were nearly forgotten, they still stand as one of the most important and distinctive of the early country music acts. Both were raised in musical families, and Tom Darby claimed himself a second cousin of Riley Puckett, the legendary blind guitarist with the Skillet Lickers. He also maintained over his life that he had written "Columbus Stockade Blues" (one of their early hits), a song that has been done countless times over the years by many, notably Doc Watson. While Darby had spent most of his life in Georgia, Tarlton was the son of an itinerant sharecropper and spent much of his youth traveling from farm to farm, continuing to wander as a young man. Originally a banjo player, he eventually picked up the slide guitar, and while in California met Frank Ferera, a noted Hawaiian and steel guitar player, who broadened his perspective on the art of slide guitar. Newly married around 1927, Tarlton came to Columbus, Georgia, to look for work in the textile mills and met Tom Darby through a mutual friend who suggested they play music together. Darby played guitar, but with an unusual fingerpicking style played in an open tuning that emphasized a prominent, strong rhythm with the thumb. Combined with Tarlton's lap-style Hawaiian guitar, they formed one of the more remarkable instrumental duets of the day. While the advent of the dobro, the resonator guitar that grew out of the Hawaiian guitar, was still several years in the future, it's fair to say that Tarlton's playing, along with that of Ellsworth Cozzens of Jimmie Rodgers's band, was the prototype for the dobro sound of players like Pete "Bashful Brother Oswald" Kirby and Cliff Carlisle that became such an important facet of country music. Yet even more remarkable than their playing were the vocals. Where the Carter Family, for example, strove for close-knit, tight harmony, Darby and Tarlton were much more free-form in their approach to their singing. Both had strong, solid voices, and sang in a style that echoed Vernon Dalhart's, yet at times when one would be diving down to a lower octave, the other would be passing him on the way up, occasionally breaking into a falsetto wail. While far from the "blue yodels" of Jimmie Rodgers, the effect is startling. Even though the Depression put an end to their careers as recording artists, Darby and Tarlton are still one of the prime examples of the links between the blues and what we've come to know as "country music."

what's available: *On the Banks of a Lonely River* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1994, prod. Gary B. Reid) is an excellent introductory collection of early Darby & Tarlton material and many of the tracks on the CD were transcribed directly from rare 78 rpm discs recorded between 1927 and 1930. Although "Columbus Stockade Blues" is not among the 17 recordings on this CD, several of their best-known hits do appear: "Lonesome Railroad," "Captain Won't You Let Me Go Home," "New Birmingham Jail," "Lonesome in the Pines," and the collection's title cut, "On the Banks of a Lonely River." Robert Nobley's liner notes add valuable history and perspective on this seminal country music duo. For the shopper with deeper pockets and a clear desire to thoroughly investigate their music, *Complete Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1995) is relatively expensive—in the $70 range—but is certainly the definitive three-CD collection of all the duo's Columbia and Victor recordings made during the late '20s and early '30s. As is the case with most Bear Family collections, the mastering is excellent and the enclosed booklet tells you everything you could ever possibly need to know about this distinctive Southern duo. If you can afford it, this is definitely the one to buy.

worth searching for: There are undoubtedly a number of "early country" anthologies that include one or more Darby & Tarlton selections, but one to especially keep an eye out for is the two-

CD set *White Country Blues: 1926–1938, A Lighter Shade of Blue* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1993), which features Darby & Tarlton on two of the 48 cuts, "Sweet Sarah Blues" and "Frankie Dean" (which also appears on the County CD). Taken as a whole, the Columbia set does a good job of putting Tom and Jimmie into the context of their musical times, with such contemporaries as Charlie Poole and Cliff Carlisle. For the listener interested in the cross-pollination going on between black and white musicians during the first half of the twentieth century, this collection is a real eye-opener.

influences:

◀◀ Clayton "Pappy" McMichen, Riley Puckett, Gid Tanner, Ernest V. "Pop" Stoneman

▶▶ Roy Acuff, the Delmore Brothers, Doc Watson

John Lupton

Mason Daring /Jeanie Stahl and Mason Daring

Born September 26, 1949, in Ithaca, NY.

Mason Daring's virtuoso acoustic guitar playing, warm vocal harmonies, and craftsman-like songwriting first attracted attention when he performed as a duo with vocalist and acoustic guitarist Jeanie Stahl. Since then, his greatest impact has come as a record producer and composer of film soundtracks, which include the John Sayles–produced films *Lianna, The Brother from Another Planet, Matewan,* and *Passion Fish.* Daring and Stahl first played together shortly after meeting in a folk music coffeehouse in Marblehead, Massachusetts, in 1974. In addition to performing together as a duo for more than a decade, they performed, along with Bill Staines, Guy Van Duser, and Billy Novick, in a folk supergroup, the Passim All-Stars.

what to buy: *The Early Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Daring, 1992, prod. Mason Daring, Jeanie Stahl, Robin Batteau) assembles cuts from Daring and Stahl's first decade of recordings and includes harmonious interpretations of Bill Staines's "River" and "The Boats They Come and the Boats They Go" and Batteau's "Take This Heart" and "The Eyes of the Beholder." Daring shows his songwriting skills with three original tunes—"Cinderella," "Shiloh," and "Marblehead Morning."

what to buy next: Daring's film soundtrack *Matewan* ♪♪♪½ (Daring, 1982, prod. Mason Daring) combines country blues, union songs, and ethnic material and features songs by John Hammond and Hazel Dickens. It is available on cassette only.

the rest:

(With Jeanie Stahl) *Sweet Melodies in the Night* ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1978)
(With Jeanie Stahl) *Heartbreak* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1980)

influences:

◀◀ Bill Staines, Tom Rush, Paul Simon

▶▶ Jeanie Stahl, Guy Van Duser and Billy Novick

see also: *Jeanie Stahl*

Craig Harris

Erik Darling

See: Rooftop Singers

Shaun Davey

See: Rita Connolly

The Rev. Gary Davis

Born April 30, 1896, in Laurens, SC. Died May 5, 1972, in Hammonton, NJ.

When it comes to virtuoso blues guitarists of the first generation whose influence is still felt today, the Reverend Gary Davis is at the top of the list. His inventiveness on 6- and 12-string guitars, complex picking patterns, lightning-fast runs, and use of different keys influenced not only his contemporaries like Blind Boy Fuller but informs the work of Taj Mahal, Dave Van Ronk, Jackson Browne, Bob Dylan, Jorma Kaukonen, David Bromberg, and Ry Cooder—the latter four actually studied guitar with him. One of the best Piedmont blues stylists, Davis launched his career playing the streets of Durham, North Carolina, in the 1920s. Prior to that, as a teenager, he came under the tutelage of Willie Walker in Greenville, South Carolina, playing in a string band and developing his guitar playing. Although sources differ as to when his blindness occurred, it appears that he was in his teens, and he became a prototype for blind street singers. Businessman J.B. Long recorded Davis in 1935, but after a couple blues numbers, Davis became adamant about playing religious songs. He was ordained in 1937 and added "Reverend" before his name. He moved to New York in 1944, where he preached and sang on the streets of Harlem. His recording career picked up in the 1960s when appearances at Newport and other folk festivals revived interest in his work; two documentary films have been made on his life. He continued to perform until his death in 1972, leaving behind a legacy that still resonates.

guy davis

what to buy: Of the early recordings that are available, *The Complete Early Recordings of the Reverend Gary Davis* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1994) best captures Davis from those J.B. Long sessions and a couple of cuts from 1949. Songs such as "I'm Throwin' up My Hand" demonstrate guitar playing that sounds like an end run on a piano. His religious fervor is captured in cuts such as "The Great Change in Me," where he sounds like he is preaching to the flock, "I Saw the Light," convincing proof that God and religious faith have transformed him, and the slow country blues of "O Lord, Search My Heart," which has a country/western feel. This remastered set has eliminated some of the tape hiss from those early sessions without compromising the rest of the sound. *Pure Religion and Bad Company* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991) features material recorded in 1957. Still strongly religious and fervid as ever, Davis's fiery guitar skills are highlighted on instrumental tracks like "Mountain Jack," the deliberate "Cocaine Blues," "Evening Sun," and "Hesitation Blues." His proselytizing is forceful in "Right Now," just as his voice is on "Crucifixion."

what to buy next: *Say No to the Devil* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bluesville, 1961, prod. Kenneth Goldstein) highlights Davis's religious fervor, but what makes it more interesting for collectors is the haunting harmonica work. On "No One Can Do Me Like Jesus," his voice echoes the sound of his harp. But it is still the combination of finger picking and scorching vocals on the title cut, as well as on "Lord, I Looked Down the Road" and "Tryin' to Get to Heaven in Due Time," that remind us how masterfully Davis blended blues and gospel. *Blues & Ragtime* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. Stefan Grossman) is the most interesting disc of his later work (between 1962–66), because of the inclusion of longer tracks such as the almost rambling "Hesitation Blues," which clocks in at nearly 12 minutes. It best captures how Davis abandoned some of his religious fervor in the 1960s and returned to some of his early roots with ragtime pieces such as "Cincinnati Flow Rag" (which he learned back in the Willie Walker days) and "Cocaine Blues," and it even displays his sense of humor on a seven-minute "She's Funny That Way." *Live at Newport* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967) is a must for anyone who wants the *live* Davis experience, with a short but effective and fast-fingered turn on "Buck Dance" and great vocals that demonstrate his range on the gospel-tinged "You Got to Move," "I've Done All My Singing for My Lord," and the country blues of "Lovin' Spoonful."

what to avoid: *At the Sign of the Sun* ♪♪♪ (Gospel/Heritage, 1962) is not particularly bad, but the recording quality for this period is better represented on other discs.

the rest:

Gospel Blues & Street Songs ♪♪♪♪½ (Original Blues Classics, 1961)
From Blues to Gospel ♪♪♪½ (Biograph, 1992)
Harlem Street Singer ♪♪♪♪ (Prestige/Bluesville, 1992)
Complete Recorded Works 1935–49 ♪♪♪♪½ (Document, 1994)
I Am a True Vine (Gospel Heritage, 1994)
Sign of the Sun 1962 (Gospel Heritage, 1994)
O Glory—The Apolostic Studio Sessions ♪♪♪ (Genes, 1995)
Live & Kicking ♪♪♪½ (Just a Memory, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Willie Walker, Blind Boy Fuller, Blind Lemon Jefferson

▶▶ Bob Dylan, Ry Cooder, Taj Mahal, Jorma Kaukonen, Dave Van Ronk, Peter, Paul and Mary

John Koetzner

Guy Davis

Born May 12, 1952, in New York, NY.

Guitarist/songwriter/singer Guy Davis has exploded onto the blues scene as one of the most captivating performers of pre-World War II blues. His recordings are infused with his personal and deeply-felt connection to his African American cultural heritage. His commitment to the acoustic tradition, realized via 6- and 12-string guitar, slide guitar, harmonica, and washboard, creates a "time-capsule" feel to his recordings, even on his original material.

what's available: Davis, son of actor Ossie Davis, has recorded two albums. *Call Down the Thunder* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996, prod. Joe Ferry, Guy Davis) blends classic Piedmont hokum stomp, old-time gospel, deft fingerpicking, and straight-up blues for a unique, original recording. *Stomp Down Rider* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1995, prod. Thom Wolke), a live recording, is enjoyable but less intriguing than *Call Down the Thunder*, relying too heavily on the familiar legacy of Robert Johnson.

influences:

◀◀ Big Bill Broonzy, Rev. Gary Davis, Robert Johnson, Mance Lipscomb, Blind Willie McTell

▶▶ Keb' Mo'

Bryan Powell

Jimmie Davis

Born September 11, 1900(?), in Quitman, LA.

Born the oldest of 11 children to sharecroppers in northern Louisiana, Jimmie Davis began singing as a youngster in

church. His subsequent interest in politics resulted in his twice being elected governor of Louisiana. Although he failed in his bid for a third term in 1971, he was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame the following year. With a repertoire that included gospel standards, weepy ballads, and sexually suggestive blues numbers, Davis's appeal was certainly broad.

what to buy: *Country Music Hall of Fame Series* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991, prod. Country Music Foundation) is the only worthwhile collection of Davis's most familiar material currently available on CD. Compiled by the Country Music Foundation, the single disc mixes such classics as "You Are My Sunshine" and "Nobody's Darling but Mine" with a good cross-section of other chart toppers, plus a few of the racier records from his early Decca days.

what to buy next: *Greatest Hits—Finest Performances* ♪♪♪♪ (Sun Entertainment, 1995) contains re-recordings of many of his classics, with Davis in fine voice, and is a lively production that attempts to stay fairly close to the original versions.

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers

▶▶ Ernest Tubb

Stephen L. Betts

Julie Davis

Born September 29, 1946, in Wray, CO.

Julie Davis is a Colorado multi-instrumentalist known for her storytelling and her musicianship. She teaches and performs with the autoharp, guitar, bowed psaltery, and folk flutes such as panpipes and gemshorn. Davis's academic background in early music contributes to her style, and she often performs her music for children with disabilities, patients in hospice care, and people with head trauma or Alzheimer's disease. She was honored to be part of the Outstanding Colorado Artists concert series in the early '90s.

what's available: *Traveling Light* ♪♪♪♪ (Winter Wind Music, 1994, prod. Julie Davis) is a pleasant folk collection of vocal and instrumental selections, from "Howl at the Moon" by Jim Ratts and John McEuen, to "Music Box Waltz" by Ron Wall and Mike Howard. Davis's consistently clear vocals are complemented by 16 talented musicians, including Harry Tuft (harmony vocals, guitar), Susan Hess (electric bass), Doug Berch (hammered dulcimer), Eric Levine (violin), Mary Stribling (harmony vocals, bass), and Daniel Jones (pedal steel). Davis's autoharp is featured throughout in well-planned arrangements, interacting superbly with the other instruments in interesting combinations. *Traveling Light* is available from Winter Wind Music, P. O. Box 1302, Nederland, CO 80466.

worth searching for: *Heart Full of Song* ♪♪♪ (Winter Wind Music, 1991, prod. Julie Davis) is the artist's debut recording of her favorite songs. *Journey to the Fluted Mountain* ♪♪♪ (Winter Wind Music, 1997, prod. Julie Davis) is an enchanting narration of the artist's journey on the Colorado Trail, with an occasional instrumental highlight. These two recordings are available from Winter Wind Music on cassette tape.

influences:

◀◀ Maybelle Carter, Sylvia Fricker, Alice Stewart

▶▶ Harvey Reid, June Maugery

Heidi Cerrigione

Julian Dawson

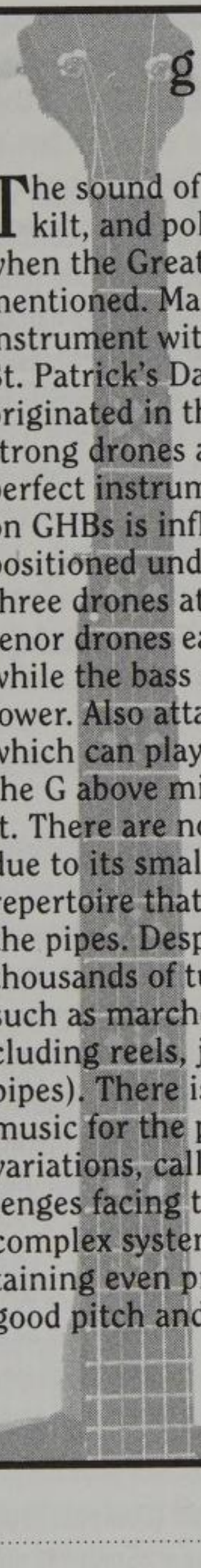
Born July 4, 1954, in London, England.

Julian Dawson makes pop music for smart people. Exquisitely produced and heartfully sung, it's singer-songwriter music gone uptown. Dawson was born to be influenced by American music; his birthday is Independence Day. He toured Germany in his youth before returning to England. His first three LPs (now out of print) were on Rough Trade and Polydor, but in 1990 he released his first American-based album, *Live on the Radio*, on Watermelon Records in Austin, Texas. He later joined Compass Records in Nashville, Tennessee. He was a founding member of Plainsong with Iain Matthews.

what to buy: *Travel On* ♪♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1995, prod. Stewart Lerman, Steuart Smith, Garry Tallent) is a masterful pop album reminiscent of early Squeeze. Highlights include "Sigh Heart Don't Break" and "New Columbus," the latter an acid-tinged look at America.

what to buy next: *Move Over, Darling* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1997, prod. Julian Dawson, Stewart Lerman, Steuart Smith) is more acoustically oriented, mellower, and more introspective, the title track notwithstanding. It highlights Dawson's adeptness at rendering tongue-in-cheek songs like the title track, a Doris Day chestnut, with earnest affection. (Similarly inclined artists the Roches and Richard Thompson guest on this track.) A tribute to Elvis Presley, "It Came from Memphis," draws on a bit of Dawson trivia: Elvis was rehearsing his Sun Sessions the day Dawson was born. "Locked out of Paradise," reminiscent of the Eagles' "New Kid in Town," has a wistful charm.

2008 de danann



great highland bagpipe

The sound of the drone, the sway of the kilt, and police funerals all come to mind when the Great Highland Bagpipe (GHB) is mentioned. Many mistakenly associate this instrument with the Irish, due to its use in St. Patrick's Day parades, but it actually originated in the highlands of Scotland. The strong drones and piercing sound make it a perfect instrument for use outdoors. The bag on GHBs is inflated by mouth and generally positioned under the left arm. There are three drones attached to the bag; the two tenor drones each play an A below middle C, while the bass drone plays the A an octave lower. Also attached to the bag is a chanter, which can play nine different notes, from the G above middle C to the second A above it. There are no accidentals available, and due to its small range there is a limited repertoire that can be converted for play on the pipes. Despite this limitation, there are thousands of tunes available to the piper, such as marches, airs, and dance tunes (including reels, jigs, strathspeys, and hornpipes). There is also a form of classical music for the pipes, based on a theme and variations, called the piobaireachd. Challenges facing the piper include learning a complex system of grace notes and maintaining even pressure on the bag to keep good pitch and tone.

Jo Hughey Morrison

De Danann /De Dannan

Formed 1974, in Spiddal, County Galway, Ireland.

Frankie Gavin, fiddle, viola, flute, tin whistle, piano, vocals (1974–present); Alec Finn, bouzouki, guitar, keyboards (1974–present); Charlie Piggot, banjo, melodeon, tin whistle (1974–82); Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh, bodhrán, bones (1974–present); Dolores Keane, vocals, flute (1974–75, 1985–88); Johnny Moynihan, vocals, bouzouki, mandolin, tin whistle (1976–79); Jackie Daly, accordion (1980–82); Maura O'Connell, vocals (1981–82); Mary Black, vocals (1983–87); Martin O'Connor, accordion (1983–88); Caroline Lavelle, cello (1987–88); Eleanor Shanley, vocals (1988–92); Aidan Coffey, accordion (1988–94); Colm Murphy, bodhrán, bones (1988–present); Adele O'Dwyer, cello (1988–90); Tommy Flemming, vocals (1994–present); Derek Hickey, accordion (1996–present).

If Planxty and the Bothy Band could be called the Beatles of Irish traditional music, then De Danann would have to be its Rolling Stones. For not only has this Galway-based band been extremely prolific and adventurous in its choice of repertoire and its arrangements, it has also shown remarkable longevity for a folk band, rivaling the Chieftains as an Irish musical institution. Over the 24 years of its existence, De Danann (they now spell their name De Dannan) has gone through numerous changes in its lineup, in the process launching the careers of several of today's best known Irish folk vocalists. Yet the band has kept the driving, straight-ahead, session-like sound of its beginnings. All along, fiddle player extraordinaire Frankie Gavin and subtle bouzouki accompanist Alec Finn have remained the driving force behind that sound. Raised in a musical family, Gavin was a precocious fiddle and flute virtuoso who was still in school when the band came together at Galway-area sessions. Yorkshire-born Finn was involved in the Dublin blues scene in the 1960s before he moved to Spiddal, County Galway, and was given a bouzouki with which he started to frequent local Irish music sessions. There he met Gavin, Kerry banjo and melodeon player Charlie Piggot, and master of the bodhrán and bones Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh. When a few professional engagements came their way, the lads became a band. They recorded their first album in 1975 with the help of singer Dolores Keane, a neighbor of Gavin. However, Keane left soon after the album came out to perform with her husband John Faulkner. Former Sweeney's Men and Planxty member Johnny Moynihan became the band's singer for a time, appearing on its second LP, *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs*, in 1978. By the time *The Mist Covered Mountain* came out two years later, the band had again lost its vocalist—the album's vocal tracks were

the rest:
Live on the Radio ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1990)

influences:
◀◀ The Beatles, Don Dixon, Gerry Rafferty, Otis Redding

▶▶ Lee Collinson

see also: *Iain Matthews*

Pamela Murray Winters

of traditional Connemara singers—but gained a great instrumentalist in the person of Kerry accordion player Jackie Daly. It wasn't long before the band members were able to talk singer Maura O'Connell into joining, just in time to record *The Star Spangled Molly*, the band's first truly successful album. True to form, however, the band soon lost half of its lineup when Piggot, O'Connell, and Daly left in rapid succession. Piggot was disabled in a freak accident and could no longer play, O'Connell was more interested in pursuing a career in country music, and Daly needed a change. Gavin and Finn found accordion wizard Martin O'Connor and singer Mary Black to replace them, and the new lineup produced the memorable *Song for Ireland* in 1983. When the band recorded *Anthem* two years later, its members asked Dolores Keane if she would sing "Let It Be" on it. Somehow she ended up recording a duet with Black and was back in the band in no time at all. This may well have been De Danann's finest lineup, yet it proved to be an embarrassment of riches. There was too much talent to go around, both instrumentally and vocally, and not enough time in concert sets to accommodate it all. Black left the band in 1987. At about the same time, Gavin recruited cellist Caroline Lavelle after a chance encounter on the streets of London, and the band went on to release the nostalgic *Ballroom*, using the new spelling, De Dannan, for its name. Another major change in the lineup occurred the very next year, as the band recorded *A Jacket of Batteries* in 1988 with Leitrim singer Eleanor Shanley, Aidan Coffey on accordion, Colm Murphy on bodhrán and bones, and cellist Adele O'Dwyer replacing Lavelle. Minus O'Dwyer, the same band recorded *1/2 Set in Harlem* in 1991, continuing their experimentation with contemporary songwriters' material, and adding gospel and klezmer musicians to their unlikely stew. Although De Dannan's fate has seemed uncertain since, as various members dropped out or pursued solo projects, the band toured extensively in 1994 with a new singer, Tommy Flemming, and a new cassette entitled *World Tour 1994—Studio & Live Recordings*. In 1996, accordionist Derek Hickey having replaced Aidan Coffey, De Dannan put out *Hibernian Rhapsody*, named after the band's intricate instrumental arrangement of Queen's rock anthem "Bohemian Rhapsody."

what to buy: As De Danann were without a designated singer when they recorded *The Mist Covered Mountain* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1980/Shanachie, 1980, prod. De Danann), the band opted to include vocal tracks by two prominent exponents of Connemara seán-nos singing, Seán Ó Conaire and Tom Pháidín Tom, the latter just months before his death at age 85. Despite good intentions, the juxtaposition of their essentially unaccompanied, rhythmically free style of singing with the band's bouzouki and whistle accompaniments often sounds at odds. However, the strength of the album is in the exciting instrumentals spun by Gavin, Piggot, and newly recruited Kerry accordionist Jackie Daly. The spectacular opening and closing sets of jigs into reels and the arrangement of O'Carolan's "Mr. O'Connor" are among the best instrumental tracks of the band's recorded output. *The Star Spangled Molly* ♪♪♪♪½ (Ogham, 1981/Shanachie, 1981, prod. De Danann, Nicky Ryan) is De Danann's salute to Irish-American music of the 1920s and 1930s and to Gavin's favorite performers of the period, the Flanagan Brothers and Sligo fiddler James Morrison. Despite Maura O'Connell's reservations about performing Irish songs, this album established her as a powerful singer and her name is forever associated with the delightful Irish-American stage songs "Maggie" and "My Irish Molly-O." Frankie Gavin also sings, on "I'm Leaving Tipperary," one of the more joyous Irish emigration songs, borrowed from a 78 by the Boston-based Dan Sullivan's Shamrock Band. The instrumental tracks, featuring once again the tight playing of Gavin and Daly, are as energetic as ever. In the Flanagan Brothers' "New Irish Barn Dance," the instrumentation, adding piano accompaniment and hammered dulcimer touches, brilliantly captures the tune's music-hall character, while other medleys of reels and jigs echo performers of long ago: John McKenna, P.J. Conlon, John Kimmel. Oddly enough, probably the best known track on the album, even if totally irrelevant to its theme, would have to be De Danann's famous arrangement of the Beatles' "Hey Jude," in which the melody gets transformed into a hornpipe. The die-hard De Danann fan may want to acquire the CD version recently put out by K-Tel Music as *De Danann* (K-Tel, 1996), as it includes two additional tracks, one instrumental and one vocal, which were originally released on a single. The stunning voice of Mary Black is one reason for which *Song for Ireland* ♪♪♪♪½ (Cara, 1983/Sugar Hill, 1983, prod. Nick Bicât, De Danann) remains one of the band's most memorable albums. Black shines on the much-copied title song, "Song for Ireland"; the classic song by Stephen Foster, "Hard Times"; and "Live Not Where I Love," while Gavin is the vocalist on the Irish-American stage song, "Barney from Killarney." There are gems as well among the instrumentals, most of which were recorded while Daly was still in the band. Of the ones to which Daly's successor, Martin O'Connor, contributed, the opening "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (In Galway)," based on Handel's sinfonia from his oratorio *Solomon*, is such a rollicking tour-de-force that one may start thinking the composer would have enjoyed it that way. *The Best of De Danann* (Shanachie, 1987) ♪♪♪♪½ is an excellent anthology based on the band's first four albums. In particular, it in-

cludes some tracks from De Danann's first two LPs, *De Danann* and *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs*, both no longer available.

what to buy next: On *Anthem* ♪♪♪½ (Dara, 1985, prod. John Dunford, Alec Finn, Frankie Gavin), Mary Black and Dolores Keane share vocal duties and, not surprisingly, this is the first De Danann album to give equal time to vocal and instrumental tracks. Black's voice is perfectly suited for the emotionally charged "Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye" and "Paddy's Lamentation." On the strength of their earlier success of "Hey Jude," the band asked Keane to sing on another Beatles classic, "Let It Be." Gavin and O'Connor continue to work their instrumental magic on medleys of traditional dance tunes. Noteworthy exceptions (although in traditional style) are Gavin's own three-part jig, "The Wren's Nest," and "Ríl an Spidéal," a set of reels by Leitrim fiddle and piano player Charlie Lennon. A sequel of sorts to *The Star Spangled Molly*, *Ballroom* ♪♪♪½ (WEA/Green Linnet, 1987, prod. De Dannan) celebrates the music of the Irish and Irish-American dance halls of earlier decades. Pioneer musicians like John Kimmel and Eleanor Neary are remembered through dance tunes they recorded or composed, while Dolores Keane invites us to the waltz with her renditions of classics like "Teddy O'Neill," "The Sweet Forget-Me-Not," and the closing medley starting with "The Stone Outside Dan Murphy's Door." A touch of exoticism is provided by a medley of "Jewish Reels," learned from New York klezmer musician Andy Statman. *A Jacket of Batteries* ♪♪♪ (Harmac, 1988/Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Alec Finn, Frankie Gavin, Jimmy McCarthy, Dan Fitzgerald) introduced us to a new group of talented musicians, accordionist Aidan Coffey, who proves a worthy successor to Daly and O'Connor, singer Eleanor Shanley, and drummer Colm Murphy. For better of for worse, it also gave a definite impression that the band settled on a formula: throw in a few jigs and reels, a piece of classical music ("The Rambles of Bach"), a Beatles song ("Eleanor Rigby"), and a mixture of traditional and contemporary songs. Still, there are good moments, for instance the reel medley of "Sailing In" (Charlie Lennon) and "Alice's Reel" (Frankie Gavin), or Shanley's passionate rendition of the classic "Carrickfergus." De Dannan's latest, *Hibernian Rhapsody* ♪♪♪ (The Bee's Knees, 1995/Shanachie, 1996, prod. De Dannan), shows that despite the years Finn and Gavin can still find talented musicians—this time accordionist Derek Hickey and singer Tommy Flemming—willing to join the band. Hickey proves up to the task as Gavin's new "straight man," although the band's virtuoso but pointless instrumental arrangement of Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" is among the least interesting tracks. The intense singing style of Tommy Flemming suggests a comparison with that of Mary Black, but recent live appearances by the band show that the new combination works better there than on record. It's worth noting that the Bees Knees release and the Shanachie release are slightly different in that the former contains the songs "The Water Is Wide" and "Fios Na Siochanna" and the instrumental "Do It in Jig Time," but does not have the song "Captain Jack" (composed by Meg Davis but not credited) and the instrumental "Sean McGuire's" which are on the U.S. version. So the Irish version has 16 tracks, the U.S. 15.

what to avoid: *1/2 Set in Harlem* ♪♪½ (The Bee's Knees, 1991/Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Arty McGlynn, Frankie Gavin, Alec Finn), which follows to some extent the formula of *A Jacket of Batteries*, is De Dannan's most adventurous album to date. However, the inclusion of gospel singers on songs like "Operator," and of klezmer-style clarinet and horn on a set of Irish hornpipes, ends up sounding more incongruous than successful.

worth searching for: The first two De Danann albums, *De Danann* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1975, prod. Dónal Lunny) and *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs* ♪♪♪♪½ (Decca, 1978, prod. Carsten Linde, Nicky Ryan, De Danann), are not currently available. They remain among the band's very best and are well worth searching for. On *De Danann*, which was available on CD from Polydor for a short while, classic instrumental tracks like the jig medley "Tripping up the Stairs," featuring Finn's fine bouzouki harmonies, or Gavin's fiddle solo on "The Gold Ring" are almost eclipsed by Dolores Keane's sean-nos (old style) singing on songs like "The Rambling Irishman" or "The Shores of Lough Bran." *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs* had a similar effect as the Bothy Band's 1975 album in that musicians would learn each and every tune on it to play at sessions. The opening set of jigs into reels, "Tom Billy's," the medley of Wren tunes played on three whistles, and the beautifully crafted counterpoint of bouzoukis and mandolins on "Carolan's Draught" are among the most memorable instrumental moments of that album. Johnny Moynihan's contribution will be remembered for his wonderful renditions of songs like "The Flower of Sweet Strabane" and "Barbara Allen." A few live tracks recorded in Germany in 1989 by the *Jacket of Batteries* lineup can be found on *Ireland* ♪♪♪♪ (WDR, 1993, prod. Christian Scholze, Jean Trouillet, Jan Reichow), perhaps more interesting for its recordings of Frankie Gavin with piper Liam O'Flynn and of the band Altan.

solo outings:
Alec Finn:

Blue Shamrock ♪♪♪½ (Cross Border Media, 1994/Celtic Heartbeat, 1994)

Jackie Daly:
Jackie Daly and Séamus Creagh ♪♪♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1977)
Music From Sliabh Luachra ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1977/Green Linnet 1992)
(With Kevin Burke) *Eavesdropper* ♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1981/Green Linnet, 1981)
Many's a Wild Night ♪♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1995)

Martin O'Connor:
The Connachtman's Rambles ♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1979)
Perpetual Motion ♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1990)
Chatterbox ♪♪♪½ (Dara, 1993)

Colm Murphy:
An Bodhrán ♪♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1996)

influences:

The Flanagan Brothers, James Morrison, John McKenna, Dan Sullivan's Shamrock Band, Planxty

Arcady, Altan, Dervish, Patrick Street, Four Men and a Dog, Skylark

see also: *Frankie Gavin, Dolores Keane, Maura O'Connell, Mary Black*

Philippe Varlet

Dead Can Dance

Formed 1983, in London, England.

Brendan Perry, vocals, instruments; Lisa Gerrard, vocals, instruments; Peter Ulrich, percussion.

Easily one of the most influential and recognizable bands of the modern gothic scene, Dead Can Dance (DCD) has built a significant career based on French depressive poetry (Charles Baudelaire), Eastern European field chants, baroque instrumentation, and religious symbolism. Listeners who coddled artists such as Enya and Enigma might find DCD a bit challenging, but if those artists leave you flat or longing for something along the same lines with a little more substance, DCD would likely fill the bill. As one of the earliest members of the elite 4AD record label, the band served to bolster the company's image of releasing arty, if pretentious, material. DCD's following is small but fervent, and it wasn't until 1994 that the group's catalog was available domestically in the U.S.

what to buy: The Baudelaire-inspired *Spleen and Ideal* ♪♪♪♪♪ (4AD, 1985, prod. Dead Can Dance, John Rivers) represents the band's style at its best—brooding music in a minor key with beautifully atmospheric male and female vocals. *Dead Can Dance* ♪♪♪♪ (4AD, 1984, prod. Dead Can Dance, John Rivers), while more stylized than *Spleen*—it's almost pop-Gregorian music—is less lush and more synthesizer-driven than the band's later efforts. It's still a brilliant piece of work, however. The CD includes the band's first EP, *In the Garden of Arcane Delights*, as a bonus—the only way to get these songs domestically.

what to buy next: DCD's progression from its early goth/baroque influences into the fully cohesive two-piece unit of Perry and Gerrard is realized on *Aion* ♪♪♪♪½ (4AD, 1990, prod. Dead Can Dance). This album showcases their organic instrumentation, strong medieval ties, and the use of field chants, may pole dances, flutes, and stunning vocal arrangements.

what to avoid: *The Serpent's Egg* ♪♪ (4AD, 1988, prod. Dead Can Dance, John Rivers) is a muddled album by a band at a turning point.

the rest:
Within the Realm of a Dying Sun ♪♪♪½ (4AD, 1987)
Into the Labyrinth ♪♪♪ (4AD, 1993)
A Passage in Time ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1994)
Toward the Within ♪♪♪♪ (4AD, 1994)
Spiritchaser ♪♪♪♪ (4AD, 1996)

worth searching for: *Dead Can Dance* ♪♪♪ (4AD, 1994) is a promotional-only 13-track sampler recapping the band's history up to 1994; it was issued to introduce the previously import-only material to radio programmers upon the release of *Into the Labyrinth*.

solo outings:
Lisa Gerrard:
The Mirror Pool ♪♪♪½ (4AD, 1995)

Peter Ulrich:
Talaquaha's Leaving ♪♪♪♪½ (Corner Stone, 1990) (12" single)

influences:

Gregorian chants, Bauhaus, medieval minstrels, chamber orchestras, Sisters of Mercy, Johann Sebastian Bach

Enigma, Enya, Deep Forest, Cocteau Twins, This Mortal Coil (features DCD), SPK, Cindytalk, Le Mystere De Voix Bulgare

Tim Davis

Déanta

Formed 1987, in Portglenone, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Disbanded 1998.

Kate O'Brien, fiddle, viola (1987–98); Eoghan O'Brien, guitar, harp (1987–98); Mary Dillon, vocals, harp, keyboards, guitar (1987–98);

geno delafose

Clódagh Warnock, bouzouki, fiddle, bodhrán, percussion (1987–98); Paul Mullan, flute, tin whistle (1987–94); Deirdre Havlin, flute, tin whistle (1994–98); Rosie Mulholland, keyboards, fiddle (1994–98).

Déanta (meaning "done" or "complete" in Gaelic) is one of a handful of bands from Northern Ireland to have gained some recognition in the Irish traditional music scene. The band came together in the early 1980s, when the O'Briens, Clódagh Warnock, and a few others entered the Gael-Linn Slógadh competitions—also a launching board for the famous Donegal band Clannad some years before. As Déanta, they began to attract attention during a tour of the United States shortly after the release of their first album, *Déanta*, in 1990. At the core of the band were siblings Kate and Eoghan O'Brien, who anchored the instrumental sound, and lead singer Mary Dillon, whose stunning voice won her two All-Ireland titles. Warnock contributed to the texture of the accompaniments with bouzouki and percussion, while flute players, Paul Mullan on the first album and Deirdre Havlin on the next two, joined in with fiddler Kate O'Brien for the instrumentals. An unusual aspect of the band is that its members all held day jobs and remained part-time musicians, touring very little and playing instead at large festivals now and then. Unfortunately, the unavoidable pressure seems to have finally taken its toll, as the band announced its breakup early in 1998. Even more unexpected, perhaps, is that, despite their part-time status, Déanta became one of Green Linnet's best-selling bands. The reason is the delightful music the musicians of Déanta made together. The material was carefully chosen and brilliantly arranged, often composed by band members, as in the case of most dance tunes on their latest album, *Whisper of a Secret*. And even when they played such dance tunes, the musicians of Déanta seemed more interested in bringing out beauty and refinement than going for speed and drive. A most pleasing change of pace, literally.

what's available: *Déanta* ♪♪♪♪ (Spring, 1990/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Steven Cooney, Déanta) is a short CD with only nine tracks, but most of them are gems. Dillon sings beautifully on "The Green Fields of Canada" and "Dark Iniseoghain," but it is the band's arrangement as well as her performance which make "Willie Taylor" the essential track on this album. Instrumental tracks like the energetic "Flight of the Termite," featuring Kate O'Brien's own "Katie's Reel," or the elegant "Harp Airs," composed by Dillon and Eoghan O'Brien, are especially enjoyable. *Ready for the Storm* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Neil Martin) is Déanta's first album recorded for Green Linnet and features the two new members—Deirdre Havlin, a most worthy successor to Paul Mullan on flute and whistle, and Rosie Mulholland on keyboards and fiddle. This gives a great boost to the instrumentals by increasing the possibilities for timbral and textural shadings. Once again, the emphasis is on new compositions, by band members and other respected musicians like Chicago fiddler Liz Carroll or Sligo/Roscommon flute player Josie McDermott. Although Dillon does well on Dougie MacLean's "Ready for the Storm" and on "The Lakes of Pontchartrain," a courageous choice considering the song was previously recorded by no other than Planxty and Paul Brady, her singing of Alastair McDonald's "Culloden's Harvest" and the traditional "The Benedy Glen" are the showstoppers on the album. Déanta's latest, *Whisper of a Secret* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Neil Martin), continues very much in the same vein but takes it up a notch. Deirdre Havlin's flute playing has become most impressive and her duets with Kate O'Brien are all the stronger for it. The two continue to produce superb new tunes, for instance "Beaujolais in Boston" and "Jimmy's Trip to Clonmel" from the opening track, and perform them at an appropriately relaxed pace for melodies that deserve savoring. Mary Dillon's singing is as exquisite as ever, particularly on "Willie and Mary" and on Andy Stewart's "Where Are You," and is well served by the band's sparse but intensely musical arrangements.

influences:

- Ann O'Brien, the Chieftains, Planxty, the Bothy Band, Clannad
- Altan, Dervish

Philippe Varlet

Geno Delafose

Born February 6, 1971, in Eunice, LA.

Geno Delafose started playing the frattoir in the Eunice Playboys at age seven. His father, John Delafose, was already playing with older brothers Tony and John Jr. in the band. As time went by Geno graduated to drums and then to warming up the crowd on accordion before his father came on. By 1992 he was sharing much of the time on stage with his father playing accordion. When the eldest Delafose died in 1994, Geno was ready to take over leadership of the band. Geno plays a more tuneful and traditional style than almost any of his peers. There is definitely less of a rock influence and more of a Cajun influence in his music. Having been both the drummer and frattoir player for the Eunice Playboys, he knows what constitutes a

great beat—as does his cousin, Jermaine Jack, whose excellent drum work always provides propulsion.

what to buy: Although it is rare for a studio recording of zydeco music to capture the passion and feeling of the live band experience, *That's What I'm Talking About!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Scott Billington) comes very close. This may not be the hottest zydeco in terms of sales, but it is about as good as unadulterated Creole zydeco music gets. From the opening of "Geno's Two Step," this band just kicks. They acknowledge the popularity of the newer sounds, like Beau Jocque's, but they stay very much in the Eunice Playboys tradition that Geno grew up in; their sound does have, though, some of the Creole swing that Boozoo Chavis seems to pull off so effortlessly. This CD covers several of John Delafose's tunes and all are excellent; even Geno's obligatory soulful ballad, "Teardrops" (complete with B3 organ), fits right in. There are no frills and no wasted notes here—just the pure sound of this band doing what they do best.

what to buy next: *French Rockin' Boogie* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder 1994, prod. Scott Billington) tries too hard to be more than it needs to be. Maybe it's the horns in the Delafose sound, or maybe it's just Geno trying to find his way out of the large shadow cast by his father. This is still a very good zydeco record, maybe just not a great Delafose record.

worth searching for: *Pere Et Garcon Zydeco* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Scott Billington) is a John Delafose CD recorded in 1991 and it shows off the talents of Geno. The record rocks and bounces in the way that good rural zydeco bands should, with an excellent tune selection that updates old Creole tunes like "Midland Two Step" and integrates non-traditional material like Ray Charles's "I Can't Stop Loving You."

influences:

◀◀ Clifton Chenier, Amédée Ardoin, Marc Savoy

▶▶ Keith Frank

see also: *John Delafose*

Jared Snyder

John Delafose

Born April 16, 1939, in Duralde, LA. Died September 17, 1994, in Lawtell, LA.

John Delafose led one of the best rural zydeco bands from 1980 to the time of his death in 1994. Delafose played single-row, triple-row, and piano accordion, all in his own style. A solid singer, there was always something—an "X" factor, a certain soulful quality—that separated his music from others. Part of that came from the family oriented nature of the Eunice Playboys, which included sons Tony, John Jr., and Geno, cousin Jermaine Jack, and the guitar and bass combination of brothers Charles and Joseph Prudhomme. There was more of a confluence of Cajun music and old Creole songs in Delafose's music and less R&B and blues. You could still hear the influence of Clifton Chenier in his music, but more of the French part of Chenier's repertoire.

what to buy: *Blues Stay Away from Me* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Scott Billington) is worthwhile just for the Linda Barry cover art. The Eunice Playboys swing across this record. Great Creole music is about subtle syncopation and moving the beat around—not the bone-crunching double-clutching that dominates now. This record features John Delafose on fiddle on a couple of tunes, with the accordion duties shared between himself and his son Geno.

what to buy next: *Joe Pete Got Two Women* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1988, prod. Chris Strachwitz) features an earlier version of the Eunice Playboys, when John's sons Geno and Tony enthusiastically drove the music on drums and frattoir, the always solid Prudhomme brothers locked into tight grooves, and John Delafose laid out the accordion and vocal lines on top. It might slip and sway a little, but the music always grooves.

the rest:

Zydeco Man ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1980)
Uncle Bud Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1982)
Heartaches & Hot Steps ♪♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1984)
Zydeco Excitement! ♪♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1984)
Pere Et Garcon Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)

worth searching for: *Tribute to John Delafose* (Deep South Records, 1995, prod. Tony Delafose) is a recording directed by John's son Tony honoring his father's music. A number of zydeco stars take their turn interpreting the music of John Delafose, including C.J. Chenier, Buckwheat Zydeco, and Terrance Simien.

influences:

◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, Canray Fontenot

▶▶ Chris Ardoin, Geno Delafose, Keith Frank

see also: *Geno Delafose*

Jared Snyder

2/4 *the delmore brothers*

The Delmore Brothers

Formed in Elkmont, AL.

Alton Delmore (born December 25, 1908, in Elkmont, AL; died June 8, 1964), vocals, guitar; Rabon Delmore (born December 3, 1916, in Elkmont, AL; died December 4, 1952), vocals, guitar.

This very important duo melded the close harmonies common to brother acts with intricate, syncopated guitar and tenor guitar instrumental accompaniment to create a new and highly influential duet sound. Their 1930s-era Bluebird recordings featured such timeless numbers as "Brown's Ferry Blues," "Gonna Lay down My Old Guitar," and "Weary Lonesome Blues." On their later records for King, they featured blues-influenced rhythms and lyrics, electric guitar, and Wayne Raney's harmonica accompaniment, creating many classics, including "Freight Train Boogie," "Hillbilly Boogie," and "Pan American Boogie," along with many other standards, including "Blues Stay Away from Me." They also recorded as members of the Brown's Ferry Four, a gospel quartet, along with Grandpa Jones and Merle Travis or Red Foley. The Delmore Brothers were early members of the Grand Ole Opry and remain an important influence in the music to this day.

what to buy: *Brown's Ferry Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1995, reissue prod. Gary B. Reid) is chock full of classic Bluebird material from 1933 to 1940, including "Blue Railroad Train," "Gonna Lay down My Old Guitar," "The Weary Lonesome Blues," and "Brown's Ferry Blues." On *Sand Mountain Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1986, reissue prod. Dave Freeman), early King recordings find the Delmores in a transitional mode between the pristine brother harmony duets they'd cut for Bluebird and the later, more raucous King boogies. Twenty classic blues and boogies are included on *Freight Train Boogie* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Ace, 1993), an English reissue of the Delmore's King material. This disc features top-notch instrumentalists of the day, including Wayne Raney, Homer & Jethro, Merle Travis, and others.

what to buy next: *When They Let the Hammer Down* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1984, prod. Richard Weize), a German reissue, features 18 tracks performed by the great country harmonica player Wayne Raney alongside the Delmores—classic stuff. There is some duplication with the Ace King compilation, but they're both well worth having.

influences:

◀◀ The Blue Sky Boys, Jimmie Rodgers

▶▶ Louvin Brothers, the O'Kanes

Randy Pitts

Iris DeMent

Born 1961, in Paragould, AR.

A songwriter with an unerring ability to tell moving and believable stories, and a singer who possesses a distinctive voice that seems to embody the entire tradition of American folk music, Iris DeMent is an anomaly in the music business. She was born the youngest of eight children in Arkansas and raised in California in a strict Pentecostal family. She never thought of being a musician until she was in her late 20s. She has become something of a folk singer's folk singer—among her illustrious fans are John Prine (who wrote the liner notes for her debut album), Emmylou Harris, and Nanci Griffith.

what to buy: DeMent's songs on her debut, *Infamous Angel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992/Warner Bros., 1993, prod. Jim Rooney), including "Let the Mystery Be" and "Our Town" (later used over the credits for the final episode of the TV show *Northern Exposure*), already sound like Smoky Mountain traditionals. Her follow-up album, *My Life* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1994, prod. Jim Rooney), is a thoughtful though implacably sad and deeply moving collection of autobiographical songs and fictional sketches.

what to buy next: DeMent's third album, *The Way I Should Be* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996, prod. Randy Scruggs), finds the vocalist broadening her stylistic base and adding frank political broadsides to her repertoire of self-observations and narrative vignettes. The sound is a bit more commercial, but the substance of the songs is not.

influences:

◀◀ Kitty Wells, Joni Mitchell, Emmylou Harris, Nanci Griffith, Bruce Springsteen

▶▶ Kate Campbell

Gil Asakawa

Sandy Denny /Fotheringay

Born January 6, 1947, in London, England. Died April 21, 1978, in London, England. Fotheringay formed 1970; disbanded 1970.

Sandy Denny, vocals, piano, guitar; Trevor Lucas, vocals, guitar; Jerry Donahue, lead guitar, backing vocals; Gerry Conway, drums, backing vocals; Pat Donaldson, bass, backing vocals.

Sandy Denny may have been the greatest female pop vocalist England ever produced. It's especially sad, then, that her ca-

reer path was uneven and cut short by death. Denny began singing in London folk clubs during the mid-1960s during the "folk revival" that also spawned Simon and Garfunkel, the various Steeleyes and Fairports, and many others. Her clear, bold voice brought her gigs as a member of the Strawbs (formerly the Strawberry Hill Boys) and later Fairport Convention. She may be best remembered for her work with Fairport, though she was in the group for fewer than four years (1968–69, 1974–75). Her work alongside Trevor Lucas (later her husband) with the group Fotheringay produced one excellent album and swelled her following to the point that *Melody Maker*'s readers twice voted her Britain's top "girl singer." She was a gifted composer with a keen ear for poetry; like Joni Mitchell, she undoubtedly influenced many singer-songwriters of the confessional/cryptic school, for better or worse. Her best-known and most often covered composition is "Who Knows Where the Time Goes?"—recorded by Judy Collins, among others. Pulled between the quiet joys of home and the love of performing, between solo and group work, and between the gusts of her own moody spirit, Denny never received the acclaim she deserved in her lifetime. Her death at 31, from a fall down the stairs, perpetuated her legend. Still, her music at its best transcends the clichés of her era and the limits of her iconic status.

what to buy: At press time, Denny's finest album, *Sandy* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1972, prod. Trevor Lucas), was out of print in the United States. An alternative is *The North Star Grassman and the Ravens* ♪♪♪♪½ (Island, 1971, prod. Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, John Wood), which includes her antiwar song "John the Gun"; the stirring, strange "Late November"; and the eerie "Next Time Around," which may have been written about ex-lover Jackson Frank. It also shows Denny having fun: duetting with Richard Thompson on Dylan's "Down in the Flood" and taking a rockabilly turn on "Let's Jump the Broomstick."

what to buy next: *Fotheringay* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1970, prod. Joe Boyd) is a fitting souvenir of a band with a very short life and a surfeit of talented members. Some of Denny's best-known songs are here, including "The Pond and the Stream" and the somber "The Sea," but the album's greatest charms are in the songs led by Trevor Lucas, including Bob Dylan's "Too Much of Nothing." Many have said that Denny's version of "Banks of the Nile" is the best thing she ever recorded. Jerry Donahue's guitar work is consistently elegant and fiery.

what to avoid: *One Last Sad Refrain* ♪♪½ (Nixed), documenting Denny's last recorded concert in 1977, shows the dangers in buying unauthorized recordings; the dismal technical quality saps all of the nuances from what should be a rich, intriguing listening experience. Someone was out to make bucks; don't waste yours.

the rest:

Sandy Denny and the Strawbs ♪♪♪½ (Sonet Dansk Grammofon A/S, 1973/Hannibal, 1991)
Like An Old Fashioned Waltz ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1973)
Rendezvous ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1977)
The Original Sandy Denny ♪♪♪½ (Mooncrest, 1978/1991)
Who Knows Where the Time Goes? ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1985)
The Best of Sandy Denny ♪♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1987)
The Attic Tracks 1972–1984 ♪♪♪♪½ (Raven, 1995)

worth searching for: *The BBC Sessions 1971–73* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Strange Fruit, 1997) was available for four months by mail order before being pulled. It's Denny at the peak of her powers and in stripped-down settings that showcase her songwriting and singing without any distracting production touches. It's flawed; it's uneven; it's brilliant.

influences:

◀◀ Anne Briggs, Dave Swarbrick, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Linda Thompson, Mary Black, Dolores Keane, Vikki Clayton, Susan McKeown, Lisa Moscatiello

see also: *Fairport Convention*

Pamela Murray Winters

John Denver

Born Henry John Deutschendorf, December 31, 1943. Died October 12, 1997, in Monterey, CA.

Rock 'n' roll hipsters always had a football-field day making fun of John Denver for writing sunny, heartfelt songs about his unconditional love for trees, flowers, mountains, and his wife. His early albums veered toward cheesy, middle-of-the-road balladry—we can even remember tuning into a Chicago Top 40 station in 1974 and hearing "Annie's Song" playing while the DJ imitated a cow mooing in the background. But Denver also built a sturdy career out of three impressive country-folk albums—1971's *Poems, Prayers and Promises* (which featured his career-making hit, "Take Me Home, Country Roads"), 1972's *Rocky Mountain High*, and 1974's *Back Home Again*—that deftly captured the aw-shucks charm and jaded innocence that eventually elevated him to superstardom. Odd obsessions like his desire to fly in space and do TV specials with the Muppets aside, Denver possessed an unwavering commitment to hu-

john denver

manitarian causes: he stood up for what he believed in, no matter how "far-out" or square it made him look. In 1985, he bravely stood beside Frank Zappa and Dee Snider of Twisted Sister at a Senate hearing to argue against mandatory labeling of sexually explicit rock albums. Still active in the Windstar Foundation, an environmental education and research center that he co-founded, and a reforestation project called Plant-It 2000, Denver was even regaining some of his artistic stature when the single-engine airplane he was piloting crashed into Monterey Bay, California. The enjoyable *Wildlife Concert*, a 1995 two-CD set benefiting the Wildlife Conservation Society, marked one of the rare perfect marriages of his social consciousness and his art; and a 1997 one-disc distillation of that album called *The Best of John Denver Live* put his name back on the country charts for the first time in a decade.

what to buy: Of his early works still in print, *Rocky Mountain High* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1972, prod. Milton Okun) sounds the least dated, with fine musicianship, genuinely gorgeous ballads in "For Baby (For Bobbie)" and "Goodbye Again," and cool John Prine ("Paradise") and Beatles ("Mother Nature's Son") covers. *An Evening with John Denver* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1975, prod. Milton Okun) captures him at the height of his fame, when all he had to do was utter "far out" to get applause. The between-song patter and notorious cover of New Christy Minstrels leader Randy Sparks's "Saturday Night in Toledo, Ohio" complement the faithful renderings of the hits. Even before his death, RCA shoehorned his hits into a plethora of oddly conceived compilations. If you're not one of the 10 million who already own 1973's *Greatest Hits*, then the two-disc *Rocky Mountain Collection* ♪♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1996, prod. various) is the best primer, with 39 tracks spanning his career and his three greatest-hits collections. It's a better bargain than the sprawling four-CD *Country Roads Collection* and makes more chronological sense than *Reader's Digest*'s *His Greatest Hits and Finest Performances*.

what to buy next: The songs are familiar, but the rustic feel, acoustic band instrumentation, and laid-back, Western-flavored arrangements on *The Wildlife Concert* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sony/Legacy, 1995, prod. Bob Irwin) lend an infectious vitality to this two-disc set. We could do without the flutes, but former Elvis Presley guitarist James Burton adds some tasteful fuel to "Wild Montana Skies," "Back Home Again," and an Appalachian-style "Take Me Home, Country Roads." A one-CD version inexplicably titled *The Best of John Denver Live* ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1997, prod. Bob Irwin) takes 15 of the original 28 performances and adds previously unreleased live versions of "I Think I'd Rather Be a Cowboy" and "I'm Sorry."

what to avoid: In a weak attempt at a concept album about the environment, *Earth Songs* ♪ (Windstar, 1990, prod. Lee Holdridge) gathers lackluster re-recordings of such '70s favorites as "Rocky Mountain Suite," "Rocky Mountain High," "Sunshine on My Shoulders," "Eagle and the Hawk," and "Calypso" around new compositions like "Earth Day, Every Day."

the rest:

Poems, Prayers and Promises ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1971)
Farewell Andromeda ♪♪ (RCA, 1973)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1973)
Back Home Again ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1974)
Rocky Mountain Christmas ♪♪ (RCA, 1975)
Spirit ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1976)
Windsong ♪♪ (RCA, 1976)
I Want to Live ♪♪ (RCA, 1977)
Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1977)
Some Days Are Diamonds ♪♪ (RCA, 1981)
Seasons of the Heart ♪♪ (RCA, 1982)
It's About Time ♪♪ (RCA, 1983)
Greatest Hits, Vol. 3 ♪♪ (RCA, 1984)
Dreamland Express ♪½ (RCA, 1985)
One World ♪♪ (RCA, 1986)
The Flower That Shattered the Stone ♪½ (Windstar, 1990)
Christmas Like a Lullaby ♪♪ (Windstar, 1990)
Different Directions ♪♪ (Windstar, 1991)
Higher Ground ♪♪ (Windstar, 1991)
Take Me Home ♪ (Laserlight/Delta Music, 1995) ♪
Reflections: Songs of Love and Life ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1996)
Country Roads Collection ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1997)
His Greatest Hits and Finest Performances ♪♪♪½ (Reader's Digest Music, 1997)
Annie's Song ♪ (Laserlight/Delta Music, 1997)
Calypso ♪ (Laserlight/Delta Music, 1997)
Sunshine on My Shoulder ♪ (Laserlight/Delta Music, 1997)
Take Me Home, Country Roads ♪ (Laserlight/Delta Music, 1997)
All Aboard ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1997)
A Celebration of Life (1943–1997) ♪♪♪ (River North, 1997)

worth searching for: *Minneapolis Does Denver* ♪♪♪½ (October, 1995, prod. John Strawberry Fields) features such Minneapolis rock acts as the Honeydogs, Steeplejack, Tina and the B-Side Movement, and the Delilahs paying surprisingly faithful tribute to Denver's '70s material. If there's any doubt that he always knew how to write a memorable melody, check out Marlee McLeod and Kristin Mooney's duet on a jangly, uptempo rendition of "Follow Me."

influences:

◀◀ New Christy Minstrels, Tom Paxton, James Taylor, Bread

▶▶ Dan Fogelberg

David Okamoto

Joe Derrane

Born March 16, 1930, in Boston, MA.

Thought by many to be dead, legendary Irish accordion player Joe Derrane made an explosive return to public performance with an appearance at the Washington Irish Festival in May 1994, and the subsequent release of his first new recording in more than 40 years. Derrane plays an exciting, fast paced, and virtuosic style of Irish music on an old-style D/C# accordion. His playing is unrelenting, filled with wild melodic runs and ornamentation, and marked by a driving, staccato rhythm. His first recordings, made for Copley Records during the late 1940s, were legendary among Irish musicians and dancers; and they are highly prized today by French-Canadian musicians who still play the push-draw style accordion and include Joe's settings and tunes in their repertoires. Due to changing styles and tastes in Irish-American communities, Derrane gave up box playing in the 1950s. He lived quietly in Massachusetts, occasionally performing in a Top 40 band with his son, until Philippe Varlet's reissue of his early recordings brought him renewed attention. Convinced by New York journalist Earl Hitchner to resume playing, Derrane has enjoyed a wonderful comeback in recent years. He has toured the U.S. and Ireland and recorded two albums. For anyone interested in Irish music, Derrane is a must-hear. Not only is he one of the last remaining players of a nearly extinct style of Irish music, he is one of the most talented musicians ever to perform in that style.

what to buy: *Irish Accordion* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Copley Records, 1993, prod. Paddy Noonan, Philippe Varlet) is a reissue of the solo sides Derrane cut for Copley Records during the late 1940s. He was just 19, a boy genius, when he made these incredible recordings. Driving, rhythmic music with incredible lift and fire and an unselfconscious sense of fun, these recordings pushed the D/C# accordion as far as it could go. These are rivaled only by John Kimmel's recordings from the 1910s for great old-style Irish accordion playing.

what to buy next: *Return to Inis Mor* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Joe Derrane, Carl Hession) is Derrane's second album since his return to performing, and finds the old fire and virtuosity returning to his fingers. Sensitively backed by pianist Carl Hession, and on four tracks by a string quartet, Derrane is a comfortable, assured musician who has lost none of his incredible chops. A very good recording. *Joe Derrane and Jerry O' Brien: Accordion Duets* ♪♪♪♪ (Copley, 1995, prod. Philippe Varlet, Paddy Noonan) is a compilation of recordings Derrane made with his friend and teacher Jerry O'Brien, as well as some of O'Brien's own solo and group recordings. O'Brien's playing style is similar to Joe's and their duets show a nice musical rapport.

what to avoid: *Give Us Another* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet 1995, prod. Joe Derrane) collects Derrane's first sessions after returning to performing—they seem a little more tentative than his earlier ones or his most recent. It's not a bad recording, just not incredibly great. He is, however, backed by New York piano genius Felix Dolan, giving him the best accompaniment he has ever had.

the rest:

The Tie That Binds N/A (Shanachie, 1998)

influences:

◀◀ John Kimmel, Frank Quinn, P.J. Conlon, Mike Flanagan (of the Flanagan Brothers)

▶▶ Stephane Landry, Martin O'Connor

Tony Ziselberger

Dervish

Formed 1988, in Sligo, Ireland.

Liam Kelly, flute, tin whistle (1989–present); Shane Mitchell, accordion (1989–present); Martin McGinley, fiddle, viola (1989–90); Brian McDonagh, mandolin, mandola, bouzouki, guitar (1989–present); Michael Holmes, bouzouki, guitar (1989–present); Cathy Jordan, vocals, bodhrán (1990–present); Shane McAleer, fiddle, viola (1990–present).

With an unlikely name that conjures Middle Eastern images rather than rollicking Irish jigs and reels, Dervish is one of the most exciting traditional bands to have come out of Ireland this decade. It combines amazing instrumental virtuosity, common to precursors like the Bothy Band, De Danann, or Altan, with tastefully arranged and beautifully sung songs in Irish and English, in a style reminiscent of Planxty. One particularly appealing aspect of the Dervish sound is the remarkable tightness of its members energetic instrumental playing, the result of years of playing together at informal pub sessions around their home base of Sligo. Flute player Liam Kelly and accordionist Shane Mitchell have been playing music together since they were nine and seven, respectively. When they were in high school, they formed a band called Poitín and had their moment of fame when the band won first place at a festival and subsequently appeared on the popular Irish TV show, *The Late Late Show.* While the two were in college, they linked up with bouzouki player Michael Holmes and later met Brian McDonagh, a former member of the band Oisín during the late 1970s. At the request of the

Sligo-based label Sound Records, the foursome agreed to record an album, for which they secured the services of fiddle player Martin McGinley. Dervish's *The Boys of Sligo*, released in 1989, started getting attention, and what was supposed to be a one-time deal began to look more promising. The band decided to add a singer to the lineup and contacted Roscommon-born Cathy Jordan, whom they knew to be terrific, even though she hadn't had much exposure to traditional music. Jordan has proven up to the task and has become one of the most respected singers on the Irish traditional music scene. Not too long afterwards, County Tyrone fiddle player Shane McAleer replaced McGinley who was working with another band as well as for the BBC. The new band's first release, *Harmony Hill*, won critical acclaim and quickly made Dervish one of the most sought-after bands in Ireland. Despite an intensive touring schedule, the band managed to bring out a second album, *Playing with Fire*, which stayed on top of the Irish Folk Music Charts for several months. The release of Dervish's two albums in the United States in 1995 was followed by several American tours with appearances at major festivals. A third album, *At the End of the Day*, released the following year, was named the *Hot Press* Trad/Folk Album of the Year. Dervish's latest, a fantastic double-CD recorded live in Palma, Majorca, attests to the band's superior musicianship and performing abilities.

what to buy: *Harmony Hill* ♪♪♪♪½ (Whirling Discs, 1993/Kells Music, 1995, prod. Brian McDonagh) is puzzling in an unusual way: it is difficult to believe that a band's first album can be so good. But it is dazzlingly so, from the first set of jigs "Apples in Winter" to the great reel set "The Green Mountain," through Jordan's brilliant renditions of songs as diverse as the lilting "The Ploughman" or the heartbreaking "A Stór Mo Chroí." On the very aptly titled *Playing with Fire* ♪♪♪♪½ (Whirling Discs, 1995/Kells Music, 1995, prod. Brian McDonagh), Dervish continues its superlative brand of traditional music, to such a degree that it would be difficult to recommend some tracks over others. Jordan is once again astonishingly good, and equally comfortable on songs in Gaelic like "Maire Mhor" or "Pheigin Mo Chroi," the band's designated sing-along at concert, sad tales of love and loss like "Johnny and Molly," or the amusingly grandiloquent poetry of "Cailin Rua." Each instrumental track is as exciting as the next, played with all the fire one could ever ask for.

what to buy next: The cover artwork of *At the End of the Day* ♪♪♪♪½ (Whirling Discs, 1996/Kells Music, 1996, prod. Brian McDonagh), a striking panoramic photograph of a pub with the musicians having a session in the corner, pulls you in irresistibly for yet another magnificent album. The instrumental work is as good as ever, with Swedish band Väsen appearing as guests on one track featuring one of their compositions. This time around, Jordan's selection of songs leans more towards the slower, melancholic ones like "For Ireland I Won't Tell Her Name," and even the tragic with the famine song "Lone Shanakyle," all performed from the heart. Dervish's latest, *Live in Palma* ♪♪♪♪½ (Whirling Discs, 1997/Kells Music, 1998, prod. Brian McDonagh), is an outstanding collection of 22 tracks (plus introductions) on two CDs, featuring the band's best songs and tune medleys from its first three studio albums performed live at a concert that took place in Palma, Majorca.

worth searching for: Dervish's all-instrumental first album, *The Boys of Sligo* ♪♪♪½ (Sound, 1989, prod. Jim Lockhart), is well worth looking for. McGinley's fiddle playing, more straightforward than McAleer's in some ways, has that same Northern energy and crispness to it. And while there are still rough edges, one can hear the pieces falling into place, particularly the band's ideas about varying the texture by changing the combinations of lead and accompaniment instruments.

influences:

◀◀ Planxty, the Bothy Band, Oisín

▶▶ De Danann, Altan

Philippe Varlet

The Deseret String Band /The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Formed 1972, in Salt Lake City, UT.

Hal Cannon, accordion, concertina, harmonica, guitar, vocals; Tom Carter, pitchfork, cello-banjo, mandolin, guitar, guitar-banjo; Leonard Coulson, banjo, tin whistle, pitchfork, vocals; Ron Kane, fiddle, vocals; Meghan Merker, fiddle, guitar, guitar-banjo, feet, vocals.

This group also goes by the name "The Bunkhouse Orchestra." In its 25 years of playing together, the group has always placed its emphasis on the music of the West, particularly Utah. This includes many songs, both serious and light-hearted, about the Mormon culture. They've toured in the U.S. and internationally.

what to buy: The band's latest offering is *UTAH: Songs of Statehood* ♪♪♪½ (Okehdokee, 1996, prod. Deseret String Band). This CD logically belongs in the old-time music bin, but it requires giving up the notion that "old-time" means fiddle and banjo music from the South. There's some of that here, but there's a lot more, too. The instrumentation includes all the usual things you expect in an old-time string band—fiddle, banjo, guitar,

mandolin—and a few things you might not expect, such as accordion and concertina, cello-banjo, tin whistle, and the pitchfork. Almost everybody in the group sings on at least one number, and it all combines into a tasty mix of lively dance tunes, stately instrumentals, songs both amusing and poignant, and even a recited poem. Most are Utah songs, many having to do with the Mormon faith and way of life. The Mormon hymn "Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief," played as an instrumental, has a compelling beauty that makes you want to learn the words. A haunting composition by Hal Cannon, "Oh, Sisters," deserves special mention, both for its content and its presentation. A few pieces have a decidedly Southern feel, possibly due to Tom Carter's influence; he once played banjo with the Fuzzy Mountain String Band, one of the first young bands to revive traditional Appalachian music. This disc is more than just a bunch of tunes: it's an interesting peek at one slice of American folk culture. And in case you were wondering, the pitchfork is a percussion instrument.

the rest:
Red Steer ♪♪♪½ (Okehdokee Records, 1990) (cassette only)

worth searching for: *Deseret String Band* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie Records, 1984), only available on cassette, is another outstanding collection of traditional tunes and songs focused on the state of Utah and its Mormon pioneer roots. Interestingly, the back of the old LP reveals that "Deseret" is a word found in the Book of Mormon that is thought to mean honeybee; of course, both Deseret and the beehive have come to symbolize Utah.

influences:
◀◀ Numerous Utah musicians documented in the Fife Folklore Archive, Utah State University

▶▶ Piney Creek Weasels, Double Decker String Band

Dave Shombert

The Devlins

Formed 1989, in Dublin, Ireland.

Colin Devlin, vocals, guitar, keyboards; Peter Devlin, bass, guitar, mandolin, vocals; Sean Devitt, drums, percussion, vocals; Niall Macken, keyboards.

The Devlins' fresh, dreamy folk-rock made its debut, *Drift*, a critical favorite. But the Irish group, centered around the Devlin brothers, hasn't been able to turn its acclaim into significant record sales, at least not in the U.S. *Drift* was sent adrift after its completion in 1992, delayed until April of the next year while Capitol's front-office played musical chairs. Good reviews and persistent touring with the likes of Sheryl Crow and Sarah McLachlan built a small U.S. following—the band's a bit bigger in Ireland—but it hasn't been heard from much since. That should change with the band's latest release, *Waiting*. The group's recorded output also includes the *Live Bait, Dead Bait* EP, released on Lime Records in the U.K. prior to *Drift*, and an edgy, synth-heavy track ("Crossing the River") on the *Batman Forever* soundtrack.

what to buy: *Waiting* ♪♪♪½ (Universal, 1997, prod. Pierre Marchand) starts with a sudden, swooping resonance, continues on through a guitar's quiet hum, and then is graciously carried by the gentle, warm tones of a grand piano. "Silence is very powerful," muses vocalist/guitarist Colin Devlin. "Music that I grew up listening to . . . Talk Talk, David Sylvian, Blue Nile. . . . I love those albums: not just the sounds, but the pauses! Those pauses are amazing! 'When in doubt, leave it out' . . . that can apply to a lot of things in life, most certainly in music."

what to buy next: The Devlins first full-length album, *Drift* ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1993, prod. Malcolm Burn, Robert Bell), hastened the group out of obscurity. *Rolling Stone* deemed them "stunning," the *New Yorker* "superb," and *Q*, quite simply, "outstanding." It was a magical ride that afforded the group an 18-month concert tour 'round the world. Semi-permanent stops in a number of atmospheric cities (New Orleans, Vancouver, Montreal, and New York City included among them) allowed the group's music to become, in a word, borderless. "We're very proud to be Irish," explains bassist/vocalist Peter Devlin, "and I hope that comes across, but it's also wonderful for us to go around the world and meet people who bring whatever it is they do into the sound."

influences:
◀◀ Kraftwerk, U2

Neal Walters and Doug Pullen

Hazel Dickens

See: Hazel and Alice

Bo Diddley

Born Ellas McDaniel, December 30, 1928, in Macomb, MS.

Bo Diddley certainly belongs in books about popular music, blues, rock 'n' roll—and surrealism. He didn't just do songs; he performed mini-operas of urban weirdness set to a primal beat. While Mud and Wolf and B.B. haunted the outskirts of white America, Bo kicked open the door to Dagwood-land and stormed on in, backed by thundering tom-toms and custom-

made guitars. His first band was called the Hipsters. By the 1950s he, drummer Clifton James, harp blower Billy Boy Arnold, and maracas-shakin' Jerome Green were working the clubs. In 1955 he cut a double-sided hit, "Bo Diddley"/"I'm a Man," that ranks as a landmark in American music history. The "shave-and-a-haircut—two-bits" beat of the former stirred loins throughout the land and filled squares with woe as they saw their peers succumbing to its carnality. Other Chess 45s followed as Bo bloomed as a songwriter, guitarist, and personality. One year he'd be in cowboy garb, chanting "Bo Diddley's a gunslinger," then his axe would be suckin' wind as he proclaimed, "Bo's a lumberjack." He would tromp on his amplifier's vibrato button and flail away, his ululating chords melding with drubbing drums on tunes that'll symbolize the sound of revelry as long as revelry exists. Certainly it existed in the 1960s, when Quicksilver Messenger Service did a version of his "Who Do You Love" that filled a whole LP side and was ranked as one of the era's best works to groove to while plowed on LSD. The Stones did "Mona," the Yardbirds did "I'm a Man," and the sinister crow in *Fritz the Cat* finger-popped to the tune of "Bo Diddley." Later, the image of a "rock 'n' roll nurse" cramming drugs into beleaguered Bo in the hospital proved irresistible to the New York Dolls, who credibly did Bo's "Pills." Lester Davenport, Little Walter, Lafayette Leake, and other Chess mainstays played on Bo's myriad Chess outings. (Even the Moonglows got into the act, singing background on 1955's "Diddley Daddy.") During the late 1970s he opened shows on a Clash tour, and has since recorded for Triple X and Code Blue/Atlantic. He has never neared the popularity he had in the 1950s and, surprisingly, has not loomed large on the bluesfest circuit. But his legacy is unshakable: every single, solitary night in America, bands play and people dance to the Bo Diddley beat.

what to buy: Even Bo loyalists would admit that while most of his LPs had one great song (or two), a cool novelty song (or two), the rest was filler. Hence for years the Bo LP to have was *Bo Diddley's 16 All Time Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪½. The 20-cut *Bo Diddley: His Best* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1997, prod. Len Chess, Phil Chess, Bo Diddley) has 12 of said hits, plus the hilarious "Pills," the mantric "Mona," the bio-epic "Story of Bo Diddley," and other items missing from the former LP. The terminally weird "Who Do You Love" is there, as is "Road Runner," on which Bo pioneered the scraping of one's guitar pick lengthwise against round-wound strings, creating a sonic whoosh Jeff Beck would popularize years later. "Say Man," his biggest hit (on which he and Jerome Green trade such insults as "you look like you been whupped wid a ugly stick!"), is there, as is "You Can't Judge a Book by Its Cover," one of Willie Dixon's greatest compositions. All in all, this is a great collection, and it won't be unseemly if you do what it says on all those rock albums—play it loud!

what to buy next: *His Best* doesn't include the immortal "Bo Diddley's a Gunslinger," but the way-cheap *Bo Knows Bo* ♪♪♪ (MCA Special Products, 1995) does, along with the skanky, rarely heard "Diddy Wah Diddy," as well as more well-known selections. Ideal for the CD stash you keep in your car.

what to avoid: Avoid just about anything Diddley did for the small, well-meaning Triple X Records label—most of them well-intentioned but poorly executed attempts to make Diddley relevant. Among them: *This Should Not Be* ♪ (Triple X, 1993); *Live* ♪♪ (Triple X, 1994); *Promises* ♪ (Triple X, 1994) (EP); and *The Mighty Bo Diddley* ♪♪½ (Triple X, 1995).

the rest:

His Greatest Sides, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1987)
London Sessions ♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1989)
Bo Diddley Is a Gunslinger ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1990)
The Chess Box ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1990)
The EP Collection ♪♪♪♪♪ (See for Miles, 1991)
Rare & Well Done ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1991)
(With Chuck Berry) *Two Great Guitars* ♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1993)
Bo Diddley/Go Bo Diddley ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chess/MCA, 1996)
A Man Amongst Men ♪♪♪ (Code Blue/Atlantic, 1996)

influences:

- Cab Calloway, Louis Jordan

influenced:

- The Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds, the Animals, George Thorogood

Tim Schuller

Different Shoes

See: Anne Dodson

Ani DiFranco

Born September 23, 1970, in Buffalo, NY.

In an industry ruled by pigeonholes and demographics, Ani DiFranco has built a rabid cult following of old folkies and young punks, men and women, and gays and straights by recording fiercely personal music on her own label, Righteous Babe, at a staggering rate. In between tackling abortion, sexuality, stereotypes, and decaying relationships in striking, stream-of-consciousness detail, DiFranco has also emerged as an underground heroine with such savage salvos at the corporate music industry as "Egos Like Hairdos," "The Next Big Thing," and "The Million You Never Made," which baits the major record compa-

nies sniffing at her backstage door ("I don't prefer obscurity/but I'm an idealistic girl"). DiFranco's visibility has been boosted by three mighty forces: the World Wide Web, where you can find more than 10 home pages dedicated to her; the "angry woman" movement spearheaded by Alanis Morissette; and torrents of accolades from the mainstream press, which is always eager to rally around a young rebel with a cause. Since appearing on the covers of *Ms.* and *Spin* and having her business savvy championed by *Forbes* and *The New York Times*, DiFranco has certainly raised her profile: in 1996 she made her first network talk-show appearance; a year later, she accepted Bob Dylan's invitation to be his opening act and had one of her songs ("32 Flavors") turned into a modest hit by Alana Davis. But artistic integrity is more than just a stance to DiFranco, and such challenging albums as 1996's deliberately noisy *Dilate* and her enthralling live performances confirm her status as that rare artist who walks it like she talks it.

what to buy: DiFranco has been fleshing out her aggressive solo acoustic sound with other instruments since her third album. But *Out of Range* ♪♪♪♪ (Righteous Babe, 1994) marks a pivotal move toward a "band" feel without overwhelming the bite of her voice, especially on "The Diner" and the electric version of the title track, about mustering the courage to walk out on an abusive relationship. *Not a Pretty Girl* ♪♪♪♪ (Righteous Babe, 1995), her mainstream breakthrough, is a hard-nosed hybrid of jagged confessionals, poetic imagery, and punkish diatribes ranging from sexual aggressiveness ("Shy") and social inadequacy ("This Bouquet") to capital punishment ("Crime for Crime"). The two-CD *Living in Clip* ♪♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1997, prod. Ani DiFranco) is marred slightly by choppy editing but boasts ferocious live versions of her most popular tunes—including "Letter to a John," "Untouchable Face," "Anticipate," and the relentlessly funky "Shameless."

what to buy next: From the days when she was more folksinger than acoustic punk, the solo *Ani DiFranco* ♪♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1990, prod. Ani DiFranco, Dale Anderson) displays the influence of everyone from Rickie Lee Jones to Phoebe Snow and exudes a faint sense of innocence bubbling under the already-callused skin. The harrowing highlight is "Lost Woman Song," which captures her contempt for protesters blocking her way into an abortion clinic, her revulsion of the lover who insists on staying with her, and her heartfelt respect for the nurse who helps her get through it.

what to avoid: *Like I Said* ♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1993, prod. Ani DiFranco, Ed Stone) is a compilation of re-recorded versions of songs from her first two albums. These are faster, but not necessarily better, than the originals.

the rest:
Not So Soft ♪♪♪ (Righteous Babe, 1991)
Imperfectly ♪♪♪ (Righteous Babe, 1992)
Puddle Dive ♪♪♪ (Righteous Babe, 1993)
Dilate ♪♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1996)
More Joy, Less Shame ♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1996) (EP)
(With Utah Phillips) *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere* ♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1996)
Little Plastic Castle ♪♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1998)

worth searching for: *Women in (E)motion* ♪♪♪ (T&M, 1997, prod. Ani DiFranco) is a German radio broadcast from the 1994 *Out of Range* tour. Available only as a European import, it includes three previously unrecorded songs.

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Woody Guthrie, Rickie Lee Jones, Fugazi
▶▶ Dar Williams, Lisa Loeb, Alanis Morissette

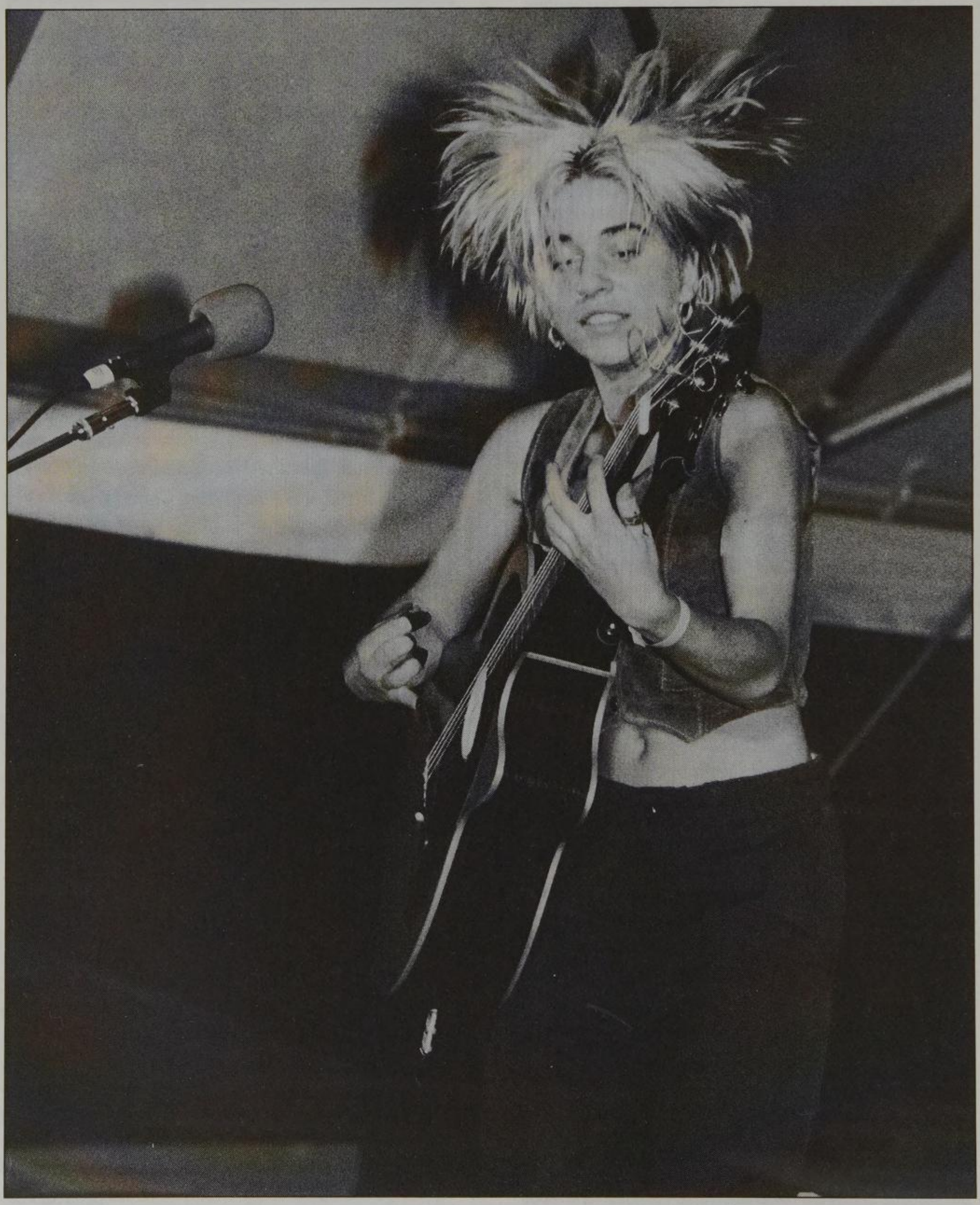
see also: *Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips*

David Okamoto

editor's choice
10 tin whistle albums

Mary Bergin, *Feadoga Stain* (Gael Linn/Shanachie)
Mary Bergin, *Feadoga Stain 2* (Gael Linn)
Joanie Madden, *Song of the Irish Whistle* (Hearts of Space)
Cathal McConnell, *On Lough Erne's Shore* (Flying Fish)
Paddy Moloney/Sean Potts, *Tin Whistles* (Shanachie)
Donncha O'Brien, *Donncha O'Brien* (Gael Linn)
Various Artists, *Light through the Leaves* (Rounder)
Sean Ryan, *Take the Air* (Gael Linn)
Micho Russell, *The Man from Clare* (Trad)
Joanie Madden, *Whistle on the Wind* (Green Linnet)

the dillards



dwight diller

The Dillards

Formed c. 1962, in Salem, MO.

Doug Dillard, banjo, vocals (1963–68); Rodney Dillard, guitar, vocals; Dean Webb, mandolin, vocals; Mitch Jayne, bass, vocals; Herb Pedersen, banjo, vocals (1969–72); Billy Ray Lathum, banjo, vocals (1972–79); Steve Cooley, banjo.

Formed by two Illinois-born brothers, Doug and Rodney Dillard, the Dillards were a bona fide bluegrass band that borrowed the best of the folk-rock sound of the mid-1960s. The result was an ear-pleasing amalgam of corn-pone humor, greased-lightning soloing, and pristine, country harmonizing (and a stint as the fictitious Darling Family on *The Andy Griffith Show*). In 1963 the group signed with Elektra and released *Back Porch Bluegrass*, which included a smokin' version of "Duelin' Banjos" 10 years before *Deliverance*. That release was followed by *Live—Almost* in 1964 and *Pickin' and Fiddlin'* in 1965. Doug left the band in 1968 to start a group with former-Byrd Gene Clark and was replaced by banjoist Herb Pedersen. The band then cut *Wheatstraw Suite*—a landmark country-rock album that displayed some fiery playing and stunning vocal harmonies, especially on the Beatles' acoustic gem "I've Just Seen a Face" and the original composition "Nobody Knows." The band continued to push the bluegrass-country-rock envelope even further with its next release, *Copperfields*. Two mediocre albums appeared during the early 1970s—*Roots and Branches* and *Tribute to the American Duck*—before the band packed it in. But only for a while. In 1979 the Dillards regrouped in Salem, Missouri, for a reunion concert that was captured on tape and released by Flying Fish two years later.

what to buy: *There Is a Time: The Best of the Dillards 1963–1970* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1995, prod. Herb Pedersen, Rodney Dillard) contains the best of the Elektra years, from *Back Porch Bluegrass* to *Copperfields*. This is a must for any serious bluegrass and country-rock history buff.

what to buy next: *Homecoming and Family Reunion* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1981, prod. Herb Pedersen) features highlights from the historic August 1979 concert in Salem, Missouri, including "Old Joe Clark," "Ebo Walker," and "Tennessee Breakdown."

the rest:
Let It Fly ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1990)
Take Me Along for the Ride ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992)

worth searching for: *The Fantastic Expedition of Dillard and Clark* ♪♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1990, prod. Henry Lewy) was originally released by A&M Records in 1969 and is a groundbreaking country-rock record that features Doug's sophisticated banjo playing and former-Byrd Gene Clark's wonderfully warm singing.

solo outings:

Doug Dillard:
(With Bernie Leadon, John Hartford, and Gene Clark) *The Banjo Album* ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1980)
What's That ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
Heartbreak Hotel ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)
(With Rodney Dillard and John Hartford) *Glitter-Grass/Permanent Wave* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1994)

Rodney Dillard:
Rodney Dillard at Silver Dollar City ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1985)
Let the Rough Side Drag ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Flatt & Scruggs, Bill Monroe & the Blue Grass Boys
▶▶ The Byrds, the Flying Burrito Brothers, the Eagles, Poco

Rick Petreycik

Dwight Diller

Born in WV.

Dwight is a clawhammer banjo player from Pocohontas County, West Virginia. Dwight has been playing the banjo for 30 years. He learned from the Hammons family when he was young and they are obviously the biggest influence on his playing. His recordings more often than not feature tunes that come out of the tradition of this West Virginia family. His live shows and workshops also present the tunes and stories of the Hammons. Dwight also helped bring the Hammons into the spotlight by calling them to the attention of the Library of Congress, who recorded them and made the recordings available to the public. Don't think of Dwight just as an evangelist for the Hammons, however. He is also an amazing musician. In 1995 he was voted one of the top five clawhammer banjoists alive by the readers of *Banjo Newsletter.* Every note this man plays is packed with feeling. Nothing is wasted.

what's available: *Harvest: West Virginia Mountain Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Yew Pine Mountain, 1997, prod. Dwight Diller) is the only CD recording that Dwight has out. He's had quite a few cassette-only releases out previously and many of the best

Ani DiFranco **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

2/2/4 *john "seven foot dilly" dilleshaw*

folk harp

The harp is commonly thought to have been originated by a bow hunter, who, upon hearing the "twang" of his bowstring, realized he had a musical instrument in his hands. The instrument has evolved, with harps now ranging from eight to 47 strings, and from a foot and a half to seven feet tall. These harps quickly grew in popularity in Celtic lands, South America, and Africa. So, what makes it a folk harp? Folk harps, basically, are harps without pedals. The pedals make sharps and flats available to the harpist. Many folk harps have another method of playing accidentals; levers can be installed on each string, and the harper must flip the lever on or off as the accidental is needed. With this system, only sharps or flats are available, rather than both. Cross-strung harps allow the full scope of accidentals, for all of the notes available on a keyboard are available on this type of harp. Most harps have a single row of strings, but there are also double- and triple-strung harps. Harp strings are commonly made from three different types of materials: wire, nylon, or gut. The type of string determines not only the nature of the sound (warm for nylon or gut, bell-like for wire) but also the technique used. Wire strings are typically played with the harper's fingernails, while nylon and gut strings are played with the pads of the fingers.

Jo Hughey Morrison

songs from these were redone for this CD. For that reason *Harvest* is the best place to start for an introduction to Dwight's music. An added treat is that the CD features the fiddling of Jimmy Triplett, a young fiddle player originally from North Carolina who now lives in West Virginia. He won top honors at the Appalachian String Band Festival in Clifftop, West Virginia, in 1996.

worth searching for: The remainder of Dwight's recordings are only available on cassette and can be ordered through him directly. Contact Dwight at Box 148, Hillsboro, WV 24946 to get the following: *Papa!* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released), *Red Rooster* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released), *Hold On!* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1989), *O Death* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1992), and *Just Banjo* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1996).

influences:

◀◀ The Hammons Family, Wilson Douglas

▶▶ Cordelia's Dad, Sheila Adams, Chris Coole

Steve Gardner

John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw /Dilly & the Dill Pickles

Born c. 1896, near New Hope, GA. Died 1941.

Dilly & the Dill Pickles: John Dilleshaw, guitar; Harry "Bill" Kiker, fiddle; Raymond "Shorty" Lindsey, tenor banjo; Pink Lindsey, string bass.

John Dilleshaw was a sort of bluegrass performance artist. His entire recorded work fits on a single CD, but it only hints at what must have been fascinating stage shows. Dilleshaw grew up in the wilds north of Atlanta and learned guitar picking from a "colored gentleman" named Bill Turner while recovering from a hunting accident. Later, in his 20s, he moved to Atlanta and began playing on station WSB in various bands. Between 1929 and 1930 he recorded with Dilly & the Dill Pickles as well as with various combinations of other musicians. Usually they'd play breakdowns, but sometimes Dilly sang humorous songs like "Where the Shannon River Flows," which parodied contemporary popular songs. Late in his career he experimented with talking blues.

By far Dilly's most significant contribution to music was his sketch comedy, notably the comic epic "Square Dance Fight on Ball Top Mountain," in which the music is broken up by a tussle with a heckler. It's like Flatt and Scruggs doing "The Spike Jones Story" directed by Quentin Tarantino. By the way, Seven Foot Dilly probably topped out at 6 feet, 7 inches, but who needs veracity in this kind of entertainment?

what's available: There's one collection available, *John Dilleshaw (Seven Foot Dilly) Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, 1929–1930* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1997, prod. Johnny Parth). It's got "The Square Dance Fight," "Spanish Fandango," "Bust Down Stomp"—and it's as much fun as the titles suggest.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Turner, Riley Puckett

Pamela Murray Winters

disappear fear

Formed 1987, in Baltimore, MD.

Sonia Rutstein, guitar, vocals; Cindy Frank, vocals.

Lush harmonies and hard-edged, feminist, and socially conscious lyrics are sung by sisters Sonia Rutstein and Cindy Frank. As disappear fear, the sisters have risen to the upper echelon of women's music. While harmony singer Frank retired from touring in 1996 to become a full-time mother, Ani DiFranco–like singer-songwriter Rutstein, an openly gay Jewish woman, has continued to perform solo and with a band, disappear fear. Although Frank has remained off the road, she's continued to sing harmony on the group's albums. disappear fear released their first three albums—*Echo My Call*, *Deep Soul Diver*, and *Live at the Bottom Line*—on their own independent label. After signing with the Rounder-distributed Philo label in 1994, they released a self-titled studio album and reissued their earlier recordings. disappear fear has inspired comparisons with the Indigo Girls, for whom they toured as opening act in 1993. The Indigo Girls repaid the favor by singing background vocals, along with Janis Ian, on *disappear fear*. disappear fear's performances include appearances at Woodstock '94 and the National Now conference in Washington, D.C., in 1995, which was televised nationally by C-SPAN. Sonia Rutstein released her first solo album, *Almost Chocolate*, in 1998.

what to buy: Sonia Rutstein and Cindy Frank moved into the national spotlight with *disappear fear* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994, prod. Craig Krampf). With Rutstein's lyrics and acoustic guitar and both sisters' vocal harmonies backed by a wide array of session players, the album remains a modern politically conscious folk-rock near-classic. While a gutsy interpretation of Phil Ochs's "Is There Anybody Here" pays tribute to the sisters' roots, the album's focus remains on Rutstein's sharp-edged songwriting, with 10 original songs, including the powerful folk-rocker "Washington Work Song."

what to buy next: *Seed In the Sahara* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Roy Bittan) was disappear fear's first album after Frank's retirement from touring with the group. Although she returned to sing harmonies, the album, produced by E Street Band keyboardist Roy Bittan, remained focused on Rutstein's harder-rocking approach. Songs include the anthemic "B.Y.O.G. (Bring Your Own God)" and the political funk-rocker "Skin." One tune, "Michelangelo," was included on a compilation CD, *Out Loud*, to benefit the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

the rest:
Echo My Call ♪♪ (Refined, 1988)
Deep Soul Diver ♪♪♪ (disappear fear, 1989/Philo, 1995)

worth searching for: The excitement of the two sisters' early performances is showcased on *Live at the Bottom Line* ♪♪♪ (disappear fear, 1989/Philo, 1995, prod. Tom Durack, John Grant, disappear fear, Steve Tveit). In addition to eight tracks recorded during a November 1991 show in New York, the album includes studio versions of two of the songs—"Sink the Censorship" and "Box of Tissues"—that were recorded in 1990 and originally released on a four song EP, *Box of Heaven*, and a previously unreleased studio track, "Long Long Way to Go."

solo outings:
Sonia Rutstein:
Almost Chocolate ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Phil Ochs, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan
▶▶ The Indigo Girls, Ani DiFranco, Dar Williams

Craig Harris

Dr. John

Born Malcolm John "Mac" Rebennack Jr., November 21, 1940, in New Orleans, LA.

With his spooky, voodoo-drenched debut as the Night Tripper in 1967 and his guided tour of New Orleans roots music on *Gumbo* in 1972, Dr. John paved the way for America's rediscovery of the Crescent City's rich musical heritage. It was Dr. John who led listeners to legendary New Orleans artists such as Professor Longhair and Huey (Piano) Smith. And his 1973 hits "Right Place, Wrong Time" and "Such a Night" helped bring national attention to regional stars such as the Meters and Allen Toussaint. Born and raised in New Orleans, Rebennack already was performing and recording in his teens, mainly as a guitarist. But it was his funky piano and distinctive, gravelly drawl that made him a star with the release of the *In the Right Place* album in 1973. Financial and drug problems plagued him well into the 1980s, but the growing popularity of New Orleans music helped him regain his stride. He reigns as the acknowledged master of the New Orleans sound; no one has done more to popularize it.

what to buy: *Mos' Scocious* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1993, prod. various) is the definitive Dr. John anthology—a two-CD set that begins with rare early sides cut with local bands such as Ronnie and

dr. john

the Delinquents, then marches on through more than 30 years of the doctor's finest remedies. A virtual encyclopedia of the New Orleans sound. The one-disc *The Very Best of Dr. John* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1995, prod. various) skims the cream of *Mos' Scocious*. *Dr. John's Gumbo* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972, prod. Jerry Wexler, Harold Battiste) is Rebennack's landmark tribute to the Crescent City's R&B roots—while, a year later, *In the Right Place* ♪♪♪♪ (Atco, 1973, prod. Allen Toussaint) gave him a hit. (Both *Gumbo* and *In the Right Place* are combined on a Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab 24K disc.)

what to buy next: *Goin' Back to New Orleans* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1992, prod. Stewart Levine) is another fine reflection of his early influences, with lots of stellar guest artists. *In a Sentimental Mood* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1989, prod. Tommy LiPuma) is Rebennack's career-reviving take on standards such as "Makin' Whoopee" (a Grammy-winning duet with Rickie Lee Jones) and "Accentuate the Positive." And have your mojo hand ready should you fall under the hoodoo incantations of the Night Tripper on *Gris Gris* ♪♪♪ (Atco, 1968, prod. Harold Battiste). His first in-concert set, *Trippin' Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Surefire, 1997, prod. Mac Rebennack), is worth the wait, especially for the long-anticipated "Renegade," a staple of his stage shows.

what to avoid: *At His Best* ♪♪½ (Special Music Company, 1989) has been rendered redundant by the several more complete best-ofs.

best of the rest:
Gumbo ♪♪♪♪½ (Atco, 1972/1990)
Hollywood Be Thy Name ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1975/One Way, 1997)
Dr. John Plays Mac Rebbenack ♪♪♪♪ (Clean Cuts, 1981)
The Brightest Smile in Town ♪♪♪ (Clean Cuts, 1983)
The Ultimate Dr. John ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987)
Such a Night ♪♪♪ (Makin' Waves, 1988/1992)
Gumbo/In the Right Place ♪♪♪♪½ (Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, 1994)
Television ♪♪♪½ (GRP, 1994)
Afterglow ♪♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1995)
Crawfish Soiree ♪♪♪½ (Aim, 1996)

worth searching for: Listen for that famous voice on any number of television commercials. And if you're in a used store, an import CD of formative, loose-limbed 1960s sessions, *Cut Me While I'm Hot* ♪♪♪♪ (Magnum America, 1995), would make a nice collector's trophy.

Dr. John **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

influences:

◀◀ Professor Longhair, James Booker, Isidore "Tuts" Washington, Joe Liggins, Huey (Piano) Smith

▶▶ The Neville Brothers, Marcia Ball, the Radiators

Doug Pippin and Leland Rucker

Anne Dodson

Born May 18, 1952, in Hanover, NH.

Born to parents homesteading in a small valley in Vermont, Anne Dodson and her family moved to southwest New Hampshire, where she was raised, in 1954. Weary of the long New England winters, Dodson ended up graduating from high school in Naples, Florida. Dodson's father, Fred, was a noted watercolor artist and craftsman who made pewter hollow ware (tea pots, etc.) as well as gold and silver jewelry. Her mother, Phyllis, is a naturalist and writer and still lives in Florida. Dodson has an older brother, David, who is a singer/songwriter currently living in Camden, Maine; the two grew up singing at local New England events. As kids they performed as a duo and, with two cousins from Vermont, as the "Four Cousins"; they got as far as an *Ed Sullivan Show* audition in New York City. After taking weaving classes at the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, she settled briefly in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but eventually ended up in Deer Isle, Maine; there she married a high school friend, took up weaving, built a house, and raised huge gardens. The loom sits in her attic these days, but her love of fiber is now expressed through knitting needles. Gradually the performing bug and an addiction to traditional and other forms of folk music brought her slowly back to music as a means of supporting herself. She began to work with the already established trio County Down, who had lost a member the year before. That partnership lasted for 10 years and survived Dodson's divorce and move to Camden. When her run with County Down ended, Dodson moved on to the four- (eventually to be five-) piece band Different Shoes. Over the years Dodson continued to work with Different Shoes, occasionally reuniting with County Down; she now works with both groups in addition to her solo career. In 1990 she met Matt Szostak with whom she now lives and plays music. Szostak is a builder of traditional French style hurdy-gurdys; he adds vocals, guitar, and cittern, as well as hurdy-gurdy, to Dodson's musical mix. Dodson has become increasingly interested in working with children, seeking to expose the next generation to folk music; much of her solo work is in school residency programs. She tours primarily along the eastern seaboard of the

lonnie donegan

U.S., but makes every-other-year treks to the midwest. Over the years, Dodson has performed and recorded with Gordon Bok, Noel Paul Stookey (of Peter, Paul & Mary), and others. She is the recipient of a 1996–97 individual fellowship composer's grant, awarded through the Maine Arts Commission. Dodson plays guitar, mountain dulcimer, pennywhistle, and, with Different Shoes, cello (it replaced the wash tub bass). All of Dodson's material is available from Beech Hill Music, PO Box 14, Camden, ME 04843.

what to buy: *Almost Grown* ♪♪♪♪ (Beech Hill Music, 1995, prod. Anne Dodson, Matt Szostak) is Dodson's most recent release and is targeted at "kids and their adults." Dodson's sense of humor shines as she sings of the bear that met "Benji"—"the bear was bulgy and the bulge was Benji"—and of "A Proper Coffee Pot," a song that has since become a staple of the Voices of Winter tour for Cindy Mangsen, Anne Hills, and Priscilla Herdman. Dodson can also get serious with songs like "Waiting for the Lark." She gets lots of help from a large supporting cast, including husband Matt Szostak, Gordon Bok, Cindy Kallet, Lisa Redfern, and others. Szostak's hurdy-gurdy playing is especially nice on "Lady Jane Medley."

what to buy next: Virtually the same crew gathered to cut *From Where I Sit* ♪♪♪½ (Beech Hill Music, 1993, prod. Anne Dodson, Matt Szostak), which finds Dodson in a somewhat more serious mood. She mixes original material with a great Larry Kaplan song, "Connecticut Twister," and one written specifically for her by Dave Goulder. She also takes the opportunity to show off her guitar skills.

the rest:
Tranquility Grange ♪♪½ (Fretless, 1986) (cassette only)
In Its Own Sweet Time ♪♪♪ (Beech Hill Music, 1990)

worth searching for: *Christmas in Maine* ♪♪♪ (Timberhead, 1992) is a compilation of Maine artists that includes one song with Dodson and Noel Paul Stookey. *So Bravely Dream* ♪♪♪ (Timberhead, 1995), an album celebrating the songs of Jan Harmon, has Dodson doing some solo work, along with other artists, including the Quasimodal Chorus (to which Dodson belongs). The assemblage sings choral works of the late Jan Harmon. During the 1980s Dodson helped make *The February Tapes* ♪♪ (Timberhead, various dates) with Gordon Bok and friends. These are described as "silly, never meant to be published tapes made to cheer up friends with the winter doldrums." All of these are available through Timberhead, PO Box 840, Camden, ME 04843.

solo outings:
County Down:
County Down ♪♪½ (Fretless, 1981) (cassette only)
Living in the Country ♪♪♪ (Fretless, 1983) (cassette only)

Different Shoes:
One Size Feets All ♪♪♪ (Fretless, 1985) (cassette only)
Tie One On ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1988) (cassette only)

influences:
◀◀ Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs, Gordon Bok
▶▶ Anne Hills, Cindy Mangsen, Priscilla Herdman

Neal Walters

Lonnie Donegan

Born Anthony James Donegan, 1931, in Glasgow, Scotland.

Scottish guitarist Donegan plundered the catalogs of American folk singers (such as Leadbelly and Woody Guthrie) and in turn inspired a generation of British rock heroes (like Cliff Richard and John Lennon). A regular performer on Britain's jazz circuit—he supposedly took his stage name from blues guitarist Lonnie Johnson—Donegan was England's undisputed leader of skiffle, a down-and-dirty brand of uptempo folk played on acoustic guitars, washboards, and tea-chest bass. His version of "Rock Island Line" became an instant U.K. hit in 1955, and skiffle groups appeared practically overnight throughout the country thanks to the music's simplicity and the high availability of common instruments. The craze lasted through 1959, when Donegan was knocked out of the charts by the very rock 'n' roll acts he helped to inspire. Following a lengthy absence due to a heart attack, he returned in 1978 with "Putting on the Style," an all-star skiffle record featuring Ringo Starr, Brian May, Elton John, and other musicians inspired by his music.

what's available: For a solid introduction to Donegan, check out *Collection* ♪♪♪♪ (Castle Communications, 1989), a single-disc sampler of essential Donegan tracks. If that whets your appetite—in a big way only—move on up to the import, *More Than Pie in the Sky* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1993), a massive eight-CD box set stuffed to the gills with 209 tracks. Given the strengths of these two packages, the three-CD set *Putting on the Styles* ♪♪ (Sequel) seems unnecessary, with too many novelty tunes and no "Rock Island Line."

influences:
◀◀ Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ The Kingston Trio, Sweeney's Men, the Beatles

Christopher Scapelliti

Donovan

Born Donovan Leitch, February 10, 1946, in Glasgow, Scotland.

An early British folkie turned pop star, Donovan incorporated rock and psychedelic elements during the mid- and late-'60s. From such tender ditties as "Catch the Wind" in 1965 to the grinding buzz of 1968's "Hurdy Gurdy Man" (with guitarist Jeff Beck), Donovan was all over the stylistic map. His credibility suffered from an early and much-hyped comparison to Bob Dylan, but producer Mickie Most molded Donovan from a reformed folkie to a pop singer with clever lyrics and wit—which started the "e-lect-ri-cal banana" craze of "Mellow Yellow." From pop star, Donovan changed colors again and turned himself into an early New Ager. And all of these transitions took place in a span of only four or five years. From 1965 to 1969 he released 14 albums, making him something of a one-man British Invasion with hits like "Universal Soldier," "Colours," "Wear Your Love Like Heaven," "Season of the Witch," "Atlantis," and "Barabajagal." But after that his career declined rapidly, as if so much work so soon had sapped Donovan of his creative strength. His work from the late '70s into the '80s was imminently forgettable. In 1996 he plotted a comeback with modern rock and rap producer Rick Rubin and a new album, *Sutras*.

what to buy: *Troubadour: The Definitive Collection 1964–1976* ♪♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1992, prod. various) is the one stop to hear his best. This comprehensive collection—handpicked by Donovan—includes 44 songs and all of his hits.

what to avoid: *The Classics Live* **woof!** (Great Northern Arts Ltd., 1991) is an unfortunate concert recording, best left unheard.

the rest:
Catch the Wind ♪♪♪ (Hickory, 1965/Sandstone, 1992)
Sunshine Superman ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1966/1990)
Hurdy Gurdy Man ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1968/1986)
Barabajagal ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1969/1987)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1987)
A Gift from a Flower to a Garden ♪♪♪ (Beat Goes On, 1993)
In Concert ♪♪ (Beat Goes On, 1994)
Peace & Love Songs ♪♪½ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
Golden Hits ♪♪♪ (Masters, 1996)
Sunshine Superman: 20 Songs Of ♪♪½ (Remember, 1996)
Sutras ♪♪ (American, 1996)
Donovan ♪♪½ (WMO, 1996)
Fairytale ♪♪♪ (Castle, 1996)
Performance ♪♪½ (Beacon, 1997)
Mellow ♪♪♪ (Recall, 1997)

worth searching for: *Mellow Yellow* ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1967), one of his more consistent '60s albums, has yet to see the laser light of CD reissue. Its title track is a defining piece of '60s pop counterculture.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, the Beatles
▶▶ David Crosby, XTC/Dukes of Stratosphear, the Housemartins

Patrick McCarty

Rockin' Dopsie

Born Alton Rubin, February 10, 1932, in Carencro, LA. Died August 26, 1993, in Lafayette, LA.

Most people will know Rockin' Dopsie for "That Was Your Mother" on Paul Simon's *Graceland*, but that was just a footnote to a long and successful career playing zydeco. He was born in Carencro, Louisiana, and spent much of his childhood working the land, either picking cotton or cutting cane. He started playing the accordion at 14, encouraged by his father, who was an accordionist himself. Being a lefty, Rubin had to flip over the accordion and play it upside down—the same way Jimi Hendrix played the guitar. He taught himself to play by learning tunes heard over the radio. His local reputation soon surpassed that of his father, but his career took off when he moved to Lafayette and began to play the clubs with his cousin Chester Zeno on washboard. Dopsie moved up to the three-row button accordion and got the moniker Dopsie from an out-of-town dancer that performed in Lafayette. The Rockin' was for the drive in his playing and his bands throughout the '60s and '70s cooked. His sons Alton Jr. and David joined him on drums and frattoir respectively. There is always a respect for Creole music in his records.

what to buy: *Louisiana Music* ♪♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1991, prod. Shane Keister, Ahmet Ertegun) was the major label debut of Rockin' Dopsie and he got to keep it gritty while getting the production values of a major label recording. This record does what a good zydeco record should do—sizzle and then cool into an occasional Ivory Joe Hunter tune like "Since I Lost My Baby" to let you catch your breath.

what to buy next: *Big Bad Zydeco* ♪♪♪♪ (Sonet, 1988, prod. Sam Charters) is worth buying just to hear how a zydeco band reshapes "Jambalaya" (a tune Hank Williams reshaped from the Cajun two-step "Grand Texas") and brings it home into cooking zydeco. Dopsie could drive a dance floor all night with

his accordion alone, but this band likes being driven. The production is sparse, but it suits the sound well.

the rest:
Crowned Prince of Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1987)
Saturday Night Zydeco ♪♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1988)
Good Rockin' ♪♪♪♪ (GNP, 1988)
Zy-De-Co-In' ♪♪♪½ (Gazell, 1989)
Feets Don't Fail Me Now ♪♪♪♪ (Aim, 1994)

worth searching for: *French Style* (Sonet, 1982, prod. Sam Charters) brings Dopsie together with Cajun fiddler Dewey Balfa with mixed results. Sometimes it works very well, sometimes it's a little odd—sometimes even in the same tune. Still, two legends playing together is worth finding.

influences:
⏮ Boozoo Chavis, Clifton Chenier, Amédée Ardoin
⏭ John Delafose, Roy Carrier, Chubby Carrier

Jared Snyder

Dordan

See: Mary Bergin

Double Clutchin'

See: Chris Ardoin

The Double Decker String Band

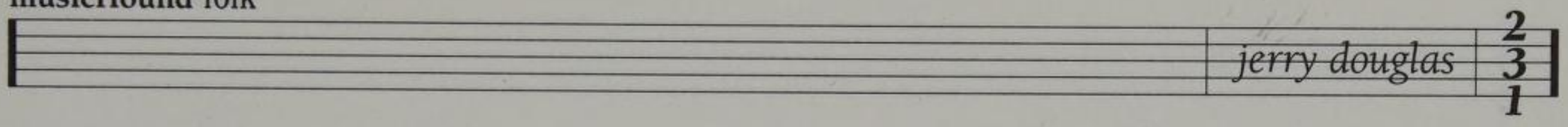
Formed 1977, in Takoma Park, MD.

Craig Johnson, banjo, fiddle, vocals (1980–present); Bruce Hutton, mandolin, banjo, vocals; John Beam, guitar, vocals; Bill Schmidt, fiddle, vocals (1977–93).

Much of the revival of old-time music during the 1970s centered on the driving, rhythmic, and heavily fiddle-oriented "Round Peak" style of the southern Virginia/western North Carolina region. Drawing on then-active legendary musicians like Tommy Jarrell, Kyle Creed, and Fred Cockerham for their repertoires, young bands of revivalists like the Highwoods String Band helped immeasurably in preserving much of the popular fiddle, banjo, and dance music of the Appalachians as the older generation passed from the scene. In counterpoint to this movement, the Double Decker String Band went in another direction, seeking out old sheet music, broadsides, and rare, forgotten cylinder and 78 rpm recordings, as well as oral transmission to find the old songs and tunes that had been sung and played in the parlors and music halls of turn-of-the-century America. In seeking out these songs—and the more obscure and forgotten, the better—this quartet of musicians from the Baltimore/Washington area sought also to perform and record them using the obscure and forgotten instruments of that bygone era. In addition to the standard instrumentation of fiddle, banjo, guitar, and mandolin, a performance by the Double Decker String Band is likely to include such oddities as the banjo ukulele, banjo guitar, tenor banjo, and tiple. When not performing or searching through musty attics and trunks for old records and sheet music, Baltimore-area natives John Beam and Bill Schmidt both carry on artistic careers, John as a graphic designer, and Bill as a noted painter. Both teach art as well. Social worker Craig Johnson, who lends his distinctive keen, high lead vocals to the band, is originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan. He now lives in Morgantown, West Virginia, and teaches part time at West Virginia University. Bruce Hutton, from the Washington suburb of Takoma Park, Maryland, is a full-time musician and music historian who performs solo outside the band. Around 1993, Bill Schmidt left the band and currently performs as a member of the Hoover Uprights, although he occasionally sits in with Double Decker, or with one or more of the other band members on an informal basis. Over the 20 years of its existence, the members of the Double Decker String Band not only have taken on the vital task of preserving, performing, and recording much of the music that entertained Americans between the Gay '90s and the Roaring '20s, but they have done it with an eclectic and eccentric style that makes them one of the most unusual and enjoyable bands in the realm of old-time music.

what's available: *Chasing Rainbows* ♪♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1996, prod. Paul Brown, Pete Reiniger) is Double Decker's debut on CD after a hiatus of several years. Now a trio, they nonetheless demonstrate that they haven't missed a beat on their recordings of vintage material like "Keno the Rent Man," "Mary, Don't You Weep," "Saro," "Down the River I Go," and "Jake Limber Leg Blues." Their version of "The House of the Rising Sun" is unlike any you might have heard before. From beginning to end on these 20 tracks, they're as on-target in '97 as they were in '77.

worth searching for: Their two early LP releases on the Fretless label, *Giddyap Napoleon* ♪♪♪♪ (Fretless, 1980, prod. Double Decker String Band) and *Sentimental Songs & Old Time Melodies* ♪♪♪½ (Fretless, 1981, prod. Double Decker String Band), are both good examples of the off-beat ethic the band is noted for. While they include such relatively familiar fare as "John Henry," "Ragged but Right," and "Wild Bill Jones," they are among the very few record sources for obscure gems like



"Riley the Furniture Man," "Jay Bird Died with the Whooping Cough," and "Tittabawassee Jane."

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, Riley Puckett, Charlie Poole, New Lost City Ramblers

▶▶ Volo Bogtrotters, Piney Creek Weasels

John Lupton

David Doucet

Born July 6, 1957, in Lafayette, LA.

David Doucet has been the backbone of Beausoleil for more than 20 years. Through long years of long nights on the bandstand he has created a guitar style that synthesizes equal parts Rodney Balfa and Clarence White. His bluegrass inflected bass runs and shifting chordal passages are the foundation around which his brother Michael builds his fiddle breaks. He also occasionally sings lead in a voice equal in strength and clarity to that of his brother and lends the brother style harmony that the two of them occasionally employ.

what to buy: *Quand J'ai Parti* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990, prod. David Doucet, Al Tharp) is David's only solo effort so far. He plays through a set of carefully picked Cajun tunes and augments his Beausoleil band mates with bluegrass dobro legend Josh Graves and bassist Josh Stewart. The acoustic bass adds a lighter bottom to the Beausoleil sound that hearkens back to the days of *Parle Nous A Boire*, while Graves's superb picking seems to push Doucet's guitar playing to new heights. If nothing else, this record makes you realize how much Doucet and his guitar are responsible for the Beausoleil sound.

what to buy next: *Master of the Folk Violin* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1989, prod. Chris Strachwitz) documents a concert tour that brought together six premier American fiddlers: Alison Krauss, Seamus Connolly, Michael Doucet, Kenny Baker, Claude Williams, and Joe Cormier. Graves and Stewart got acquainted with the Doucet brothers here. The five numbers performed by Michael and David give a rare chance to hear the interplay between the two of them in the absence of a rhythm section.

worth searching for: Half of *Beau Solo* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1989, prod. Michael Doucet, Chris Strachwitz) finds Michael Doucet at home alone in his living room, playing accordion or singing ancient unaccompanied ballads. The other half of the record features Michael and David playing a set of waltzes, one-steps, two-steps, and blues in what sounds like the same living room.

influences:

◀◀ D.L. Menard, the Balfa Brothers, Cleoma Breaux Falcon

▶▶ Steve Riley, Tasso, Beausoleil, the Basin Brothers

Jared Snyder

Michael Doucet

See: Beausoleil

Jerry Douglas /Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer

Born May 28, 1956, in Warren, OH.

The undisputed master of the dobro resophonic guitar, Jerry Douglas first established his reputation in bluegrass, joining the Country Gentlemen in 1974 and later playing with both J.D. Crowe & the New South and Boone Creek, a band Douglas formed with Ricky Skaggs. Douglas became an in-demand session musician after moving to Nashville in 1979 to work with the Whites. Since leaving that band in 1986, he has worked in an astonishing array of formats and contexts, performing and recording with bands (the Bluegrass Album Band, Strength in Numbers, and Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer), in duets with artists ranging from Peter Rowan to Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, on his own recordings, and as a guest artist on literally hundreds (if not thousands) of albums by such artists as Paul Simon, James Taylor, the Nashville Bluegrass Band, and Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers. Among Douglas's other career highlights are a stint in the house band on TNN's acclaimed *American Music Shop* series, several Grammy awards as an artist and producer (Alison Krauss, the Nashville Bluegrass Band), five International Bluegrass Music Association Dobro Player of the Year awards, and enough other industry awards to stock a trophy shop.

what to buy: *The Great Dobro Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Jerry Douglas, Tut Taylor), which won the Grammy for Best Bluegrass Recording in 1994, gathers 10 top dobro players for the most ambitious recorded survey of a single instrument in bluegrass history. Among the dobroists joining Douglas are Josh Graves, Mike Auldridge, Sally Van Meter, and Rob Ickes. Douglas is featured on two cuts, the modern jazz standard "Birdland" and a solo "Abilene Gal." Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer's *Skip, Hop & Wobble* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Russ Barenberg, Jerry Douglas, Edgar Meyer) combines Douglas with guitarist Russ Barenberg and renowned bassist Edgar Meyer for an all-instrumental album of virtuoso music that's as accessible and enjoyable as it is challenging. Guest Sam Bush takes "Big Sciota" pretty close to bluegrass, but other highlights

wilson douglas

("Big Bug Shuffle," "From Ankara to Izmir," "The Years Between") straddle genres with abandon and fiery aplomb. *Slide Rule* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. Jerry Douglas), described by Douglas as his return to "entertaining" music, made a big splash thanks to heavy airplay for cuts featuring guest vocalists Krauss ("I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby"), Tim O'Brien ("Hey Joe"), and the Brother Boys ("Pearlie Mae"). The solo "A New Day Medley" is Douglas at his best, though full-band cuts on "Ride the Wild Turkey," "Shenandoah Breakdown," and "Shoulder to Shoulder" aren't far behind.

what to buy next: *Under the Wire* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Jerry Douglas), the first of a series of self-described non-entertaining (i.e., "art") albums Douglas recorded for MCA, is actually a very entertaining collection of tunes, most of them Douglas originals. "Two Friends," a duet with Béla Fleck, is a highlight, as are the tunes "Grant's Corner," "Redhill," and "T.O.B." *Everything Is Gonna Work out Fine* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Jerry Douglas), a 19-track reissue drawn from his two Rounder albums (*Fluxology* and *Fluxedo*), presents Douglas in a more bluegrass-oriented setting than many of his later recordings. Such guests as Ricky Skaggs and Tony Rice add strong support on standout cuts like "Randy Lynn Rag," "Dixie Hoedown," and "Wheel Hoss." Dreadful Snakes' *Snakes Alive* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984) is a one-time supergroup project featuring Douglas, Béla Fleck, Pat Enright, Blaine Sprouse, Roland White, and Mark Hambree.

the rest:

Fluxology ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979)
Fluxedo ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
(With Vishwa Mohan Bhatt) *Bourbon & Rosewater* ♪♪♪♪ (Water Lily Acoustics, 1995)
(With the Bluegrass Album Band) *V. 6, The Bluegrass Album Band* (Rounder, 1996)
(With Peter Rowan) *Yonder* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

influences:

Josh Graves, Mike Auldridge
Rob Ickes, Kim Gardner

see also: *Strength in Numbers*

Jon Hartley Fox

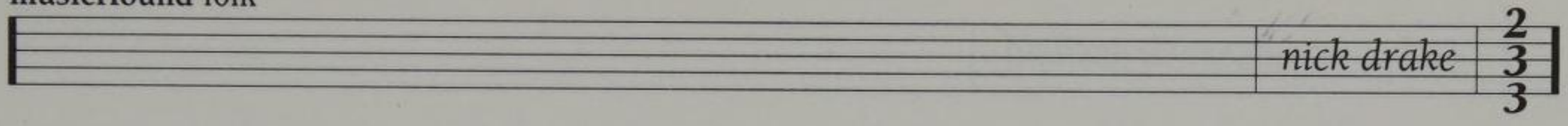
Wilson Douglas

Born 1922, in Clay County, WV.

Wilson Douglas has lived most of his life within a few miles of his Clay County birthplace. Born to a family of musicians in an area rich with traditional music, his first instrument was the guitar. At age 8, Douglas made nightly treks to his grandmother's house to accompany her fiddling and learn her tunes. Eventually he switched to the fiddle himself. Around that time, the legendary fiddler Ed Haley came to Clay County and became Douglas's greatest inspiration. After Haley's death, Douglas was further influenced by the playing of West Virginia fiddler French Carpenter. These days, Douglas has assumed the role played by Haley and Carpenter, passing his tunes, his style, and his love of mountain music along to the many younger musicians who come to learn.

what's available: In 1973, a series of field recordings were made around West Virginia by musician/collector Tom Brown. These recordings are now in the care of the West Virginia Regional History Collection at West Virginia University. They include Douglas, accompanied by his uncle, Gruder Morris, on guitar. The CD *Hot from the Kitchen* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Roane Records, 1996, prod. David O'Dell) consists of 21 tunes from this collection. Douglas's style is different from many other old-time fiddlers, and this disc presents a cross-section of his playing, showcasing all the grace and dignity that he brings to his music. Many of these tunes are well known in old-time circles, but Wilson's versions almost always include an interesting twist or two. Even the ubiquitous "Forked Deer," which has been sanitized and sterilized by a countless number of lesser fiddlers, takes on a new life in Wilson's capable hands. There are also a few relatively uncommon tunes, one of which—"Goin' Downtown"—is a pure delight. These are field recordings, and there are a few reminders of that in the form of bumped microphones, tapping feet, etc. Morris's guitar is also louder on some cuts than others. However, these things are not distracting, and the fiddle is always clean and clear. This is no imitation, it's the real stuff—Appalachian fiddle music, the kind that was a part of everyday life in the old days, played by one of the masters. If anything, the evidence of field recording adds to the enjoyment. This disc is available from Roane Records, Route 3, Box 293, Spencer, WV 25276.

worth searching for: Douglas was also recorded by Gus Meade during the 1970s, and much of this was issued on *The Right Hand Fork of Rush's Creek* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1975, prod. Guthrie Meade, Mark Wilson). This LP is out of print but worth looking for. All of the tunes were learned from French Carpenter. There is some overlap between this and the *Hot from the Kitchen* CD, but not much, and there are several unusual and beautiful tunes that are hard to find elsewhere.



influences:

Ed Haley, French Carpenter

Jim Triplett

Dave Shombert

Connie Dover /Scartaglen

Scartaglen formed 1982, in Kansas City, MO. Disbanded 1994.

Connie Dover, vocals, keyboard, harmonium; Roger Landes, bouzouki, mandolin, guitar; Kirk Lynch, uilleann pipes, guitar; Michael Dugger, bouzouki, fiddle, guitar, vocals.

Scartaglan was an acoustically-oriented American band that performed ballads and tunes from Ireland, Scotland, and England, as well as original compositions that were heavily inspired by Anglo-Celtic traditions. They released three albums, all of which are now out of print. During an off period for Scartaglen in 1991, Connie Dover traveled to Scotland and recorded her first solo album with a cast of great Scottish and Irish musicians. Subsequent to Scartaglen's demise, Dover has continued to develop her solo career. She recorded two more solo albums with Phil Cunningham (ex–Silly Wizard) producing, and she performs live in a duo setting with Roger Landes. Dover and Landes had a guest spot on the famed National Public Radio program, *A Prairie Home Companion*.

what's available: Since all three of the Scartaglen albums are out of print, all that's available presently are Connie Dover's solo albums and solo efforts by Landes and Dugger. Dover's three solo recordings—*Somebody* ♪♪♪♪½ (Taylor Park Music, 1991, prod. Phil Cunningham), *The Wishing Well* ♪♪♪♪ (Taylor Park Music, 1994, prod. Phil Cunningham), and *If Ever I Return* ♪♪♪♪ (Taylor Park Music, 1997, prod. Phil Cunningham)—are all fairly similar in tone. Cunningham surrounded Dover with a fine cast of sympathetic musicians, including himself on keyboard and pennywhistles, Aly Bain (Boys of the Lough) on fiddle, Christy O'Leary (uilleann pipes), and Manus Lunny (guitar, bouzouki, bodhrán). Most of the selections are traditional ballads from Scotland or Ireland, with the occasional surprise such as the lovely French song "La Fontaine," which also appears on *If Ever I Return*.

worth searching for: *Scartaglen* ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1984, prod. Scartaglen), *The Middle Path* ♪♪♪½ (Castle Island, 1987, prod. Scartaglen), and *Last Night's Fun* ♪♪♪½ (City Spark Records, 1992, prod. Tom Mardikes) are all nice recordings and worth searching out.

solo outings:

Michael Dugger:

At Early Dawn (Lopitha, 1996)

Roger Landes:

Dragon Reels ♪♪♪♪ (Ranger Music, 1997)

influences:

Maddy Prior, Phil Cunningham, Silly Wizard, Planxty, Boys of the Lough, Dwight Yoakam

Loreena McKennitt, Dervish, Seelyhoo, Altan

Ken Roseman

Nick Drake

Born June 19, 1948, in Rangoon, Burma. Died November 25, 1974, in Tanworth-in-Arden, England.

Of all the names to come out of the English folk movement of the late '60s, only Drake had to wait some 20 years after his death to be recognized for his achievements and impact. During his brief life, Drake released three touching, heartfelt albums that met critical adulation and public dismissal. This lack of commercial acceptance sent the already melancholy Drake into an even deeper state of depression. Through his pain, or perhaps because of it, Drake was able to write songs that were at times personal, often mystical, sometimes tragic, and always enchanting. Behind the English lilt of his hush-be-quiet voice was Drake's radiant and hypnotic guitar playing, a lyrical triad of alternate tunings, complex chord progressions, and intricate finger picking. But, his chronic shyness and aversion to performing live did little to get his name in front of those who could have appreciated him while he was alive. A few months after beginning to record his fourth album, Drake overdosed on Tryptizol, an anti-depressant medication. The coroner declared it a suicide, though friends and family disagree. Today, interest in Drake is far greater than it ever was while he was alive, with his CDs reaching a new audience and generating talk about tribute albums and a feature film about his life.

what to buy: Even with the lush background of Robert Kirby's string arrangements, the delicate power of Drake's acoustic guitar rings through *Bryter Layter* ♪♪♪♪½ (Island/Hannibal, 1970, prod. Joe Boyd). The jazzy "One of These Things First" and "At the Chime of the City Clock" share space with haunting instrumentals and emotionally intense love songs such as "Northern Sky." Drake reportedly recorded the songs on *Pink Moon* ♪♪♪♪½ (Island/Hannibal, 1972, prod. Nick Drake) in two days, just with his voice and a guitar, then without a word

robin and barry dransfield

dropped the tape off at the Island Records reception desk and disappeared. After several days someone opened the package and realized they had the new Nick Drake album. After a few listens, this scenario makes perfect sense; he said all he needed to with one voice, six strings, and 11 songs.

what to buy next: Drake's first album, *Five Leaves Left* ♪♪♪♪ (Island/Hannibal, 1969, prod. Joe Boyd), was recorded when he was just 20 years old. But he belies his youth with skillful playing, and the production blends his guitar, voice, and string arrangements magnificently. "Cello Song" is as close to perfection as it gets. *Time of No Reply* ♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1986, prod. Joe Boyd, Frank Kornelussen) consists of unreleased songs recorded during the *Five Leaves Left* sessions, as well as home recordings and four songs recorded in 1974 which were to be included on Drake's fourth album. All are solo acoustic performances except for an alternate version of "The Thoughts of Mary Jane," which features Richard Thompson on electric guitar. Once you're hooked, splurge for *Fruit Tree* ♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1986, prod. Joe Boyd), a four-CD box set that contains all three original releases and *Time of No Reply*, along with a 16-page booklet.

the rest:
Way to Blue: An Introduction to Nick Drake ♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1994)

worth searching for: *Tanworth-in-Arden 1967/68* ♪♪♪½ is an Italian bootleg that features 18 tracks, mostly cover songs, from a homemade tape. *The Complete Home Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (Boyds Music) is a German bootleg featuring 24 tracks.

influences:

◀◀ The Beatles, Tim Buckley, Bob Dylan, Tim Hardin, John Renbourn, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Jeff Buckley, the Cure, Mark Eitzel, J Mascis, R.E.M., the Smiths, Paul Weller

Brian Escamilla

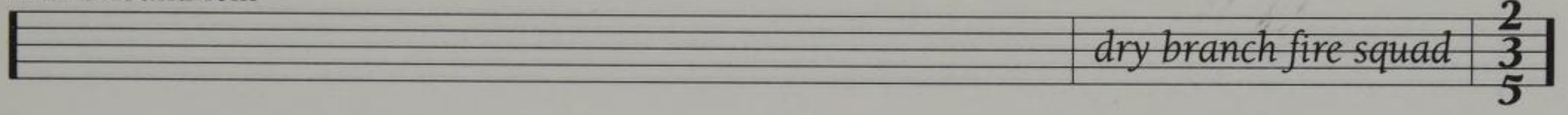
Robin and Barry Dransfield

Formed 1969, in Yorkshire, England. Disbanded 1971.

Robin Dransfield, vocals, guitar; Barry Dransfield, vocals, fiddle.

Robin and Barry Dransfield have been involved with the English folk scene in some fashion for almost thirty years. As a duo, they made their initial splash in 1969 at the Loughborough Festival, where they met legendary producer Bill Leader, for whom they subsequently recorded two albums, *Rout of the Blues* and *Lord of All I Behold*. During 1970 and 1971, the duo toured extensively, even supporting acts such as Ralph McTell. Stardom beckoned, but they declined to participate and split up; Barry stated that "joining the establishment just didn't appeal to me." After that Barry recorded a solo album, *Barry Dransfield*, and participated in recording the seminal *Morris On* album with an all-star band including Ashley Hutchings, Richard Thompson, John Kirkpatrick, and Dave Mattacks. The Dransfields came back together in 1976 for *The Fiddler's Dream*, an ambitious project described as a "thematic album based around the idea of a true folk musician's role in the community" (Colin Irwin, in his liner notes for the CD compilation *Up to Now*). This was a thoroughly contemporary set, featuring original material and folk-rock arrangements using electric bassist Brian Harrison (also on piano and organ) and drummer Charlie White. As "Dransfield" (with a different drummer—Bob Critchley), they formed a live touring unit that didn't receive the type of support it needed. For their next project, Robin and Barry returned to their acoustic roots. Credited again to Robin and Barry Dransfield, *Popular to Contrary Belief* was released in 1977. After that, the brothers went their separate ways. Barry released another solo album, *Bowin' and Scrapin'*, in 1978 and Robin's solo effort, *Tidewave*, appeared in 1980. Since then, both Dransfield brothers have had careers as violin repairers. Barry, however, has continued to perform. In 1984, he even a won a part as a blind Irish fiddler in the film *The Bounty*. The next the public heard from Barry was when *Be Your Own Man* was released in 1994. This collection of traditional and contemporary songs was well received and gave Barry the opportunity to record *Wings of the Sphinx* with producer Kenny Craddock. The Dransfield story came full circle in 1997 when the reactivated Free Reed label released *Up to Now*, a comprehensive history of the Dransfields' careers.

what to buy: Since most of Barry and Robin's albums are now out of print, to get a good sampling of what they've done, you must get *Up to Now* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Free Reed, 1997, prod. various). Not only does this two-CD anthology include tracks from the duo, solo, and "Dransfield" albums, there is also quite a bit of previously unreleased material taken from BBC radio programs, including several John Peel Show broadcasts. The Dransfield band tracks culled from those radio shows are a great treat for folk-rock fans in that they show what a dynamic live unit they were. Barry's a capella rendition of "The Werewolf," taken from *Barry Dransfield*, is stunning. The *Up to Now* package includes a booklet featuring a thorough Dransfield history written by journalist Colin Irwin, as well as complete source documentation for each track.



what to buy next: Since *The Fiddler's Dream* ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1976/Essential/Transatlantic, 1997, prod. Brian Harrison) is once again generally available, listeners can rediscover the potential of the Dransfields' variation on the folk rock theme. Barry Dransfield's recent solo albums, *Be Your Own Man* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhiannon, 1994, prod. Paul Dengate) and *Wings of the Sphinx* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhiannon, 1996, prod. Kenny Craddock), show the power of acoustic-based English roots music. Also, Dransfield's current status as an ace multi-instrumentalist is revealed, since he played cello and guitar on these albums, in addition to fiddle.

worth searching for: Barry Dransfield's *Bowin' and Scrapin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1978) and Robin Dransfield's *Tidewave* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1980) are both long out of print, but if you find them at a good price (and still own a turntable), buy 'em! *Popular to Contrary Belief* ♪♪♪♪½ (Free Reed, 1977) is also out of print, but may be reissued as a limited edition vinyl collector's item.

influences:

◀◀ The Copper Family, the Watersons, Flatt & Scruggs, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Martin Carthy & Dave Swarbrick

▶▶ Eliza Carthy, Kate Rusby, Kathryn Tickell, Pete Morton

Ken Roseman

Pete Droge

Born March 11, 1969, in Eugene, OR.

With a lyrical gift that says "folkie," and a band that answers "rock 'n' roll," Droge can have it both ways. But he mostly plays it down the middle, creating solid, acoustic-based rockers that are literate, soulful, and earnest to a fault. Considering he began his career in Seattle and later moved to Portland, it's surprising that he chose not to hide his lyrics in a sea of sonic sludge or adorn them with coy love-rock. But Droge has the air of an iconoclast about him, and, backed by his simple guitar-bass-drums-keyboard arrangements, his laconic delivery makes him sound like Tom Petty backed by the Band.

what's available: On *Necktie Second* ♪♪♪♪ (American, 1994, prod. Brendan O'Brien), Droge indulges in a fair amount of self-pity, but at least some of the time, as on the rocking opening cut, "If You Don't Love Me (I'll Kill Myself)," he plays it as if for yuks. Elsewhere, he engages in a bit of Dylanesque wordplay ("Sunspot Stopwatch") and proves himself a capable storyteller ("Fourth of July"). The album is suffused with regret and longing, yet there is just enough humor to keep things moving. *Find a Door* ♪♪♪♪ (American, 1996, prod. Brendan O'Brien), has his backing outfit solidifying into a band he calls the Sinners, but the sound is no less than heavenly, particularly on the rocking single "Wolfgang," which coasts along on a George Harrison–style slide guitar. The horn-augmented "Mr. Jade" rants at a clueless yuppie, and is perhaps Droge's own "Ballad of a Thin Man." And on "Dear Diane," Droge regresses to the wise-ass moroseness of his debut, instructing "Dear Diane/Today was worse/Call the Reverend and a hearse." This kid's gonna go places. Droge puts the rock back in folk-rock on *Spacey and Shakin* ♪♪♪½ (57/Epic, 1998, prod. Brendan O'Brien), rocking with abandon on the neopsychedelic title track and "Please the Ghost."

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Tom Petty, Neil Young

▶▶ Elaine Summers

Daniel Durchholz

Dry Branch Fire Squad

Formed 1976, in Springfield, OH.

Current line-up features: Ron Thomason, mandolin, guitar, vocals; Suzanne Thomas, guitar, clawhammer banjo, vocals; Mary Jo Leet, guitar, vocals; Charlie Leet, bass, vocals; Bobby Maynard, banjo, fiddle, vocals. Past members have included: Bill Evans, banjo, vocals; Dave Edmundson, guitar, fiddle, vocals; Dick Ervin, bass, vocals; John Hisey, banjo, vocals; Dan Russell, banjo, vocals; John Lee Baker, guitar, vocals.

A favorite attraction at bluegrass festivals for 20 years, Dry Branch Fire Squad is perhaps best known for the extemporaneous ramblings of their leader Ron Thomason during live shows. Not to be ignored as highly skilled musicians, however, their recorded output has included some mighty fine bluegrass. Thomason, the only remaining original member of the band, was mandolin player for Ralph Stanley for roughly a year in 1971, then joined Lee Allen and the Dew Mountain Boys for four years before forming DBFS. Their most recent album captures the band at its best.

what to buy: *Live! At Last* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ken Irwin, Dry Branch Fire Squad) includes Ron Thomason's amusing (if mostly pointless!) introductions of band members and of the songs fans have enjoyed for years. His duets with Thomas, including "We Believe in Happy Endings," are particularly good.

what to buy next: *Long Journey* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Ken Irwin) is the best studio record (of those available on CD) that the band has recorded; the others lack the cohesiveness and style displayed here.

the rest:
Tried & True ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
Fertile Ground ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Just for the Record ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993)
Antiques & Inventions ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) (cassette only)
Born to Be Lonesome ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) (cassette only)
Golgotha ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) (cassette only)
Good Neighbors & Friends ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995) (cassette only)

influences:
◀◀ Ralph Stanley, Molly O'Day

Stephen L. Betts

The Dubliners

Formed 1962, in Dublin, Ireland.

Ronnie Drew, voice, guitar; Luke Kelly, voice, guitar, banjo; Barney McKenna, tenor banjo, mandolin, voice; Ciaran Bourke, voice, guitar, tin whistle; John Sheahan, fiddle, tin whistle, concertina; Eamonn Campbell, guitars, mandolin, voice; Sean Cannon, voice, guitar; Jim McCann, voice, guitar; Bobby Lynch, voice, guitar; Paddy Reilly, voice, guitar.

In the history of Irish music, no group has created and maintained its niche as effectively as the Dubliners. At the beginning of "the ballad boom," that heady time during the early '60s when the Clancy Brothers made "folk songs" a meaningful category that ordinary people could relate to and take pride in, the Dubliners began their own career. While the Clancys were well-scrubbed returned Yanks from rural Tipperary, decked out in matching white Aran sweaters, the Dubliners were hard drinking backstreet Dublin scrappers with unkempt hair and bushy beards, whose gigs seemed to happen by accident in between fist fights. But their street credibility, their undeniable talent, and their honest love of the music has kept them going and made them some of the most famous Irishmen in the world.

The Dubliners started in 1962 as the Ronnie Drew Group. Drew had recently returned to Ireland from Spain, where he had been teaching English and learning to play the guitar. He brought this new musical talent to bear on the Irish song tradition, and gathered around himself a core of terrific entertainers and musicians. Barney McKenna, a great tenor banjo picker, provided instrumental firepower. All-around showman Ciaran Bourke added second guitar, sweet creaky vocals, and tin whistle. And Luke Kelly, an intense singer and five-string banjo player who had served his time on the English folk club scene, was the band's most impressive vocalist. Kelly suggested the band's name be changed to the Dubliners. After a single Dubliners album for the Transatlantic label, Kelly departed for England. He was replaced by Bobby Lynch, who also brought along his musical partner, fiddler John Sheahan. When Kelly returned to replace Lynch in 1966, Sheahan stayed on as the group's most impressive traditional instrumentalist. This five-piece lineup of Drew, Kelly, Bourke, McKenna, and Sheahan became famous in 1967 through a song called "Seven Drunken Nights," originally recorded for an album called *A Drop of the Hard Stuff*, which was later re-titled *The New Dubliners*, and later still re-christened *Seven Drunken Nights*. It first appeared on the Major Minor label. "Seven Drunken Nights" was released as a single, but when the official media banned it for bawdiness it looked like it would languish in obscurity for good. Luckily for the Dubliners, it was picked up by the pirate station Radio Caroline and given saturation airplay. As a result, it shot to Number Five on the British Pop charts, launching the Dubliners to stardom and making them a household word in Ireland, Britain, and all over the world.

The *Seven Drunken Nights* line-up lasted eight years, and despite always being on the verge of breaking up (Drew, Kelly, and McKenna fell out every other night or so), it was only split up by a major tragedy: in 1974, Bourke suffered a brain hemorrhage on stage that left him unable to perform. Bourke's condition, and a doctor's warning, caused Drew to examine his lifestyle and decide to leave the Dubliners as well. Drew was replaced by Jim McCann, and the band continued to perform all over the world. Drew did eventually return to the group (in 1979), and all went smoothly until tragedy struck again in 1984. Luke Kelly, whose soaring vocals defined the Dubliners' sound as surely as anything, died that year of a brain tumor. He was replaced by Galway singer Sean Cannon, who had been filling in off and on during Kelly's illness. A few years later, Eamonn Campbell signed on, playing guitars and mandolin. In 1987, this lineup of the Dubliners teamed up with the Pogues to record "The Irish Rover," which became their biggest hit ever and added them to the consciousness of a whole new generation.

The latest lineup change in the Dubliners was the departure (once again) of Ronnie Drew, in 1996. He was replaced by the great entertainer Paddy Reilly. One thing to take note of regarding this important band: the Dubliners have recorded many studio albums and many live albums, and they repeated the same "greatest hits" with some frequency in their recordings. Because of international licensing arrangements, many of their albums have been released more than once, by different labels, under different titles, and bearing different covers. In addition, an enormous number of Dubliners compilation albums have been released, drawing on most of the original material. The re-

sult is that, especially where CD reissues are concerned, there are a lot of different albums with a relatively narrow selection of songs, and it's often difficult to tell the origin of any given track. Always compare any Dubliners album you contemplate buying with ones that are already in your collection, or you will quite likely wind up buying the same songs over and over.

what to buy: *Original Dubliners 1966–1969* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1993) captures the excitement of the best-known Dubliners lineup. It collects four albums from the Dubliners' early days onto two CDs. Typically, the four original LPs were released at various times with various titles, but their best-known monikers were *Seven Drunken Nights*, *Seven Deadly Sins*, *More of the Hard Stuff*, and *Whiskey on a Sunday*. It should be said that, contrary to what the sleeve notes claim, these were not the first albums the Dubliners recorded, but it was these albums that established the Dubliners as an enduring presence and not a one-hit wonder. The EMI set includes memorable and influential interpretations of many great songs, including Kelly's renditions of traditional songs like "Whiskey in the Jar," "The Rising of the Moon," "Black Velvet Band," "Poor Paddy on the Railway," "A Nation Once Again," and "Gentleman Soldier." Kelly also sings three songs by his friend and mentor Ewan MacColl, "The Traveling People," "Shoals of Herring," and "Net Hauling Song," as well as many Scottish songs that he picked up during his years in Britain. For his part, Drew contributes some of the racier, bawdier, boozier material: "Seven Drunken Nights," "Poor Old Dicey Riley," "Quare Bungle Rye," "Whiskey on a Sunday," "The Parting Glass," and "A Pub with No Beer" are all supplied by him. Bourke sings a few as well, though his voice was weaker and creakier than those of his bandmates. "Darby O'Leary," "All for Me Grog," "Drink it up, Men," "Mrs. McGrath" (a parody of the traditional song based on his own life), and "The Limerick Rake" are all sung by Bourke. Many sets of tunes, including a memorable version of "O'Carolan's Concerto," are led by McKenna and/or Sheahan. All of these are classic tracks that would irrevocably change the way the world saw Irish music. In every Irish music lover's collection, there will always be room for these albums, albums that in many ways started it all.

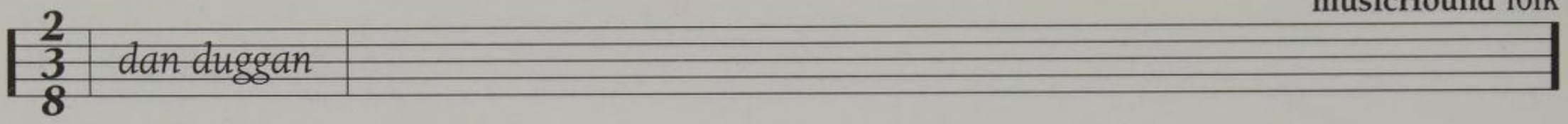
what to buy next: The Dubliners' 1992 anniversary double CD, *30 Years a-Greying* ♪♪♪♪ (RTE 1992, prod. Eamonn Campbell, Phil Coulter), features the then-current lineup of Drew, McKenna, Sheahan, Cannon, and Campbell, along with guest musicians ranging from Rory Gallagher to the Hothouse Flowers. Even the famous Scottish comedian Billy Connolly, who got his start as a banjo-wielding folkie, does a lead vocal on the album, singing his own ironic and effective song "I'm Asking You Sergeant, Where's Mine?" A similar release from 1987, *Celebration* ♪♪♪½ (Baycourt 1987, prod. Eamonn Campbell), teams the Dubliners up with the Pogues, Paddy Reilly, Christy Moore, and others. It contains the hit single "The Irish Rovers" by the Dubliners and the Pogues. One of the best LPs from the Jim McCann years, *A Parcel of Rogues* ♪♪♪½ (ARC, 1976, prod. Earl Gill), is available on CD. It's quite short but features some beautiful songs, including McCann's rendition of "Kellyburn Brae," a humorous (if misogynistic) ballad. Luke Kelly brings in a lot of his Scottish-influenced folk club material, and shows his debt to Ewan MacColl on the title track. One curious note: although most sources suggest that Ciaran Bourke did not perform on this album, he is pictured on the front cover. Since the CD reissue contains no list of the musicians or notes of any kind, the question is open to interpretation. If you want to hear a good live Dubliners show, *Live in Carre, Amsterdam* ♪♪♪½ (Spectrum, 1985, prod. Reinoud Weidema, Rob Smaling, Tom Steenbergen) captures a lovely concert during Luke Kelly's final tours with the group. An unusual touch is that this disc features both Kelly and Sean Cannon, who filled in for Kelly during his illnesses and replaced him permanently after he died. Some of the nicest songs on this disc, like "The Waterford Boys," come from Cannon. Kelly, while his fatigue and illness are perceptible, still sings strongly and communicates beautifully with the audience. Castle Communications recently released a compilation made from Transatlantic's very early Dubliners material (these *were* the Dubliners' very first albums) entitled *The Definitive Transatlantic Collection* ♪♪♪ (Castle 1997, prod. Nathan Joseph). These tracks, most of which were recorded live, sound a little tentative compared to their EMI recordings, but they're very much worth having. Many of the songs did not appear on the band's later EMI outings or their live LPs, so this is some of the more unusual material out there. For completists, a compilation called *Complete Dubliners* ♪♪♪♪ (Earache, 1997, prod. Nathan Joseph) collects all the tracks from their Transatlantic recordings onto two CDs.

what to avoid: Two budget-priced CDs are available from K-Tel Records, *The Dubliners* ♪♪ (K-Tel, 1996) and *The Best of the Dubliners* ♪♪ (K-Tel, 1996). These are decent collections, but you get what you pay for; they're so short that both together would have fit on a single CD.

influences:

- The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, Ewan MacColl
- The Johnstons, Planxty, the Pogues, Christy Moore

Steve Winick



Dan Duggan

Born August 21, 1956, in Syracuse, NY.

Dan Duggan is rapidly being acknowledged as one of the finest hammered dulcimer players and composers in the country. He recently placed first in the prestigious National Hammered Dulcimer Championships, displaying both his technical mastery of the instrument and his compositional skills—he was the first winner ever to play all original material in the competition. As if this wasn't enough, he is also a superb dance musician and caller, often calling intricate squares while simultaneously playing lead on the dulcimer. Whether in concert or on the dance floor, Duggan's renditions of traditional Irish and American tunes reflect his study and understanding of their original context. He can faithfully recreate eighteenth-century harp pieces or bowl you over with vibrant nineteenth-century dance tunes. His performances are always an interesting excursion into a variety of musical styles and moods fueled primarily by his virtuoso dulcimer playing, but complemented by his skill on other instruments, including yang quin, guitar, and banjo. He mixes these talents with interactive storytelling in his school program performances to stimulate individual expression and group participation. Duggan is also a member of the Susquehanna String Band, a trio with John Kirk and Rick Bunting. The band has performed in concert with several symphony orchestras throughout the country. Not content just to play the instrument, he has designed and marketed a hammered dulcimer with partner John O'Hara, under the name of Blackhawk Dulcimers. Several times a year, Duggan hosts an "Esperance Masterclass Dulcimer Weekend" as well as an "In the Hayloft" concert series. His recordings and more information are available through Esperance Productions, RD 1, Box 208, Red Creek, NY 13143.

what to buy: *Between the Seasons* ♪♪♪♪ (Esperance Productions, 1984/1996, prod. Dan Duggan, Larry Serafini) is an excellent recording of original instrumental compositions on hammered dulcimer and guitar, and combines two earlier releases, *First Frost* and *Last of May*. This generous 75-minute CD features Duggan's hammered dulcimer and guitar playing with the help of Henry Jankiewicz (fiddle), Roberta Wackett (tenor recorder), Marc Facci (bass), Dorian Bunting (cello), and Chris Lee (banjo). The selections vary from the energetic dulcimer medley of "Lonely Again Rag" and "New Wave Rag" to a pleasing guitar picking number, "Bringing in the Hay."

what to buy next: *Trillium Lane* ♪♪♪½ (Esperance Productions, 1993, prod. Dan Duggan) contains more examples of Duggan's compositional skills, ranging from the happy "Old Zeb," a hammered dulcimer tune about his favorite old black Lab, to "Blue Monday," a reflective guitar piece. Duggan gets some superb help from Chris Norman playing flute on the title cut.

the rest:

Christmas Morn ♪♪♪ (Esperance Productions, 1986)
Winters Eve ♪♪♪ (Esperance Productions, 1988)
Seasons of Change ♪♪♪ (Esperance Productions, 1990) (cassette only)
All through the Night ♪♪♪ (Esperance Productions, 1995)

solo outings:

Susquehanna String Band:

The Cloths of Heaven ♪♪♪½ (Susquehanna String Band, 1987) (cassette only)
North Country ♪♪♪½ (Esperance Productions, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Sterl Van Arsdale, Paul Van Arsdale, Malcolm Dalglish

▶▶ Helicon, Walt Michael, No Strings Attached

Heidi Cerrigione

Lorraine Duisit

See: Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit

Stuart Duncan

Born April 14, 1964, in Quantico, VA.

Stuart Duncan is the fiddle player in the much-honored Nashville Bluegrass Band; he is also virtually everyone's favorite bluegrass fiddler these days, and is consequently the first-call-guy for most bluegrass and a lot of mainstream country sessions. He first gained widespread attention playing and recording in southern California with a fellow-prodigy, banjo player Alison Brown, as a pre-teen. He also logged time with the popular southern California bluegrass band Lost Highway before taking Nashville by storm.

what's available: *Stuart Duncan* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Béla Fleck) is this fabulous fiddler's sole available effort as a leader, and it shows off his beautiful tone, control, articulation, and imagination to great effect on a mixture of traditional fiddle tunes and Duncan originals.

influences:

◀◀ Chubby Wise, Byron Berline, Mark O'Connor

▶▶ Chris Thile, Jason Carter

see also: *Nashville Bluegrass Band*

Randy Pitts

Stanley Dural Jr.

See: Buckwheat Zydeco

Bob Dylan

Born Robert Allen Zimmerman, May 24, 1941, in Duluth, MN.

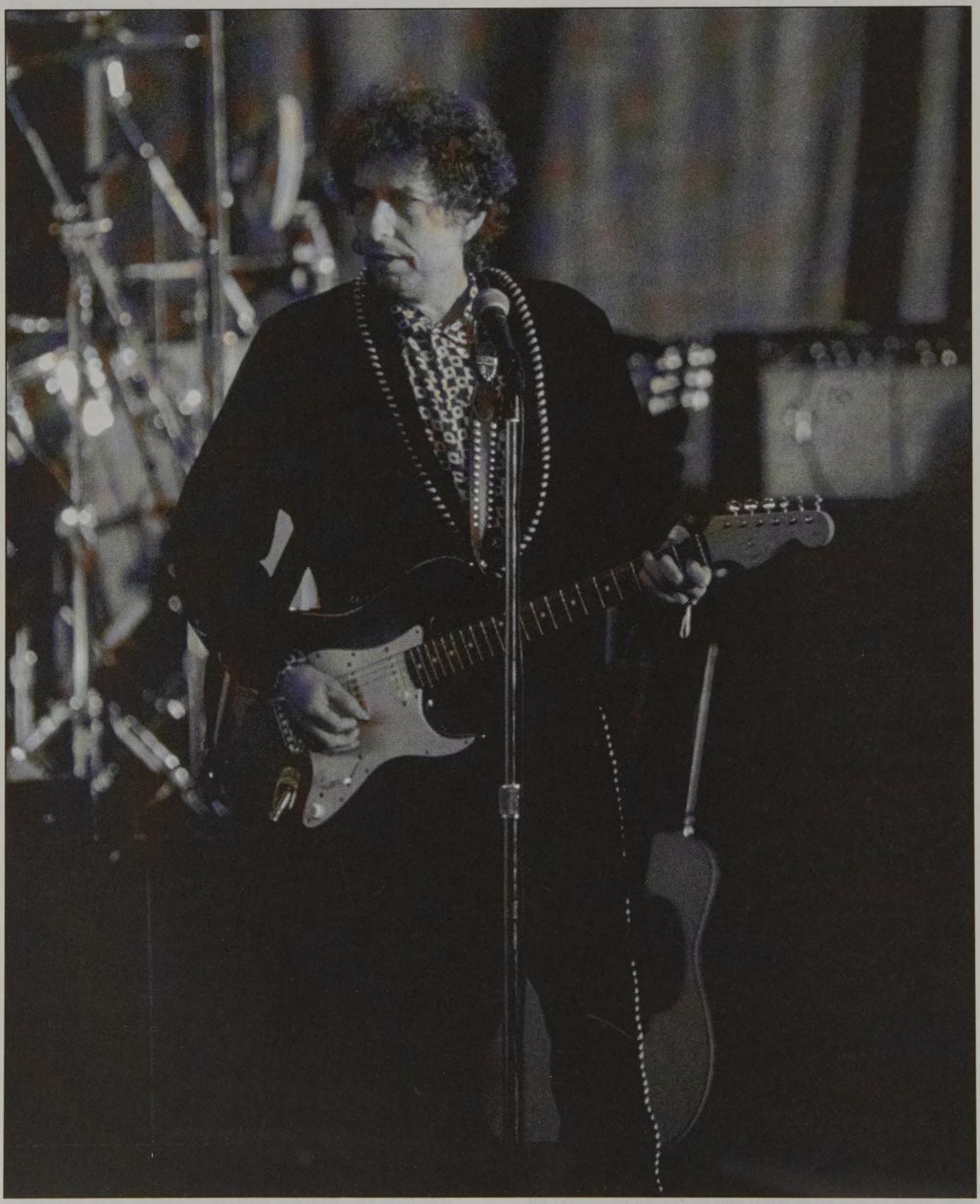
Bob Dylan has been almost deified as one of the most important artists of his generation, yet he is an artist who defies classification. He established his reputation first as a protesting folk artist and, later, as a rock superstar, with a stop-off to revolutionize the Nashville country scene as well. Decades from now, when all the dust has settled and the various musical revolutions are viewed with historical hindsight, Dylan will stand out as one of the three most important people to ever pick up a guitar. Lest you think that smacks of hyperbole, none other than George Harrison has been quoted as saying that 500 years from now, Dylan will be the most remembered and revered name from this era, eclipsing even the Beatles. Unlike the Fab Four and Elvis Presley, Dylan's profound influence on the music world—and society in general—was never matched by his sales. Nonetheless, his key material truly serves as the soundtrack for a generation and is deeply ingrained in our daily lives. Phrases like "The Times They Are A-Changin'" have worked their way into everyday journalistic vernacular; his song "Like a Rolling Stone" even helped give a moniker to our biggest music magazine. Dylan's most important contribution was giving the voice of social consciousness to contemporary music lyrics, starting with folk music and then evolving into rock. When girl groups and teenage idols were topping the charts in 1962 and '63, Dylan woke up a sleeping public with songs about racial injustice and the ravages of war. All of this has earned Dylan a continuing level of respect that is on a par with greats like Duke Ellington, Leonard Bernstein, and Miles Davis. His influence may be best illustrated by the fact that one scholarly study concluded that he was the one person, from all walks of life, most responsible for stopping the Vietnam war.

On the country front, no single songwriter since Hank Williams—save perhaps Harlan Howard—revolutionized Nashville more than Bob Dylan. He isn't usually the first artist that comes to mind when people think about the dismantling of the Nashville establishment. But he struck a nerve in country songwriters that continues to this day. Of course, the country roots in Dylan's own music have long been ignored in favor of the Woody Guthrie connection that comfortably keeps his work within a stricter context. But the strains of early bluegrass harmonies, not to mention some of the Elizabethan lyricism, suffuse Dylan's early recordings, and he continues to toss off country standards during his live performances to this day. But even more, Dylan's casually sculpted lyrical touch, his phrase-twisting command of the vernacular, infected an entire generation of country songwriters, including Kris Kristofferson, who at least served an honest apprenticeship as janitor during the *Blonde on Blonde* recording sessions. Dylan's own songs continue to thrive in the repertoires of countless country singers. His association with country music's then-reigning star, Johnny Cash, signified the approval of Nashville. The pair recorded an album's worth of duets, although only "Girl from the North Country" surfaced on *Nashville Skyline*, and Dylan made a crucial guest appearance on Cash's popular TV program. Dylan won three Grammy Awards in 1998, including Album of the Year and Best Contemporary Folk Album honors for the critically acclaimed *Time out of Mind*.

what to buy: Regardless of his well-deserved reputation in both rock and country, to this day Dylan's legacy is still very much that of a folk artist, and his key work is *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1963, prod. John Hammond). This album single-handedly launched the mid-60s protest movement with such venerable songs as "Blowin' in the Wind" and "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall." Once Dylan started rocking full-time, he made *Highway 61 Revisited* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1965, prod. Bob Johnston, Tom Wilson), which many pundits feel is one of the greatest albums ever released, perhaps even tying the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* for the all-time crown. It is hard to overpraise an album that opens with "Like a Rolling Stone" and closes with "Desolation Row," and doesn't have an ounce of fat in between. Directly following that was *Blonde on Blonde* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1966, prod. Bob Johnston), another highly regarded album that always winds up in the top 10 of any greatest albums of all-time poll. Probably Dylan's most popular record among his legions of hard-core fans, the album is a folk-rock masterpiece featuring "Rainy Day Women #12 & 35," "I Want You," and "Just Like a Woman." Although Dylan's creative output peaked with that record, nine years later he shocked everyone with the brilliance of *Blood on the Tracks* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975, prod. Bob Dylan). As his marriage started to crumble, Dylan wrote and sang songs like "Tangled up in Blue" and "Idiot Wind" from the soul, causing critics everywhere to pull out and dust off the "masterpiece" moniker once again.

what to buy next: *Bringing It All Back Home* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1965, prod. Tom Wilson) is many fans' favorite Dylan album and literally kick-started the folk-rock movement with "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)." Before that, however, *The Times They Are A-Changin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia,

bob dylan



1964, prod. Tom Wilson) set the music world on fire with its title song and "With God on Our Side," and *Another Side of Bob Dylan* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1964, prod. Tom Wilson) showed his softer—though no less ingenious—side with "It Ain't Me Babe" and "Chimes of Freedom." The double-disc *Basement Tapes* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975, prod. Bob Dylan, the Band) was recorded in 1967 with the Band and has achieved legendary status with off-the-wall, yet compelling, songs like "Please, Mrs. Henry" and "Nothing Was Delivered" (plus the brilliant "Tears of Rage"). If it's an overview of Dylan's career that you need, however, nothing beats the box set *Biograph* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985, prod. various), featuring three CDs full of his most compelling material, spanning all of his most important phases.

what to avoid: Without Dylan's consent, his former record label released the unfortunately titled *Dylan* **woof!** (Columbia, 1973, prod. Bob Johnston) only after he had jumped ship to David Geffen's Asylum label. It was a dirty trick that now stands alone as a black eye in Dylan's canon. The album is so insignificant that, to this day, Columbia still hasn't reissued it on CD in America. Similarly, *Dylan and the Dead* ♪ (Columbia, 1989) is perhaps the weakest entry among the scattershot plethora of live albums Dylan has released over the years.

the rest:
Bob Dylan ♪♪ (Columbia, 1962)
Bob Dylan's Greatest Hits ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1967)
John Wesley Harding ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1968)
Nashville Skyline ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1969)
Self Portrait ♪♪ (Columbia, 1970)
New Morning ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1970)
Greatest Hits Vol. II ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1971)
Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid Soundtrack ♪ (Columbia, 1973)
Planet Waves ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1974)
Before the Flood ♪♪ ((Asylum, 1974)
Desire ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1976)
Hard Rain ♪ (Columbia, 1976)
Street Legal ♪♪ (Columbia, 1978)
Bob Dylan at Budokan ♪½ (Columbia, 1979)
Slow Train Coming ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979)
Saved ♪ (Columbia, 1980)
Shot of Love ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981)
Infidels ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
Real Live ½ (Columbia, 1985)
Empire Burlesque ♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Knocked out Loaded ♪½ (Columbia, 1986)
Down in the Groove ♪½ (Columbia, 1988)
Oh Mercy ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
Under the Red Sky ½ (Columbia, 1990)
The Bootleg Series Vols. 1–3: 1961–1991 ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1991)
Good As I Been to You ♪♪ (Columbia, 1992)
World Gone Wrong ♪♪ (Columbia, 1993)
Greatest Hits Vol. 3 ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994)
MTV Unplugged ♪♪ (Columbia, 1995)
Time out of Mind ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Sony, 1997)

worth searching for: DCC Compact Classics' gold-disc version of *Highway 61 Revisited*, remastered in the early '90s with sparkling sound, is well worth its $25–$30 price tag. Also worth pursuing is *The Concert for Bangladesh* ♪♪♪♪½ (Apple/Capitol, 1971), with its five-song, highly charged Dylan acoustic set that features his greatest-ever live reading of "Just Like a Woman." *Forever Young* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1988, prod. various), an 18-song collection distributed to radio stations to promote the incidental "Silvio," the single from his indifferent *Down in the Groove* album, contains 17 other certified classics.

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams, Leadbelly, Little Richard, Elvis Presley, the Weavers, Joan Baez

▶▶ The Byrds, Sonny & Cher, Joan Baez, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, Garth Brooks, Joe Henry, Bob Seger, Joan Osborne

Pete Howard, Joel Selvin, and Neal Walters

Bob Dylan **(© Ken Settle)**

The Eagles

Formed 1971, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1981. Reunited 1994.

Glenn Frey, vocals, guitars, keyboards; Don Henley, vocals, drums; Randy Meisner, bass, vocals (1971–77); Bernie Leadon, guitar, banjo, mandolin, vocals (1971–76); Joe Walsh, guitar, vocals (1976–present); Don Felder, guitar, vocals (1974–present); Timothy B. Schmit, bass, vocals (1977–present).

Building their musical prowess in Los Angeles' fertile country-rock community during the late 1960s, the Eagles first came together in 1970 as the backing band for Linda Ronstadt's *Silk Purse* album; individually, the musicians had already played with the Flying Burrito Brothers, Poco, Rick Nelson's Stone Canyon

Band, and Bob Seger. But the Eagles' sound—smooth harmonies and polished, twangy arrangements—would define southern California rock during the coming decade. As time went on, the sound became progressively more rock-oriented, and by the time they rolled out the groundbreaking *Hotel California* album in 1976, Henley and Frey had become astute social commentators—despite a bit of cynicism that lent a nasty edge to some of their songs. Always too serious, the Eagles succumbed to the pressures of success and called it quits in 1981. But the 1993 release of *Common Thread*, a tribute album featuring country stars doing Eagles songs, spurred the group to soar again—particularly after Travis Tritt reunited them to appear in the video for his version of "Take It Easy." Since then the Eagles have made a zillion dollars (or thereabouts) on the road, though the reunion has yet to produce any new material of note. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in January 1998.

what to buy: A little inconsistent during their early years, the Eagles are best served by *Their Greatest Hits, 1971–1975* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1975, prod. Glyn Johns, Bill Szymczyk), an awesome collection of singles—from the hot picking of "Take It Easy" to the smooth pop polish of "One of These Nights"—that established the band as one of the top groups of the time.

what to buy next: *One of These Nights* ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1975, prod. Bill Szymczyk) is the apex of the Eagles' twang time with some truly gorgeous moments in "Lyin' Eyes" and "Take It to the Limit."

what to avoid: *Desperado* ♪♪ (Asylum, 1973, prod. Glyn Johns) is a misbegotten concept album about the Southwest whose best songs can be found on *Their Greatest Hits*.

the rest:
Eagles ♪♪½ (Asylum, 1972)
On the Border ♪♪½ (Asylum, 1974)
Hotel California ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1976)
The Long Run ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1979)
Live ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1980)
Greatest Hits, Volume 2 ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1982)
Hell Freezes Over ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1994)

worth searching for: *Peaceful Easy Feeling* (Cuttlefish) is one of many bootleg recordings of a landmark 1974 show at New York's Bottom Line, at which Ronstadt and Jackson Browne joined the Eagles for a rendition of "Take It Easy." Recommended.

solo outings:
Glenn Frey:
No Fun Aloud ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1982)
Best Of ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)
Don Henley:
I Can't Stand Still ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1982)
Building the Perfect Beast ♪♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1984)
The End of the Innocence ♪♪♪♪½ (Geffen, 1989)
Actual Miles: Don Henley's Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪½ (Geffen, 1995)
Joe Walsh:
(With Barnstorm) *The Smoker You Drink, the Player You Get* ♪♪♪ (ABC/Dunhill, 1973)
Look What I Did: The Joe Walsh Anthology ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)
Little Did He Know . . . Joe Walsh's Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ The Byrds, Gram Parsons, the Beatles, the Everly Brothers, Hank Williams, the Louvin Brothers

▶▶ Travis Tritt, Restless Heart, Garth Brooks, the Mavericks, the Gin Blossoms, Uncle Tupelo, the Jayhawks, Vince Gill, the Judds

see also: *Flying Burrito Brothers, Linda Ronstadt*

Gary Graff

Fred Eaglesmith

Born in Ontario, Canada.

One of nine children, Fred Eaglesmith grew up driving tractors and trucks on a southern Ontario farm. His music smartly marries the dusty town and far-off train whistle imagery of classic country music to his chilly, farm country north-of-the-border roots. The musical results are captivating, cinematic songs with a touch of humor and a folky edge.

what's available: *Drive-In Movie* ♪♪♪♪ (Vertical, 1996, prod. Scott Merritt, Fred Eaglesmith) is a beautifully coherent set of songs evoking more innocent times and happier days. But that's not to say that there isn't a fair share of humor and optimism in these sublimely catchy songs. Eaglesmith's voice can be mournful or uplifting, but it's never less than thoroughly convincing and totally inviting. Even more consistent is *Lipstick Lies & Gasoline* ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1997, prod. Scott Merritt), where he bridges the gap between the true-blooded young traditionalists haunting Nashville's famed lower Broadway and the raw electricity of Neil Young and J.J. Cale. Whether the singer and his partner are sadly waking up to the mess they've made of their lives in "Drinking Too Much" or he's just reflecting on the circumstances that led to the end for Hank, Gram, Jimi, and Janis in "Alcohol & Pills," Eaglesmith brings his stories to life with excruciating clarity.

worth searching for: Fred J. Eaglesmith & the Flying Squirrels' *Things Is Changin'* ♪♪♪ (Sweetwater, 1993, prod. Scott Merritt) and *From the Paradise Motel* ♪♪♪♪ (Barbed Wire, 1994, prod. Dave Brogren), both recorded live at the La Casa Music Series in Birmingham, Michigan, are two smartly crafted Canadian releases with living-room warmth.

influences:

⏪ Bob Dylan, Neil Young

⏩ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Robert Earl Keen Jr.

David Sokol

Jim Eanes

Born December 6, 1923, in Mountain Valley, VA. Died 1995.

Smilin' Jim Eanes celebrated 50 years in the music business in 1990; he was a prominent figure in both bluegrass and country circles, known for his smooth baritone vocal delivery and his songwriting prowess. He wrote several songs that became standards in country and bluegrass music, most notably "Missing in Action," "Your Old Standby," "Baby Blue Eyes," and "I Wouldn't Change You If I Could." He recorded prolifically for several labels from the late 1940s into the 1950s, including Capitol, Decca, and Starday. Although his smooth vocal delivery was more country than bluegrass (he was a member of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys briefly, but his baritone was an ill-fitting duet partner for Monroe's high tenor) and his major label recordings tended to be aimed at more mainstream audiences, Eanes did appear at many bluegrass festivals and made mostly bluegrass recordings during the later years of his career.

what to buy: *Classic Bluegrass* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1992, prod. Gary B. Reid) is culled from several 1970s and 1980s Rebel sessions, and includes material from Eanes's excellent LP *50th Anniversary*, first released in 1990. Eanes teamed with banjo player and singer Bobby Atkins on *Heart of the South* ♪♪♪ (Rural Rhythm, 1991, prod. Mike Swinson), an enjoyable collaboration that also features contributions from fiddler extraordinaire Vassar Clements and such outstanding pickers as dobro player Frank Poindexter and guitar flash Clay Jones.

worth searching for: Jim Eanes & the Shenandoah Valley Boys' *The Early Days of Bluegrass, Volume 4* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978, prod. Jack Tottle) hails from two 1950s sessions, featuring fine bands and outstanding Eanes vocals.

influences:

⏪ Clyde Moody, Roy Hall

⏩ Tony Rice, John Starling

Randy Pitts

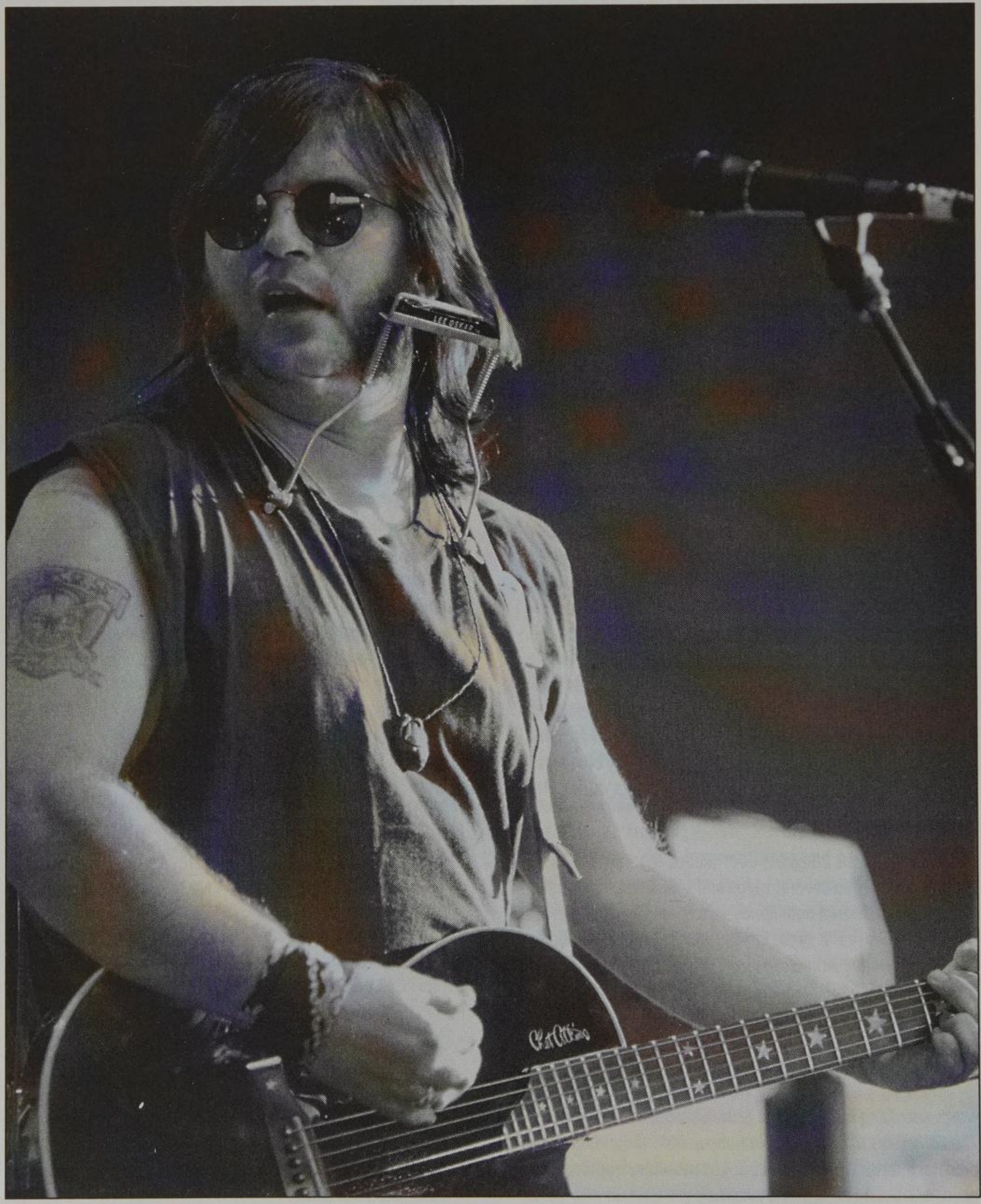
Steve Earle

Born January 17, 1955, in Fort Monroe, VA.

The son of an air traffic controller, Steve Earle infiltrated Nashville in 1986 with a twangy, hard-core-hillbilly sound filtered through the heartland rock 'n' roll of John Mellencamp and *Nebraska*-era folk of Bruce Springsteen. Although signed to mainstream MCA Records, Earle quickly established himself as a rebel without a pause by worshipping Townes Van Zandt, covering the Rolling Stones, opening shows for such alternative bands as the Replacements, and eventually battling cocaine and heroin addictions. Despite a string of powerful albums—capped by 1990's underrated *The Hard Way*—radio resisted the big, bad, good ol' boy and the back-to-back releases of a live album and a greatest-hits collection confirmed that even MCA had lost patience with him. But Earle has confronted and conquered his demons: now clean and sober, he released a 1996 comeback album called *I Feel Alright* that confirms the title with a hearty, hard-rocking relish. More important, his own E-Squared imprint is developing into an exalted outpost for young, like-minded acts like the V-Roys, Cheri Knight, and Six String Drag, who recognize that country music is an essential ingredient of, not an alternative to, rock 'n' roll.

what to buy: *Guitar Town* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1986, prod. Tony Brown, Emory Gordy Jr.) is an auspicious debut of small-town frustration ("Someday") and romantic yearning ("Fearless Heart"). *I Feel Alright* ♪♪♪½ (E-Squared/Warner Bros., 1996, prod. Richard Dodd, Ray Kennedy, Richard Bennett) finds him defiantly addressing his past in "Cocaine Can't Kill My Pain" and "The Unrepentant," but the brightest signs are the brash but breezy twang-pop confections "Hard-core Troubadour," "More Than I Can Do," and "You're Still Standin' There." The equally unapologetic follow-up, *El Corazon* ♪♪♪½ (E-Squared/Warner Bros., 1997, prod. Steve Earle, Ray Kennedy), finds him spitting, spewing, and sparkling against backdrops ranging from the Crazy Horse–like caterwaul of "Taneytown" to the protest-folk music of "Christmas in Washington" to the full-frontal garage-band assault of "Here I Am." The latter is a pummeling declaration of independence that sounds like a throwaway but strikes like a manifesto.

steve earle



cliff eberhardt 2/4/5

what to buy next: For new fans who've just discovered him, the two-CD *Ain't Ever Satisfied: The Steve Earle Collection* ♪♪♪♪ (Hip-O/MCA, 1996, prod. various) renders obsolete 1993's *The Essential Steve Earle* by adding such album tracks as "Fearless Heart" and "Nothing but a Child" and his promo-only live version of Springsteen's "State Trooper."

what to avoid: *Early Tracks* ♪ (Columbia, 1987, prod. Roy Dea, Pat Carter) is a hurriedly compiled collection of tepid unreleased material designed to cash-in on his *Guitar Town* accolades. Koch reissued the album in early 1998 with four additional tracks that previously had appeared only on 45s.

the rest:
Exit O ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1987)
Copperhead Road ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1988)
BBC Live ♪♪♪ (Windsong, 1988)
The Hard Way ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1990)
Shut Up and Die Like an Aviator ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991)
Essential Steve Earle ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1993)
Train a Comin' ♪♪♪ (E-Squared/Warner Bros., 1995)
Johnny Too Bad ♪♪♪ EP (E-Squared, 1996)

worth searching for: Jill Sobule's *Happy Town* (Atlantic, 1997) boasts "Love Is Never Equal," a wicked duet with Earle that showcases the snarling clout of his voice.

influences:
- Townes Van Zandt, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie
- Todd Snider, Jack Ingram, Reckless Kelly

David Okamoto

editor's choice
5 zydeco albums

Clifton Chenier, *Zydeco Sont Pas Sale—King of the Real Creole French Zydeco* (Arhoolie)

Various Artists, *Zydeco: Early Years, Vol. One* (Arhoolie)

Boozoo Chavis, *Zydeco Trail Ride* (Maison de Soul)

Geno Delafose, *That's What I'm Talking About!* (Rounder)

Beau Jocque, *Pick up on This!* (Rounder)

Cliff Eberhardt

Born January 7, 1954, in Berwyn, PA.

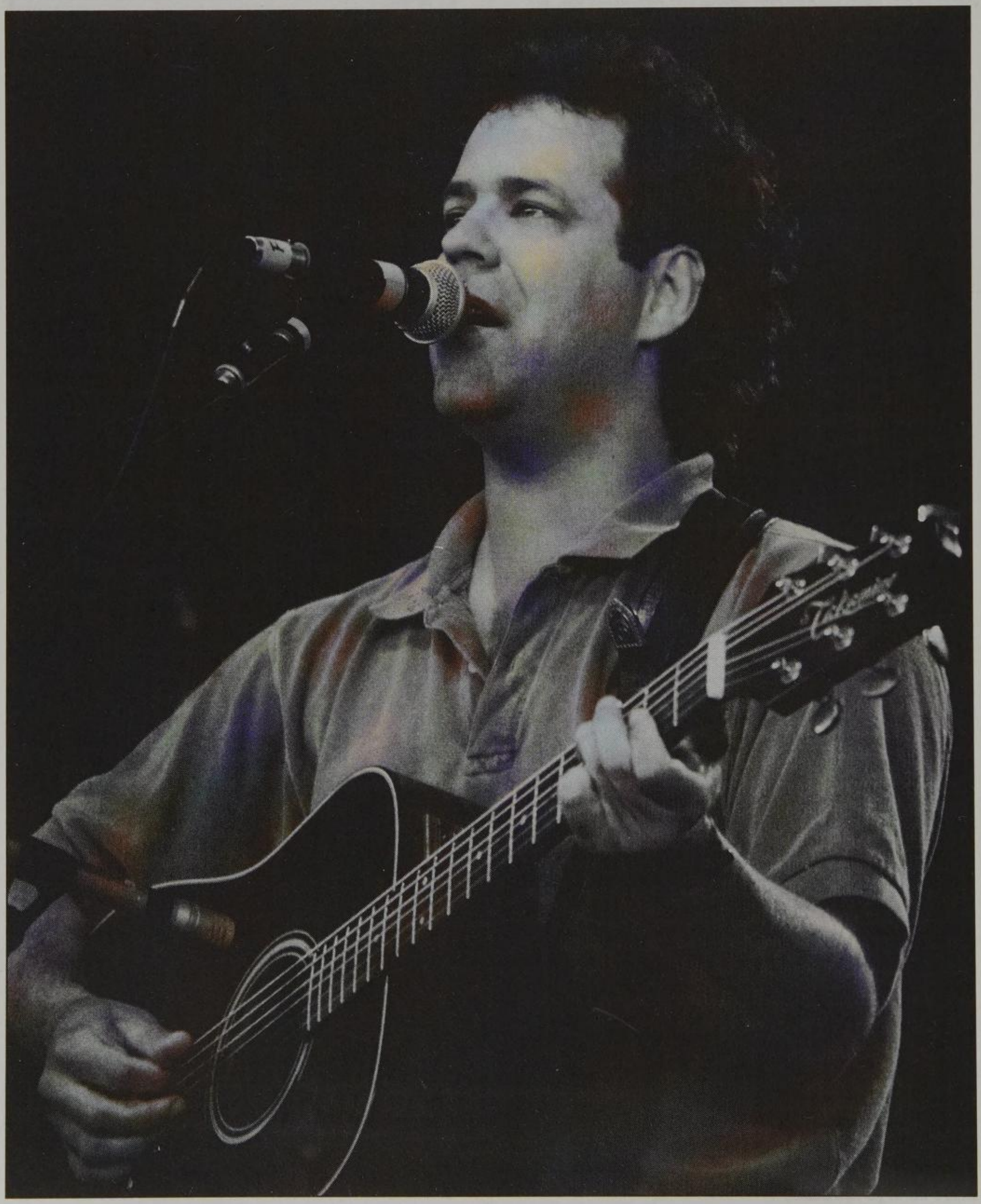
The poetry of the city echoes through the songs of Greenwich Village–based singer-songwriter Cliff Eberhardt. Singing in a gutsy, streetwise baritone and playing acoustic guitar with emotional mastery, Eberhardt injects an infectious hard edge to his music. The son of amateur musicians, Eberhardt was raised in the suburbs of Philadelphia. As a youngster, he sang satirical Tom Lehrer tunes in a band that he shared with his brothers. After working in a masking tape factory in Carbondale, Illinois, he settled in New York in 1978. One of Greenwich Village's "new" breed of songwriters, Eberhardt had many early songs included on albums issued by the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. Eberhardt's first breaks as a musician came as a sideman for Richie Havens, Rick Danko, Melanie, and Shawn Colvin. Havens repaid the compliment by singing duet vocals on the title track of Eberhardt's debut album, *The Long Road*. Havens recorded his own version of the song for his 1994 album, *Cut to the Chase*. In addition to touring as a soloist, Eberhardt has performed with a larger acoustic-electric band. He's also toured as part of a revue, "A Winter's Night," with Patty Larkin, John Gorka, and Cheryl Wheeler. Their rendition of the Smokey Robinson–penned tune "You've Really Got a Hold on Me" was included on Eberhardt's 1993 *Now You Are My Home* album.

what to buy: *The Long Road* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1990, prod. Peter Gallway) was one of the first albums released when the former all–New Age instrumental label turned to singer-songwriters. A classic of modern urban folk music, the album remains Eberhardt's apex. With accompaniment by Kevin Jenkins (piano), Jeff Pevar (electric guitar), Seth Farber (keyboards), Jake Ehrenreich (drums, background vocals), and guests including Shawn Colvin and David Buskin, Eberhardt sings with an emotional conviction that inspires comparisons with Bruce Springsteen and mid-1960's Bob Dylan. The high point of the album is the title track, a duet sung with Richie Havens.

what to buy next: Eberhardt's songs on his second album, *Now You Are My Home* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. Peter Gallway), are more concise and cut-to-the-bone, and reflect the dreams and heartbreaks of a romantic. In addition to a harmonious cover of Smokey Robinson's "You've Really Got a Hold on Me,"

Steve Earle **(© Ken Settle)**

cliff eberhardt



recorded with Patty Larkin and John Gorka during the "Winter's Night" tour, the album showcases Eberhardt's songwriting with such well-crafted tunes as "Ever Since I Lost Your Love," "Not Alone In This World," and "Every Time I See Your Face."

the rest:
Mona Lisa Cafe ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995)
12 Songs of Good and Evil ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997)

worth searching for: Many of Eberhardt's early songs were featured on issues of the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. A rare live version of Eberhardt's "When the Circus Comes to Town" is included on *The Greenwich Village Folk Festival: 1989–1990* ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1991, prod. Mitch Cantor).

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Jack Hardy, Richie Havens, Sam Cooke

▶▶ Shawn Colvin, John Gorka

Craig Harris

Ebin-Rose

Formed March 1992, in Guilford, CT.

Ebin Parker (born April 7, 1952, in New Haven, CT), vocals, guitar; Rose Bengtson (born May 19, 1960, in Middletown, CT), vocals.

Ebin-Rose is a contemporary acoustic folk duo with a wide following of fans throughout New England. With their dazzling original songs, Parker's masterfully played guitar, and Bengtson's unique stage presence, the duo has garnered positive regional press ("Rose's voice and Ebin's guitar work as a flowing musical mosaic . . . the sum being greater than the parts," Ken Bastura wrote in *Frogbelly Folk News*) and shared the stage with the Nields, Dar Williams, Harvey Reid, Greg Brown, and Iain Matthews. They have performed at numerous folk venues and events, including the Hartland Folk Festival, Falcon Ridge Festival, the Speakeasy, and Cafe Lena. Parker, who has studied the guitar playing of Nick Drake and Richard Thompson, uses a variety of traditional and opening folk tunings that feature his singular fingerpicking style. Ebin Parker says, "We try and write songs that take you to the edge of life's experiences and then float you back to your normal existence." A quick snippet from "Turn to Stone" illustrates just that: "Tell me I'm your favorite liar, just once before I turn to stone."

Cliff Eberhardt **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

what's available: *Through the Wires* ♪♪ (Ivoryton Music, 1997, prod. Trip Wyeth) features some of the songs that best demonstrate Parker's dexterity on the six-string and Bengtson's haunting vocals. Song selection includes favorites "Turn to Stone," "Peace Abides," and "Tell You." You can order it from Ivoryton Music, PO Box 421, Ivoryton, CT 06442.

worth searching for: *Mr. Boot* ♪ (Ivoryton Music, 1995, prod. Tryp Wyeth), *Down to Tryp's* ♪♪ (Ivoryton Music, 1994, prod. Tryp Wyeth), and *Seems So Childlike* ♪ (Ivoryton Music, 1992, prod. Tryp Wyeth) are cassettes of mostly hard-to-find studio and live recordings of Ebin-Rose. If interested, contact Ivoryton Music to see if they still stock these cassettes.

influences:
◀◀ Richard Thompson, Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, Nick Drake, Iain Matthews, Bert Jansch

▶▶ Jessica and Martin Simpson, Clive Gregson and Christine Collister, Kate MacDonnell

TJ McGrath

Eddie from Ohio

Formed 1991, in VA.

Eddie Harness, percussion, vocals; Mike Clem, guitar, bass, harp, vocals; Robbie Schaefer, guitar, vocals; Julie Murphy, vocals, piano.

Eddie from Ohio was actually born in Virginia in 1991. It's a folk-pop band with a strong local following (the band's "Folkin' Excellent!" bumper stickers adorn seemingly every Toyota inside the Beltway) and a growing national reputation. The band's sound is a sparkling blend of lead female vocals, backing harmonies, light percussion, and the usual strummed strings.

what's available: *Big Noise* ♪♪♪♪ (Virginia Soul, 1997, prod. Billy Wolf) shows off the band's growing confidence with a fine collection of songs written by Clem and Schaefer. *I Rode Fido Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Virginia Soul, 1995, prod. Billy Wolf) includes more percussion, more fiddles, and more nostalgia and pathos. *Actually Not* ♪♪♪♪ (Virginia Soul, 1993, prod. Billy Wolf) opens with the CSN-like "North Pacific Rain," as vocal harmonies turn into rich fingerpicking instrumentals.

influences:
◀◀ The Grateful Dead, Peter, Paul, and Mary, the Electric Bonsai Band

▶▶ The Dave Matthews Band, Frenté

Pamela Murray Winters

judith edelman

Don Edwards **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Judith Edelman

Born November 11, 1964, in New York, NY.

For years, music was Judith Edelman's side project. Though she started piano lessons at age 5 and continued for years, she always had something else going: college, a job in third-world development, whatever. She kept up the music end, though, later adding voice and guitar to her studies. She joined the Bay Area bluegrass band Ryestraw before going solo and releasing her first album for Nashville-based Compass Records in 1996.

what's available: The irony of *Perfect World* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass Records, 1996, prod. Bil VornDick) is that Edelman knows the world isn't perfect and never can be, and she weaves that philosophical thread into nearly every song on this exceptional debut. Working with a band that includes Clive Gregson, banjo player Alison Brown, dobro player Jerry Douglas, and drummer Pat McInerney, Edelman and producer Bill VornDick craft a fresh statement that incorporates elements of Celtic music and folk into Edelman's bluegrass vision.

influences:

◀◀ Richard Thompson, Tim O'Brien, the Stanley Brothers

▶▶ Matt Flinner

Brian Mansfield

Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Formed 1988, in Durham, NH. Disbanded 1996.

Dan Leone, baritone ukulele, banjo ukulele (1988–96); Dom Leone, guitar (1988–89); Carrie Bradley, violin, guitar (1988–96); Neno Perrotta, bongos, clarinet, rice in a coffee can (1988–91); Jonah Winter, clarinet, mandolin, accordion, concertina, tin whistle, drum (1991–96).

Ed's Redeeming Qualities formed when Carrie Bradley and Dan Leone, who were attending graduate school at the University of New Hampshire, teamed up with Dan's cousin Dom and Neno Perrotta. The band started out playing calypso covers but soon switched to writing its own material, although ca-

lypso-inspired songs would show up on most of the band's recordings. Despite musical roots in the folk world, Ed's quickly crossed the line into the world of pop and rock by playing a series of gigs at the Rathskellar, a now-defunct Boston rock club that traditionally hosted much harder fare. Through these Sunday night gigs, Ed's became a staple on the Boston music scene, and it didn't take long for Ed's to become known as a Boston band. Early critics dismissed the band as quirky or eccentric. With "rice in a coffee can" listed as a key instrument, how could you blame them? But Ed's had a sly, minimalist charm that blended pathos and sly humor and touched a nerve in audiences around the country. There was a childlike simplicity to most of the band's lyrics that was often reminiscent of e.e. cummings or A.A. Milne. Bradley's violin added a melancholy flavor to the jauntiest of songs, and the band delighted in spinning tales about people and places—real or imagined—that took sudden elliptical turns, usually for the worst: "She was pegged in the head with a lawn dart/Her dad didn't see her/That's the worst part . . . " In 1989, Dom Leone died of cancer. This had a profound effect on the band, and all subsequent Ed's releases drew heavily on his songs, words, music, and illustrations. Despite the personal tragedy, or perhaps because of it, the formula Ed's had perfected on early demo tapes—tapes that produced such Ed's classics as "Lawn Dart" and "Drivin' on 9"—remained with the band until its breakup in San Francisco in 1996.

what to buy: *More Bad Times* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. ERQ) was ERQ's first full-length CD, and critics and fans alike pick the album as the band's best. The CD contains 17 songs, re-recordings of songs culled from two years of demo tapes and an EP. It lacks some of the spontaneity of the live recordings, but is a solid showcase for the band's music. The band's most well-known single, "Lawn Dart," and one of Carrie's better vocal turns, "The Boy I Work With," appear on this CD.

what to buy next: *Big Grapefruit Clean-Up Job* ♪♪♪ (Slow River, 1995, prod. ERQ) is a 21-song live CD recorded during shows the band played as part of a 1994 tour, and it is the only time "Drivin' on 9" appears on an Ed's CD. However, a version does appear on the Breeders' *Last Splash* CD, on which Carrie also played violin, and the newer version stays remarkably true to country roots of the original. This album has a few weak moments but is notable for the way it captures the band's onstage rapport and sincerity. *At the Fish & Game Club* ♪♪♪ (Slow River, 1996, prod. ERQ) turned out to be the band's swan song. The CD blends old and new material ("My Friend Bob" resurfaces after appearing on the band's first demo tape, released in 1988), and while it is the most technically proficient of all the Ed's releases, it lacks the open, free feeling of earlier CDs, back before anyone knew better.

the rest:
Ed's Day ♪♪♪½ EP (Aurora, 1989)
It's All Good News ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Safe World Record ♪♪♪ EP (Ed's Quality Music, 1992)
Static and Weak Tea ♪♪½ (Ed's Quality Music, 1993) (cassette only)

worth searching for: ERQ contributed four songs to the soundtrack of *Ed's Next Move* ♪♪½ (BMG/Milan, 1996). Everyone involved in the 1996 movie claims the name similarity was just a happy coincidence. The band also appears in the film.

solo outings:
Carrie Bradley:
(With the Breeders) *Pod* ♪♪♪♪ (4AD/Elektra, 1990)
(With the Breeders) *The Last Splash* ♪♪♪♪ (WEA/Elektra, 1993)
(With the Buckets) *The Buckets* ♪♪♪ (Slow River, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Jimmie Rogers, Jonathan Richman, Laurie Anderson, Robyn Hitchcock

▶▶ Barbara Manning/SF Seals, Ben Folds Five

Lisa M. Moore

Don Edwards

Born March 30, 1939, in Boonton, NJ.

One of the most popular of the modern cowboy singers, Don Edwards became enamored with the black-and-white images of early film cowboy Tom Mix while a young child. He taught himself guitar at age 10, then kicked around folk and country music scenes in various parts of the country as a young adult. He backed yodeler Elton Britt, released his first single on a small Dallas label in 1964, and recorded in Nashville during the late 1960s. Edwards hooked up with Michael Martin Murphey at a 1990 cowboy poetry gathering and later signed to Warner Western, which has released his four most recent albums.

what to buy: On *Songs of the Trail* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1992, prod. Joey Miskulin, Michael Martin Murphey), Edwards's smooth cowboy crooning evokes Marty Robbins's gunfighter ballads. The album is a collection of such new and old Western tunes as "I'd Like to Be in Texas When They Roundup in the Spring" and "Springtime in the Rockies"

what to buy next: *West of Yesterday* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1996) won a Western Heritage "Wrangler" award for Edwards's perfor-

mance of "The Freedom Song." Edwards pares his sound down to just his voice and his guitar (or banjo) on the two-disc, 32-song *Saddle Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Don Edwards). The material ranges from "The Old Chisholm Trail," which Edwards calls in his liner notes "probably the oldest and most authentic of all cowboy songs," to Marty Robbins's "The Master's Call."

the rest:
Goin' Back to Texas ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1993)
(With Waddie Mitchell) *The Bard and the Balladeer: Live from Cowtown* ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Red Steagall, Rex Allen, Michael Martin Murphey
▶▶ Waddie Mitchell

Brian Mansfield

Jonathan Edwards

Born July 28, 1946, in Minneapolis, MN.

Jonathan Edwards was one of a bevy of folkie songwriters who hit paydirt during the winter of 1972—the tune was "Sunshine," a Top Five single that became a coffeehouse standard. Edwards never did better commercially than on his self-titled debut, but maintained a decent following well into the 1980s, when he dug deep into his country/bluegrass roots and resurrected himself as a Nashville songwriter and performer.

what to buy: *Jonathan Edwards* ♪♪♪ (Atco, 1971, prod. Peter Casperson) contains most of the songs that would become radio and concert staples for the singer through the years, including the hit "Sunshine," "Emma," "Everybody Knows Her," and "Athens County," as well as the Edwards doper anthem, "Shanty."

the rest:
Lucky Day ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1974)
One Day Closer ♪♪♪ (Rising, 1994)
Man in the Moon ♪♪♪ (Rising, 1997)
Natural Thing ♪♪♪ (Rising, 1997)

worth searching for: *Rockin' Chair* ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1976) and *Sailboat* ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1977) are notable for the musical contributions of Emmylou Harris and Rodney Crowell.

influences:
◀◀ Jerry Jeff Walker
▶▶ Michael Martin Murphey

David Simons

Seamus Egan

See: Solas

Kat Eggleston

Born mid-1950s, in Vashon Island, WA.

Affairs of the heart and personal growth are the lyrical themes of singer-songwriter-acoustic guitarist-fiddler Kat Eggleston. Raised on the harmony singing that she inherited from her mother and the music theory that she learned during 11 years of classical piano lessons, Eggleston allows her balladry to serve as the background for her emotional explorations. Although she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting from Interplayers Ensemble in Spokane, Washington, music has continued to be Eggleston's natural medium. Since returning from a trip to the South Pacific following her graduation in 1983, she's performed as a soloist and with such obscure groups as the Ferrybat Musicians, Four Women at Play, Fool Moon, the Otters, and Trio Basho. In addition to performing with the David Bromberg Band, Eggleston, who moved to Chicago in 1990, has toured the U.S. several times with her longtime partner, Andrew Calhoun.

what to buy: On *Outside Eden* ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1997, prod. Kat Eggleston, Steve Rashid) Eggleston accompanies her alto vocals and poetic lyrics with acoustic guitar and hammer dulcimer and is joined by Gary Krolak (fretless bass), John Rice (guitar, mandolin), Andrew Bird (violin), and Dave Rush (drums, percussion, and garbage-can lid). The album reflects the diversity of Eggleston's music and balances sensitive original songs—including Eggleston's witty look at the contents of her purse, "Shit"—with an expressive rendition of the traditional Child ballad "Flower of Northumberland," a lively string band instrumental interpretation of Woody Guthrie's "Pastures of Plenty," and the traditional fiddle tune "Kitchen Girl."

what to buy next: Eggleston's debut CD, *Second Nature* ♪♪ (Waterbug, 1994, prod. Kat Eggleston, Steve Rashid), includes several songs—"Paper Boats," "Darling Wake Up," and "The Stranger"—that had been released on earlier compilations.

the rest:
First Comes Love ♪♪ (Waterbug, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Judy Collins, Joan Baez, Kate Wolf
▶▶ Andrew Calhoun, Priscilla Herdman, Barbara Kessler

see also: *Andrew Calhoun*

Craig Harris

The Egyptians

See: Robyn Hitchcock

Jason Eklund

Born late 1950s, in IL.

A modern-day wandering minstrel, Jason Eklund is the product of countless miles that he's driven in his 1977 Chevy Nova. While most songwriters are associated with a geographical region, Eklund creates his folk-like songs wherever the traveling takes him. Although he's been called "Townes Van Zandt in training" and his songs have been compared with those of Woody Guthrie and a young Bob Dylan, Eklund's compositions are a personal chronicle of his journeys. Many of Eklund's songs deal with the romantic lure of the open road and incorporate a wide range of settings.

what to buy: Eklund's self-titled debut album, *Jason Eklund* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1993, prod. Jason Eklund), combines rich imagery, gutsy vocals, and heartfelt arrangements while introducing a road-experienced chronicler. Recorded in Boulder, Colorado, it contains songs about hard traveling ("Lonesome out There," "I Am the Road," and "Walk One More Mile") and odes to visited locations ("Loves in Oklahoma" and "Borneo").

what to buy next: *A Streamliner's Duet* ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1997, prod. Jason Eklund, Roger Johnson), recorded in late 1995 with guitarist Roger Johnson, is the result of two mutually respected musicians coming together for a few days and includes folk songs, acoustic blues, and ragtime instrumentals.

the rest:
Lost Causeway ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark
▶▶ Roger Johnson

Craig Harris

Betty Elders

Born in Greensboro, NC.

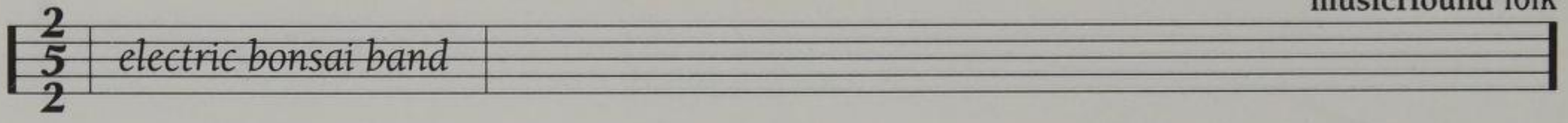
Poetic lyricism set to a natural blend of traditional folk, rock, jazz, and country music influences has made North Carolina–born and Texas-based Betty Elders one of modern acoustic music's most promising singer-songwriters. In addition to being featured on her own albums, Elders's songs have been covered by such artists as Beth and April Stevens, who recorded "Bed of Roses/Bed of Thorns," and Joan Baez, who included her interpretation of "Crack in the Mirror" on her 1997 album *Gone from Danger*. As Baez's guest, Elders performed several shows at venues ranging from Ben and Jerry's Newport Folk Festival in Newport, Rhode Island, to the Bottom Line in New York City, to Toad's Place in New Haven, Connecticut. At these shows Baez and Elders sang "Crack in the Mirror" and "Long Bed from Kenya." Joined by Richard Shindell, Elders and Baez performed a 27-date tour of Europe in late 1997.

Music and poetry were Elders's passions early on. Beginning piano lessons at age four, she was writing her own tunes two years later. Influenced by the poetry of Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, and Robert Louis Stevenson that she studied in school, she was writing poems by age 10. Settling in Austin, Texas, with her family in 1984, Elders was inspired by the thriving acoustic music scene and began performing. Her self-produced debut album, *Daddy's Coal*, was issued on her own Whistling Pig record label in 1989. At the awards ceremony for Austin's Music City Texas Insiders' Poll, she received awards for Best Independent Tape, Song of the Year (shared by two songs on the album), Best Female Songwriter, and Best Female Vocalist. With her second album, 1990's *Peaceful Existence*, Elders's acclaim reached beyond regional borders. The album was reviewed favorably as far away as Italy and the United Kingdom. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* named the album one of the five best releases of the decade. Elders's first internationally distributed album, *Crayons*, continued to spread her musical message.

what to buy: Elders's songwriting talents remained a well-kept secret before her albums were readily available outside of Texas. But with the release of *Crayons* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish,1995, prod. Betty Elders), the secret was out. Her first international release, the album successfully showcased her poetic songwriting and emotion-tinged delivery.

what to buy next: Despite limited distribution and publicity, Elders's albums *Daddy's Coal* ♪♪♪ (Whistling Pig, 1989, prod. Betty Elders) and *Peaceful Existence* ♪♪♪ (Whistling Pig, 1990, prod. Betty Elders) were hard to keep hidden. In addition to receiving a crop of local music awards, they served to introduce Elders as an artist worthy of further attention.

worth searching for: Elders's long-out-of-print debut cassette album, *After the Curtain* ♪♪ (Whistling Pig, 1981, prod. Betty Elders), was released five years before her ground-breaking recordings, but it showed hints of where she was headed. Baez and Elders's Newport performance of "Long Bed from Kenya"



was added as a bonus CD track on copies of *Gone from Danger* ♪♪, sold by Borders Books.

influences:

◀◀ Carolyn Hester, Nanci Griffith, Emmylou Harris

▶▶ Iris DeMent, Carolyn Aiken, Joan Baez

Craig Harris

Electric Bonsai Band /Uncle Bonsai

Formed 1981, in Seattle, WA.

Andrew Ratshin, guitar, vocals; Arni Adler, vocals (1981–89); Ashley Kristen, vocals (1981–89).

Since public radio stations embraced such hilarious battle cries of the sexes as "Penis Envy" and "Boys Want Sex in the Morning," folk trio Uncle Bonsai was mistakenly heralded as a feminist novelty act. This was an odd pigeonhole, especially since the band's brainchild was Andrew Ratshin, a gifted songwriter with a remarkably high voice and an equally remarkable understanding of the frustrating fallout from the sexual revolution. Their funniest songs mocked cheerleaders, suburban families, rednecks, and Julie Andrews. But Uncle Bonsai's most memorable tunes were the serious ones that examined the fertile gray area between humor and pain, love and rejection, hope and fear. Their acrobatic, sometimes atonal harmonies emphasized Ratshin's rapid-fire, eerily insightful lyrics—he could write about a parent's death from a child's point of view ("Silent Night") as easily as the death of a marriage from the viewpoint of bitter parents staying together for the sake of their kids ("In It for the Children"). The group was on the brink of major-label stardom in 1987, but a deal with Island Records fell through when their A&R champion died; they broke up amicably two years later. Ratshin continues performing solo acoustic under the confusing moniker of the Electric Bonsai Band ("It's not electric . . . it's not a band"), where his self-deprecating humor and brooding ruminations on middle-age and middle America combine to make him one of folk's most thought-provoking singer-songwriters.

what to buy: Recorded live in 1987, *Myn and Wymyn* ♪♪♪♪ (Yellow Tail, 1992, prod. Uncle Bonsai) was Uncle Bonsai's swan song and boasts some of their most moving material, from the sexual politics of "Men and Women" and "Bedroom Eyes" to "Doug at His Mom's," the first in a series of songs about a fictional loser named Doug. Even better were "Another Fat Song," which chronicles liposuction in stomach-churning detail, and "Womb for Rent," a touching tune about surrogate motherhood. *Lounging in the Belly of the Beast* ♪♪♪½ (Yellow Tail, 1995, prod. Andrew Ratshin) is Ratshin's third album as the Electric Bonsai Band and his most consistent, thanks to improved production and alternately chilling and disarmingly chirpy compositions about facing mortality and looking in the mirror—and not liking either view.

what to buy next: *The Inessential Uncle Bonsai* ♪♪♪½ (Yellow Tail, 1992, prod. Uncle Bonsai, Andrew Ratshin) collects live radio-broadcast renditions of most of the tunes found on Uncle Bonsai's first two albums, the out-of-print *A Lonely Grain of Corn* and *Boys Want Sex in the Morning*, including "Penis Envy," "Suzy," "Silent Night," and "In It for the Children."

what to avoid: Ratshin's second EBB effort, the ironically titled *But I'm Happy Now* ♪♪½ (Yellow Tail, 1993, prod. Andrew Ratshin), boasts the concert favorite "I Am My Dad," but too many of the songs meander where they usually bite.

the rest:

Electric Bonsai Band:

I Am Joe's Eyes ♪♪♪ (Yellow Tail, 1990)

Uncle Bonsai:

Boys Want Sex in the Morning ♪♪♪½ (Freckle, 1986)

worth searching for: *20 Seconds of Pleasure* ♪♪♪ (Yellow Tail, 1993, prod. Andrew Ratshin) is a cassette-only collection of short, hilarious tunes, like "The Weatherman" and "The Airplane," that Ratshin uses to spice his solo sets. The longer odes to David Wilcox and Rosanna Arquette are as edgy and funny as anything Uncle Bonsai did.

influences:

◀◀ The Roches, Christine Lavin

▶▶ The Chenille Sisters, Clive Gregson

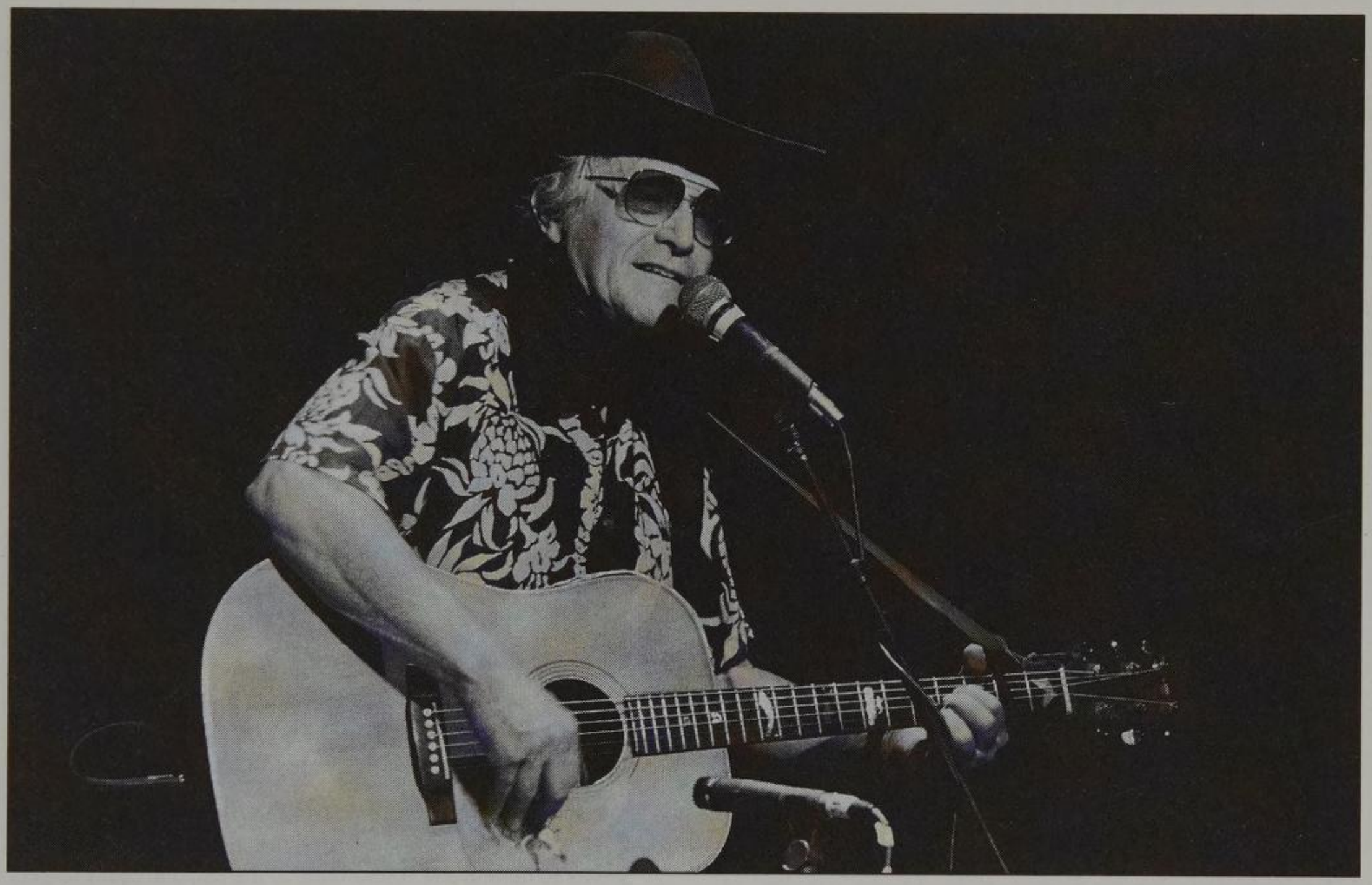
David Okamoto

Ramblin' Jack Elliott

Born Elliott Adnopoz, August 1, 1931, in Brooklyn, NY.

In February 1951, folk music icon Woody Guthrie was hospitalized for an acutely ruptured appendix at Coney Island Hospital in New York. One of his visitors was a 20-year-old former rodeo hand, dressed like a cowboy and carrying a guitar. His name was Buck Elliott and he told the recovering patient how much he admired his music. Upon Guthrie's release, Elliott even started hanging around Guthrie's home in Howard Beach, New York, and eventually moved in. Guthrie, who saw a lot of promise in

ramblin' jack elliott



Ramblin' Jack Elliott **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

the eager musician, took him under his wing and taught him everything he knew about folk music and songwriting. The young buck changed his name to Ramblin' Jack Elliott and, between 1951 and 1954, the two musical soul mates traveled throughout the country, playing and collecting stories. Among the many kindred spirits Elliott met along the way were actor James Dean and beat writers Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, who actually read Elliott the manuscript for his then unpublished *On the Road*. When Guthrie was hospitalized in 1954 for Huntington's chorea, Elliott continued spreading the folk legend's gospel, taking off for Europe with singer Derroll Adams. In addition to introducing Guthrie's songs to a new audience, he also expanded his own repertoire extensively. When Elliott returned to the States in 1961, folk music was experiencing a tremendous boom and Ramblin' Jack was being heralded as one of the genre's leading practitioners. While visiting Guthrie in the hospital, he met another young musician who was also heavily influenced by Guthrie. His name was Bob Dylan, and they became friends and started playing together. In fact, in addition to borrowing Elliott's songs, Dylan began adopting his mannerisms and knack for telling a story, as well as his guitar- and harmonica-playing techniques. Throughout the 1960s, Elliott recorded regularly and became a mesmerizing fixture on the Greenwich Village folk circuit, playing the Bitter End, Gerde's Folk City, and the Gaslight. In the mid-1970s, he toured as a member of Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue, playing small concert halls across the U.S. and Canada. Throughout the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, Elliott continued recording, and in 1996 his *South Coast* won a Grammy for Best Traditional Folk Album. He was also awarded the prestigious Bill Graham Lifetime Achievement Award at the Bay Area Music Awards in San Francisco.

what to buy: *Friends of Mine* ♪♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1998, prod. Roy Rogers) is an outstanding album on which the folk legend teams up to play with the likes of Arlo Guthrie, Peter Rowan, Rosalie Sorrels, Tom Waits, Emmylou Harris, Nanci Griffith, John Prine, Jerry Jeff Walker, and Bob Weir. Check out Elliott's and Guy Clark's gut-wrenching vocal deliveries on Merle Travis's

chestnut, "Dark As a Dungeon." The easy-rolling "Bleeker Street Blues," which Elliott penned after hearing about Bob Dylan's recent bout with a life-threatening heart ailment, showcases the singer's natural gift for storytelling that's engaging and cleverly crafted. *The Essential Ramblin' Jack Elliott* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1976/1993) features Elliott performing spirited renditions of tunes by Leadbelly and Jimmy Driftwood.

what to buy next: *Hard Travelin': Songs by Woody Guthrie and Others* ♪♪♪½ (Fantasy, 1989) is a tour de force that combines two great releases from the 1960s—*Jack Elliott Sings the Songs of Woody Guthrie* and *Ramblin' Jack Elliott*.

the rest:

Ramblin' Jack Elliott Sings Woody Guthrie and Jimmie Rodgers ♪♪♪ (Monitor, 1962)
Kerouac's Last Dream ♪♪♪ (Appleseed, 1980/1997)
Me & Bobby McGee ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
South Coast ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Bob Dylan, Kevin Welch, Steve Earle, Jimmie Dale Gilmore

Rick Petreycik

Tony Ellis

Born in NC.

On the face of it, Tony Ellis seems to have roughly the same biography as many first-generation bluegrass artists: he's a Southerner (from the mountains of western North Carolina), he's from a big family of native musicians, and he was a distinguished alumnus of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. It's not until you actually hear him play—especially his own music—that you get a glimpse of how unique he is. As a youngster, Ellis first learned the banjo from his grandmother, an old-time, two-finger style he immediately abandoned after he first heard Earl Scruggs play. Committed to bluegrass music from then on, he traded in the trumpet he played in high school for a resonator banjo and learned from everywhere he could—after his family moved to Lynchburg he took lessons from bluegrass great Don Reno. Ellis went pro after a successful audition with Bill Monroe, touring with his band for two-and-a-half years, including a show at Carnegie Hall with Mac Wiseman and 25 sides with Decca Records. After leaving the Blue Grass Boys to devote his time to raising a family, Ellis played music around the Bristol, Tennessee, area with noted old-time music artists George Pegram and Tommy Jarrell. In time he migrated to south central Ohio and played with many bluegrass bands and old-time aggregations, including fiddler Lonnie Seymour. Ellis still lives, plays, and runs a small bed-and-breakfast in Chillicothe, Ohio. Among banjo players there seems to be a vast gulf between the stylistic worlds of old-time music and bluegrass; but it's precisely there that Ellis makes his musical home. In his experienced hands, rendering a version of an old tune like "Sally Ann" in an antiquated mountain tuning, but with a Scruggs-style right hand, seems as natural as a mountain spring—yet it's essentially unheard of among other banjo pickers. But the real treasures come not from rehashing the old tunes, but from his own compositions.

what to buy: The exquisite *Farewell My Home* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993, prod. Stephen Wade) should be enough to banish banjo jokes from the earth forever. This is Ellis's second full program of his own jewel-like compositions, conceived as a set of duets with his son, Bill, who proves to be a tasty and intuitive guitarist here. Banjo visionary Stephen Wade is on hand also, and it was recorded at the studios of the late Larry MacBride of Marimac Records. Ellis's tunes are understated but powerfully built, like a church foundation—and it's that very deceptive simplicity that makes these tunes all but impossible to distinguish from traditional ones. Furthermore, the music seems so natural and comfortable to the ear, one easily forgets that this is uncharted territory: neither old-time music nor bluegrass, it's something entirely new.

what to buy next: You wouldn't want to miss *Dixie Banner* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994, prod. Stephen Wade), Ellis's first album of his own unique banjo music. Originally recorded and issued on vinyl in 1986, this one benefits from the guiding hand of Stephen Wade as well, not to mention the presence of Red Clay Ramblers Mike Craver and Jack Herrick, and Ellis's son, Bill. If the record-biz marketing buzzword "Americana" wasn't invented for this album, it could have been: it's as honest and sprouted-from-the-roots sounding as it is unclassifiable.

influences:

◀◀ Earl Scruggs, Don Reno, Tommy Jarrell
▶▶ Stephen Wade, Michael J. Miles, Bill Keith

Chris Rietz

Tony Elman

Hammer dulcimer player Tony Elman has taken his distinctive instrument places where it had never gone before. Recording

Joe Ely **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

on his own label, Elman has worked with the cream of Bay Area acoustic musicians to create several albums blending traditional tunes and atmospheric original instrumentals.

what to buy: *Earth Tones* ♪♪♪½ (Acorn, 1995, prod. Mike Marshall), a collection of original songs that recall specific geographical locations, is Elman's most ambitious and lush recording to date. The sessions feature splendid playing from, among others, producer Marshall, Elman's keyboardist sibling Peter, flutist Matt Eakle, bassist Todd Phillips, and percussionist/fiddler Joe Craven.

what to buy next: The seasonal *Winter Creek* ♪♪♪ (Acorn, 1991, prod. Tony Elman) blends familiar carols with traditional winter pieces.

the rest:
Shakin' Down the Acorns ♪♪♪½ (Acorn, 1982)
Shakin' Down the Acorns, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Acorn, 1984)
Swinging on a Gate ♪♪♪ (Acorn, 1986)

influences:
David Grisman Quintet, Madeline MacNeil, Trapezoid
Malcolm Dalglish

Michael Parrish

Joe Ely

Born February 9, 1947, in Amarillo, TX.

Joe Ely blew out of the hot, windy, brown plains of Lubbock, Texas—where Buddy Holly grew up—during the late 1970s. His new wave honky-tonk baffled the country music establishment, which seemed more concerned with rhinestone suits and string arrangements, and fringe rockers alike. Ely was too rock for country, too country for rock, and he's never turned his critical acclaim into gold. A prolific songwriter who wandered the wilds of the Southwest as a teenager, Ely sang stories about drifters, not-so-star-crossed lovers, and some of life's more colorful characters. His voice bad boy gritty, his bands always an overly

british folk rock

The Byrds may have inadvertently invented folk-rock and subsequently introduced the work of Bob Dylan and Pete Seeger to millions, but in their elegant way, the British created some of the best, most durable music of the genre. Spooky traditional lyrics, jangly melodies, shimmering harmonies, and cunningly reworked versions of Dylan songs fill the late '60s/early '70s albums by Fairport Convention, and early members Richard Thompson, Sandy Denny (both first-class songwriters, as well), and Iain Matthews have all become British folk-rock royalty. Though Fairport never enjoyed the popularity of the Byrds, the band never gave up its quest to meld rootsy tales and instrumentation with a contemporary sparkle. After leaving the group, Matthews had his biggest hit with an archetypal slice of folk-rock—an electric version of Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock." And Thompson—both with Fairport and after leaving the band—has written some of the prettiest, most aching, and loudest music to bridge folk and rock. But Fairport's unconventional crew were hardly the only folk-rock players on the other side of the pond. A year before Fairport's classic *Unhalfbricking* album, Denny recorded an album (that included her first recording of "Who Knows Where the Time Goes") with the Strawbs, themselves a bunch of budding rockers with tons of respect for traditional melodies. The sounds of dulcimers and 12-string guitars abound on their early albums. Denny's haunting voice also graces "The Battle of Evermore," the track that precedes "Stairway to Heaven" on Led Zeppelin's fourth album. If you think that mentioning the Z word in a discussion of British folk-rock is a stretch, remember that side two of the group's third album is full of folky, acoustic material (with Jimmy Page wailing on banjo, mandolin, and steel guitar), and that the traditional "Babe I'm Gonna Leave You" on their breakthrough debut was once a Joan Baez song.

David Sokol

aggressive mix of punkish roots rockers and straight-ahead country musicians, Ely turned his soulful but raucous blend of honky-tonk, rock 'n' blues, and Tex-Mex into vivid songs about life. He lists Merle Haggard and the Clash's Joe Strummer among his biggest fans.

what to buy: *Love and Danger* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Joe Ely, Tony Brown) was a return to form for the Texas singer, who'd ventured a little too far from his honky-tonk roots to a rootsy blues-rock sound during a stretch with HighTone Records. That stuff was good, but a little too one-dimensional. Ely's at his best when he's writing compelling narratives, interpreting songs by wonderful but overlooked Texas writers like Robert Earl Keen Jr. (and buddy Butch Hancock) and using all of his musical tools.

what to buy next: Smoky, sweaty bars, hot summer nights, and romantic desperadoes drip from *Honky Tonk Masquerade* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1978, prod. Chip Young), the product of Ely's restless spirit and his tenure as the king of the west Texas honky-tonks during the late 1970s. Ely classics "West Texas Waltz" and "Fingernails" (opening line: "I keep my fingernails long so they click when I play the piano") are among its most colorful inclusions.

what to avoid: The raucous rockabilly of *Musta Notta Gotta Lotta* ♪♪ (MCA/Southcoast, 1981, prod. Joe Ely, Michael Brovsky) is fun, but not as memorable as his best work.

the rest:
Joe Ely ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1977)
Down on the Drag ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1979)
Live Shots ♪♪♪ (MCA/Southcoast, 1980)
Lord of the Highway ♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1987)
Dig All Night ♪♪ (HighTone, 1988)
Live at Liberty Lunch ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1990)
Letter to Laredo ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)

worth searching for: All but one of Ely's albums are available on CD. The exception: the experimental *Hi-Res* ♪♪ (MCA, 1984, prod. Joe Ely, Michael Brovsky), issued on vinyl and cassette. It was Ely's one and only plunge into the world of computers and synthesizers, which, like many of his musical moves, was ahead of its time and hardly in character for a roots country-rocker. It was a clunker, but there are some superb songs under the layers of electronics, including "Cool Rockin' Loretta" and "Letter to Laredo," later recast as the title song of his newest, flamenco-inflected album. There are also two best-of collections available from the U.K.: *No Bad Talk or Loud Talk, 1977–81* ♪♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1995) and *Time for Travelin': The Best of Joe Ely, Vol. 2* ♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1996).

influences:

Buddy Holly, Hank Williams

Alejando Escovedo, Son Volt

see also: *Flatlanders*

Doug Pullen

Lyman Enloe

Born 1906, in Cole Country, MO.

Lyman Enloe was surrounded by traditional music as a boy. Both his father, Elijah, and his older half-brother, Wade, played the fiddle. Tony Gilmore of Jefferson City, Missouri, was Enloe's most important influence. A railroad man by occupation, Gilmore played over radio station WOS, which broadcast from the dome of the Capitol in Jefferson City from 1923 to 1933. Enloe started out playing backup guitar for Gilmore but soon became interested in fiddling. He recalls that he "already had all the tunes in his head." He just had to learn to play them on the fiddle. Enloe moved to Kansas City in 1940 and worked as a painter. He put his music aside for over two decades but started playing again in the 1960s with a group called the Bluegrass Association. The group played together for 13 years and cut four LPs, disbanding in 1981. David Freeman of County Records, on the partial recommendation of Kenny Baker, brought Enloe to national attention in 1978 with the rerelease of *Fiddle Tunes I Recall*. That album became an instant classic. Enloe was a National Heritage Fellowship recipient in 1995 for his life as an old-time fiddler. He played at festivals and toured occasionally later in life showing off his Midwestern style of fiddle playing.

what to buy: *Fiddle Tunes I Recall* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1978/1993, prod. Lyman Enloe, the Bluegrass Association) was originally released in 1973 on a small independent label in Missouri. Reissued on vinyl in 1978 and on CD in 1993, this album is special in that it brought out a lot of tunes that Enloe had heard from old fiddlers in his region who were long gone in the 1970s. Reading the liner notes, and of course listening to the music, is akin to looking through a history book for the first time. The tunes recorded here were drawn out of the memory banks of Lyman Enloe and given a new life in the able hands of this master fiddler.

worth searching for: *Rugged Road* ♪♪♪½ (Missouri Old Time Fiddler's Association, 1989, prod. Missouri Old Time Fiddler's Association) is a worthwhile cassette-only release.

influences:

Arthur Smith, Casey Jones, Tony Gilmore

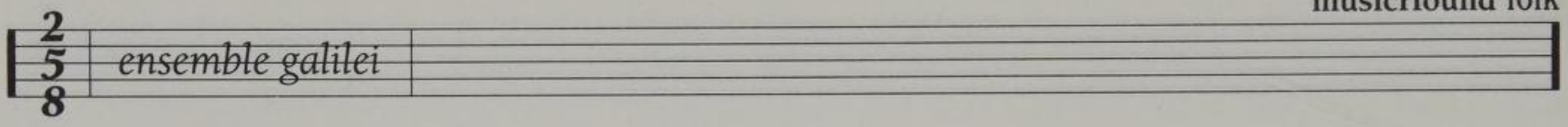
Lynn "Chirps" Smith, Kenny Baker

Steve Gardner

Séamus Ennis

Born May 5, 1919, in Jamestown, County Dublin, Ireland. Died October 5, 1982, in Naul, County Dublin, Ireland.

A colorful and charismatic personality, as well as a masterful performer on the Irish uilleann pipes, a singer, storyteller, and collector, Séamus Ennis was a father figure to a generation of Irish pipers and, indeed, a giant of Irish traditional music. Like other traditional players, Ennis was raised into the music. His father, James, was a piper who made radio broadcasts and records with the Fingal Trio in the early 1930s, and the Ennis house in Jamestown was often visited by musician friends. Although not through formal training, Séamus learned his piping from his father. After a few years with Colm Ó Lochlainn's Three Candles Press, Ennis was hired by the Irish Folklore Commission in the early 1940s to collect songs in the west of Ireland. In 1947, he went on to work for Radio Éireann, then for the BBC in London in 1951, traveling all over Britain and Ireland to record traditional music for his show *As I Roved Out*. By all accounts, Ennis was very successful in establishing a strong rapport with traditional players and singers who saw him as one of their own. While in London, Ennis recorded his first album, *The Bonny Bunch of Roses*, for the American label Tradition. Also from that period, a couple of recordings of Ennis's piping are included on the 1965 Folkways album *Irish Music in London Pubs*. By 1958, his work with the BBC having ended, Ennis returned to Ireland and resumed his collecting for Radio Éireann. He continued to travel and perform throughout the 1960s, appearing at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964. In the early 1970s, as the Irish folk music revival was in full swing, Ennis was sharing an apartment in Dublin with fellow piper Liam O'Flynn, soon to become famous as a member of the group Planxty. He was visited there by American folksinger Patrick Sky, who had become enamored with the pipes and who would later produce *Forty Years of Irish Piping*, an album containing recordings Ennis made at that time. During that period, Ennis's piping was also featured on the Topic LP *The Wandering Minstrel* and on two LPs produced for Tara, *The Pure Drop* and *The Fox Chase*. By the late 1970s, Ennis returned "home" to North County Dublin. Despite health problems, he continued to make regular appearances to the end, even playing at the Willie Clancy Summer School a few months before his death.



what to buy: On the pioneering *The Bonny Bunch of Roses* ♪♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1959/Rykodisc, 1996, prod. Robin Roberts), recently reissued on CD by Rykodisc, Ennis presents an excellent selection of airs and dance tunes—played on pipes or whistle—and songs learned during his collecting trips. Ennis's instrumental Tara LPs, reissued as the two-CD set *The Best of Irish Piping* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1995, prod. Séamus Ennis), are a monument to the art of Irish piping. Of particular interest is Ennis's 13-minute rendition of "The Fox Chase," a descriptive piece complete with galloping horses and barking hounds. From the same period, *The Wandering Minstrel* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1974/Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Tony Engle) is also entirely devoted to the pipes.

worth searching for: *Irish Music in London Pubs* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1965, prod. Ralph Rinzler, Barry Murphy), recorded live in the London pubs frequented by Irish musicians, is still availble on tape from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Although Séamus Ennis only appears on two tracks and the sound quality is less than optimal, the album is interesting for the presence of Sligo fiddle player Michael Gorman and street singer Margaret Barry. The first album released on the Green Linnet label, *Forty Years of Irish Piping* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1977, prod. Patrick Sky) is a poorly documented collection of disparate recordings from various times and sources, yet remains a classic well worth searching for. Available from Radio Telefis Éireann in Dublin, *The Séamus Ennis Story* ♪♪♪ (RTE, 1988, prod. Julian Vignoles) assembles on two cassettes four radio broadcasts featuring interviews of Ennis's friends and relatives, as well as music from the master. From the same source, the recent *The Return from Fingal* ♪♪♪♪ (RTE, 1997, prod. Peter Browne) is an outstanding collection of recordings made by Radio Éireann and RTE over a 40-year period. Especially interesting are several renditions of sean-nós melodies, both sung and played on the pipes.

influences:

◀◀ James Ennis (Séamus Mac Aonghusa), Mary McCabe, Patsy Touhey, Nicholas Markey, Patrick Ward

▶▶ Liam O'Flynn, Willie Clancy

Philippe Varlet

Ensemble Galilei

Formed 1990, in Annapolis, MD.

Carolyn Anderson Surrick, viola da gamba; Sue Richards, Celtic harp (1991–present); Marcia Diehl, recorders, psaltery, pennywhistle (1990–97); Jim Brooks, recorders, concertina, percussion (1990–93); Nancy Karpeles, percussion (1995–present); Sarah Weiner, oboe (1995–present); Erin Shrader, guitar, fiddle (1996–97); Liz Knowles, fiddle (1997–present); Deborah Nuse, Scottish smallpipes, fiddle (1997–present).

Diversity is the key to both the voice and the success of Ensemble Galilei. The brainchild of viola da gambist Carolyn Surrick, this group deftly melds the traditions of Celtic and early music. The all-instrumental format is particularly refreshing. Combining the varied backgrounds of an eclectic group of talented musicians, this ensemble creates a whole new sound to add to the usually limited range found in early music. Carolyn Surrick brings abundant knowledge about early music to the group, coming from a background of musicology. Sue Richards brings the passion and fire of Celtic music. Add the fine musicianship and creativity of a collection of excellent musicians, and you come out with a rich, exciting repertoire—from Hildegard von Bingen, to traditional Celtic, to originals by members of the group. The arrangements vary from a singing counterpoint, to haunting melodies with little accompaniment, to thick, rich harmonies. This variety is truly the spice of life.

what to buy: A true showcase of the fusion of folk and early classical, *Following the Moon* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1994, prod. Charlie Pilzer) presents a perfect blending of instrumentation. This remarkable recording sparkles with a number of fine jewels, including John Kirkpatrick's haunting "Jamieson's Farewell" and the lively "English Dance/Estampie." *The Mystic and the Muse* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1997, prod. Charlie Pilzer) is a study of music for, by, and about women. This recording follows women around the world, kicking up its heels with lively Irish dance tunes, declaring its undying love with Bach's "Bist du bei mir," and coming to America for "Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair." There are delightful original works by several members of the group included as well.

what to buy next: On *Ancient Noels* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1993, prod. Charlie Pilzer), the ensemble teams up with hammer dulcimerist Maggie Sansone, fiddler Bonnie Rideout, percussionist Ben Harms, and guitarist and citternist Zan McLeod to deliver an unusual and special holiday recording. Filled with lesser-known carols, medieval cantigas, and sprightly dance tunes from Europe, this isn't the sort of recording you put away on the holiday shelf, but rather keep out to play during all seasons. *Music in the Great Hall* ♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1992, prod. Maggie Sansone, Carolyn Surrick) is an excellent live recording of the group, but lacks the vision the group later established for themselves. This recording has more of an early music feel, although it does include a fair number of Celtic tunes. The

group is joined again by the amazing fiddler Bonnie Rideout, and the musicians work together beautifully to create a peaceful picture of the early music world.

influences:

◀◀ Vincenzo Galilei, Anner Bylsma, Stan Getz, Sileas

▶▶ Baltimore Consort, Hesperus

see also: *Maggie Sansone*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Enya

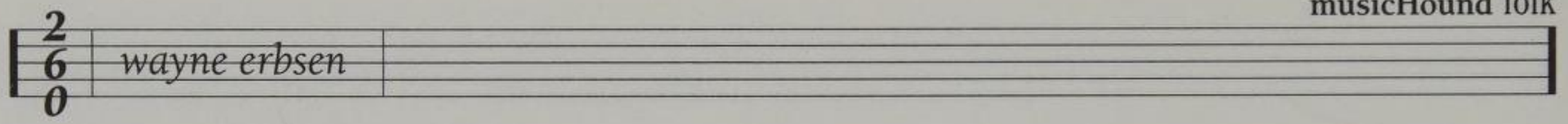
Born Eithne Ni Bhraonain, May 17, 1961, in Gweedore, County Donegal, Ireland.

"Heavenly" is the best way to describe Enya's ethereal voice. The Irish singer-songwriter-instrumentalist paints wide open soundscapes reminiscent of the New Age genre, but more melodic, heavily based in the Celtic folk music that formed much of her early singing career. After her start in the Irish band Clannad—which featured her older brothers and sisters—Enya hooked up with producer Nicky Ryan and lyricist Roma Ryan to write several film and television scores for the BBC. This trio reached the pinnacle of pop success in 1988 with the CD *Watermark*, selling more than 4 million copies worldwide. On the four successful CDs that followed, Enya's dreamy arrangements float alongside musical imagery, lyrical poetry, and mesmerizing vocals. Enya has veritably made a new instrument of her voice—and, appropriately, her fans have made her one of the most successful recording artists of all time.

what to buy: *Watermark* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1989, prod. Nicky Ryan) presents a superb collection of tone poems interwoven with ethereal vocal lines sung in Gaelic, Latin, and English. The dreamy instrumental title piece overdubs piano with lush orchestration. "Storms in Africa" carries the listener to a far away country, while the Gaelic "Na Laetha Geal Moige" exudes the warmth of home. In "Exile," Enya defines a spiritual journey: "My light shall be the moon, my path/the ocean, my guide the morning star." This is high quality music by a distinctive artist, compellingly requesting countless replays. *The Celts* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Nicky Ryan) draws on Enya's twin Catholic and Celtic heritages to present an instrumental soundtrack that lingers with historical and spiritual overtones. "The Sun in the Stream" is inspired by the legend of the Salmon of Knowledge, in the grove of nine wise hazel trees where the sacred River Boyne flowed. The gentle nuances of "Fairytale" tell the story of the fairy king Midir and his love for the beautiful princess Etain: a dreamy ambiance reflects the characters' great love, jealousy, and endurance. "Boadicea," meaning Victorious, portrays the queen of the Iceni tribe who lead a successful rebellion against the Romans, but eventually poisoned herself following a military defeat. Enya's use of her voice as a musical instrument is particularly strong in this collection, and the historical liner notes direct the listener's impressionistic response. *Paint the Sky with Stars: The Best of Enya* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1997, prod. Nicky Ryan) showcases the artist's greatest hits along with two new tracks: "Only If" and the title track. Most notably, "Caribbean Blue" assimilates yet another cultural paradigm into Enya's style, the exuberance of the tropics—a pleasant change of venue in an already eclectic artistic palate. This worthwhile collection provides a good opportunity to sample Enya's portfolio.

what to buy next: *Shepherd Moon* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1991, prod. Nicky Ryan) utilizes the same basic formula of trance and mysticism as *Watermark*, but somehow seems less engaging. Nonetheless the tranquillity of "Angeles," "Evacuee," and "Marble Halls" will soothe the seasoned listener. Awash in synth strings, "Caribbean Blue" is this album's gigantic worldwide pop hit, while "How Can I Keep from Singing?" is Irish folk music at its best. Numerous songs in Gaelic provide additional mystery to this worthy collection. *The Memory of Trees* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1995, prod. Nicky Ryan) engages Enya's trademark style, but again lacks the spark of *Watermark*. Perhaps her existing popularity explains this CD's 1997 Grammy Award for Best New Age Album. Notably, "Anywhere Is" is a joyous, spiritual anthem to confusion and indecision. And Enya's lyrics, in English, Spanish, Latin, and Gaelic, leave much room for personal interpretation by her mono-lingual American followers.

worth searching for: Although the Canadian import *Enya Collection* ♪♪♪½ (MSI/WEAC, 1986, prod. Nicky Ryan) is a three-CD set repackaging previous recordings, its 64-page booklet will entice the avid follower. *Frog Prince Soundtrack* ♪♪♪ (Karussell, 1989, prod. Nicky Ryan) is a British import reminiscent of Enya's professional roots in television and movie scores. *Oiche Chiun (Silent Night)* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Nicky Ryan) features three tracks (10 minutes total): "Silent Night" sung in Gaelic, "Oriel Window," a characteristically ethereal piano instrumental, and "S Fagaim Mo Bhaile," a Gaelic song. If the holiday season finds you dreaming of a dreamy Christmas, check out the Canadian import *Christmas EP* ♪♪♪ (MSI/WEA, 1986, prod. Nicky Ryan). Finally, *Interview* (BAKTABAK, 1986, prod. Nicky Ryan) is another British import—but without the distraction of melody and harmony—for those seriously interested in Irish Catholicism, Celtic mysticism, and pop idolatry.



influences:

◀◀ Claude Debussy, Erik Satie, Clannad

▶▶ Mary Black, Loreena McKennitt, Dee Carstensen, Björk, Brian Eno, the Cranberries

see also: *Clannad*

Art Wojtowicz

Wayne Erbsen

Born in CA.

Wayne Erbsen is an evangelist for the traditional music of the U.S. (especially the southern Appalachian mountains). He currently has 12 recordings out on his own Native Ground Music label. All of his recordings are presented in an educational way, focusing more on the instruments and types of songs than on the performer himself. So, in that aspect, these recordings are great for the uninitiated. All of his albums are arranged around a certain theme (e.g. *Ballads and Songs of the Civil War*, *Railroadin' Classics*) and they usually contain the "hits" instead of obscure tunes that have not previously been recorded. On the other hand, Wayne is a talented musician and would most likely please someone who has already gotten their feet wet in traditional music. If that weren't enough, he also has some fine people guesting on his albums, including Dirk Powell, David Holt, John Herrmann, and Phil Jameson. Along with these recordings Wayne also offers many instructional books so you can get started making some music yourself. The only area where Wayne's talents run thin is with his vocals. For that reason, his instrumental recordings are preferred.

what to buy: Since Wayne's releases all seem to revolve around the music of the South, start with *Southern Mountain Classics* ♪♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1992, prod. Wayne Erbsen), which features Wayne Erbsen with Dirk Powell, John Herrmann, Meredith McIntosh, Don Pedi, and Phil Jameson. Songs featured include "Soldier's Joy," "Shady Grove," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Cluck Old Hen," and other old-time "hits." All of Erbsen's recordings are of good quality and each has a theme, so choose the one that best matches your own interests.

the rest:

Native Ground ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1988)
Old-Time Gospel Instrumentals ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1989)
Ballads & Songs of the Civil War ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1994)
Cowboy Songs of the Wild Frontier ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1995)
Front Porch Favorites: 19th Century American Classics ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1995)
Southern Soldier Boy: 16 Authentic Tunes of the Civil War ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1996)
The Home Front: 17 Authentic Tunes of the Civil War ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1996)
Authentic Outlaw Ballads ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1996)
Old-Time Gospel Favorites ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1997)
Singing Rails: 14 Railroadin' Songs ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1997)
Railroadin' Classics: 16 Great Instrumentals ♪♪♪ (Native Ground, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family, Tommy Jarrell, John Lomax

▶▶ Laura Boosinger

Steve Gardner

Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit

Formed 1985, in Little Washington, VA.

Tom Espinola (born January 26, 1953, in Newport News, VA), guitars, mandolin, mandola, octave mandolin; Lorraine Duisit (born June 26, 1955, in New Haven, CT), harp, mandolin, mandola.

Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit live in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Washington, Virginia. They perform original and traditional music on harp, mandolin, guitar, voice, and percussion. Their music reflects an enthusiasm for traditional folk and string band music, as well as classical training and involvement with chamber, orchestral, and jazz music. Drawing freely from the music of Europe, North and South America, the British Isles, and Africa, Espinola and Duisit extend traditions through their own work to form a unique and vital music. Espinola has taught guitar, mandolin, and music theory and is experienced in bluegrass, jazz, classical, avant-garde, and traditional music. He was formerly in the New Morning String Band and Nothin' Doin'. He has written for chamber, orchestral, theater, and dance groups, and one of his multimedia pieces was featured in the *New Music America* festival in Washington, D.C. He was commissioned to arrange music for the Paul Winter Consort and for Trapezoid, who recorded his arrangements on three of their albums. Duisit was a member of Trapezoid for over eight years, touring the U.S., Canada, and Japan and appearing on a number of television and radio shows, including *Fire on the Mountain* and *A Prairie Home Companion*. She recorded three albums with Trapezoid and also appears on albums by John McCutcheon and Holly Near. Her solo album, *Hawks and Herons*, was selected by the *Washington Post* as one of the finest folk records of 1983. Her music has been featured on *Voice of America* and *All Things Considered*.

what to buy: *Which Way Waltz* ♪♪♪♪ (CLR, 1997, prod. Tom Espinola) features new music modeled on traditional dance music and pays a debt of gratitude to Espinola's native Southern upbringing. "My youthful winters were spent studying classical, jazz, and rock music in a southern Virginia town," he confides, "but my summers were spent in a sultry tobacco fields region of eastern North Carolina 'studying' what was referred to by the locals as 'country music.' Friday and Saturday nights were spent under a massive ancient oak tree with instruments in hand and libation at foot. The memory of the faces of those gentlemen has lit the creative path for me." A mandolin trio performs a playful dance in "Beulah and Hildred," imitates the baying of hounds in "Red Fox Run," and frolics through a few keys in "Wagner in the Woodpile." "Creekfinder" is a rock just right for delivering a satisfying "plunk" when tossed fifty yards, and "Iron Horse Dream" is a reflection on changes brought about by the coming of the steel rail. The haunting "Open Field," performed on mandola, was based on a recurring dream by one of Tom's mandolin students, where he has given his life in the Southern cause on a Civil War battlefield. The recording includes two of Lorraine Duisit's pieces previously recorded by her former group Trapezoid, the crooked and whimsical "Old Road to Maryland" and "Silverplume Waltz," which also appears on *Windham Hill Guitar Sampler* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1988, prod. Will Ackerman, Dawn Atkinson).

what to buy next: *Feather River* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1988, prod. Tom Espinola) is a bit dated chronologically, but is still very fresh musically. Not quite "New Age," it was exceptionally forward looking for its time, with the "spaciness or amorphous good vibes of so much 'New Age' music." Geoffrey Himes, in his liner notes to the album, termed it "chamber folk" as a means of suggesting both "the informal rural character of the music as well as it's high technical standards and thoughtful architecture." The one overriding impression that remains after listening to this album is not what to call the music, but rather that these people ought to do this more often.

solo outings:

Lorraine Duisit:

Hawks and Herons ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1983)

Collected Hymns: From the 16th to the 20th Century ♪♪♪♪ (Creative Live Records, 1991) (cassette only)

influences:

◀◀ Norman Blake, Trapezoid, Andy Statman, Andy Irvine, David Grisman, Sam Bush

▶▶ Darol Anger, Todd Phillips, Butch Baldassari

see also: *Trapezoid*

Neal Walters

Sleepy John Estes

Born John Adam Estes, January 25, 1899, in Ripley, TN. Died June 5, 1977, in Brownsville, TN.

Some blues artists earned repute for hooking up with the right people, or recording in the right studio, at the right time. A select few—Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Buddy Guy—became famous because they're just drop-dead talented. You can hear from the first notes of Estes's classic "The Girl I Love, She Got Long, Curly Hair" a natural high-pitch tremolo, an instinctive yodel that communicates heartbreak without much effort. Estes's father was a guitar picker, and John—who later earned the nickname "Sleepy" because he could supposedly sleep standing up—fashioned his own guitar from a cigar box. He led a work gang for a railroad maintenance crew, singing to keep everybody else alert. Through his travels he met musicians like Jab Jones and James "Yank" Rachell, and they wound up auditioning for the Victor company in 1929. Though he never made enough money to exist above the poverty line, he sustained an amazingly prolific career, recording for almost a dozen record companies until his death.

what to buy: Estes's songwriting talent—on the detail-rich "Broken-Hearted, Ragged and Dirty Too" and "Fire Department Blues (Martha Hardin)"—comes across just as well as his teary singing style and excellent small-combo arrangements on the almost-definitive *I Ain't Gonna Be Worried No More, 1929–41* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1992, prod. Richard Nevins, Don Kent, Stefan Grossman). It's all traditional blues, but Estes takes the lyrics a step further than most performers; "Floating Bridge" describes in astounding detail a near-drowning incident Estes endured in Kentucky, and the frustrated "Who's Been Telling You Buddy Brown" asks, "Have you ever tried lovin', when you can't get it in your mind?"

what to buy next: In the 1960s Estes was a prime subject for revivalists and historians, not to mention admiring musicians. *Electric Sleep* ♪♪♪♪ (Delmark, 1964/1991, prod. Robert Koester) matches the singer with an electric Chicago blues combo, including pianist Sunnyland Slim, harpist Carey Bell, and bassist Earl Hooker. *Broke and Hungry* ♪♪♪½ (Delmark, 1964/1995, prod. Robert Koester) is a collaboration with blues upstart Michael Bloomfield and Estes's old stomping partner Yank Rachell.

the rest:

The Legend of Sleepy John Estes ♪♪♪½ (Delmark, 1962)

Brownsville Blues ♪♪♪ (Delmark, 1965)
In Europe ♪♪ (Delmark, 1966)
1929–40 ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1967)
Complete Works, Vols. 1–2 ♪♪♪ (Document, 1991)

worth searching for: *First Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (JSP, 1930) collects Estes's first recordings, his 1929 sessions with troubled harpist Noah Lewis and guitarist Yank Rachell.

influences:

◀◀ Robert Johnson, Son House, Tommy Johnson, Willie Brown, Blind Boy Fuller

▶▶ Jackie Wilson, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Eric Clapton, Paul Butterfield Blues Band, Otis Redding, Sam Cooke

Steve Knopper

Etchingham Steam Band

See: Shirley Collins, Albion Band

Everly Brothers

Formed 1954.

Don Everly (born February 1, 1937, in Brownie, KY), vocals, guitar; Phil Everly (born January 19, 1939, in Brownie, KY), vocals, guitar.

Having begun their singing careers as children on their parents' radio program, brothers Don and Phil Everly qualified as country music veterans by the time their first rock 'n' roll records hit the charts eight years later, their deeply entwined high-mountain harmonies practically instinctual. The blood harmonies of the Everly Brothers may be the main tributary feeding all rock vocal styles; the Beatles, among many others, styled their harmony sound after the Everlys. But the Everly Brothers were not only the children of long-standing members of the country music community. They were also an officially sanctioned Nashville project. Guitarist Chet Atkins conducted the recording sessions and Acuff-Rose frontliners Boudleaux and Felice Bryant supplied the material. Though they may have slipped off the charts during the 1960s, the brothers never stopped making heart-stoppingly beautiful records. When matched with the right piece of material and sympathetic production, the Everlys cut records that matched the finest work of their early years, right up to the modest 1984 comeback with Paul McCartney's "On the Wings of a Nightingale" (produced by Dave Edmunds) and beyond. And the Everlys never strayed far from the country field; one of their best-loved albums of their wilderness years was, in fact, the country-oriented *Roots*, not unlike the *Songs Our Daddy Taught Us* album of many years earlier. The duo split—bitterly—in 1973, breaking up literally in front of a Knott's Berry Farm audience when Don splintered a guitar across his brother's back and walked offstage, only to discover nobody wanted to hear one Everly brother singing alone. They rejoined forces for a sentimental 1983 Royal Albert Hall concert, recorded and filmed, and apparently found an uneasy truce that allowed them to continue to perform and record together.

what to buy: *Cadence Classics: Their 20 Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1985, prod. Archie Bleyer) contains the basic fundamentals of the Everlys' repertoire, from the acoustic guitar–accented rockabilly of "Wake Up Little Susie" and "Claudette" to almost ethereal ballads such as "Let It Be Me."

what to buy next: *Walk Right Back: The Everly Brothers on Warner Bros., 1960–1969* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Archives 1993, prod. various) is a 50-song survey that begins where the Cadence era left off and takes the Everlys through the flowering of Los Angeles country-rock that their early work did so much to inspire. The four-disc box set *Heartaches and Harmonies* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994, prod. various)offers a detailed retrospective that smoothly covers nearly 40 years of Everlys recordings.

what to avoid: During the mid-1960s, the brothers re-recorded a set of their Cadence hits for Warners, released as *The Very Best of the Everly Brothers* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1964, prod. various), which pales vastly in comparison to the original versions.

the rest:

Songs Our Daddy Taught Us ♪♪♪♪ (Cadence, 1958/Rhino, 1988)
The Fabulous Style of the Everly Brothers ♪♪♪♪ (Cadence, 1960/Rhino, 1988)
Roots ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1968)
Reunion Concert ♪♪ (Mercury, 1984)
EB 84 ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1984/Razor & Tie, 1994)
The Mercury Years ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1993)

worth searching for: In assembling the label's Everlys reissues of the Cadence material, Rhino Records researchers unearthed a set of unreleased demo tapes—*All They Had to Do Was Dream* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1985, prod. Archie Bleyer)—that showcase the pure vocal sound of the brothers. Perhaps some of rock's first "unplugged" sessions, this material glistens with the maturity and depth of artists far beyond their years when it was actually recorded.

influences:

◀◀ The Stanley Brothers, the Louvin Brothers

▶▶ Foster & Lloyd, the O'Kanes, Marty Brown

Joel Selvin

John Fahey

Born February 28, 1939, in Takoma Park, MD.

A folk/blues guitarist, producer, scholar, and founder of the Takoma label, Fahey's first interest was in traditional country music. He traveled extensively through the South, searching for obscure country and blues recordings. As much a historian of early blues guitarists as he is a proficient practitioner of the art, he wrote a definitive biography of blues musician Charley Patton. From blues, country, folk, and spirituals, Fahey turned his attention to Brazilian music during the '80s. His open-tuned acoustic guitar work was the progenitor for such guitarists as Leo Kottke (who first recorded on the Takoma label) and William Ackerman.

what to buy: *The Essential John Fahey* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1974/1993, prod. John Fahey, Barry Hansen, Sam Charters) is a 13-track overview of Fahey's career that hits most of his high points. Combining such disparate elements as hymns, blues, and trippy accents, Fahey's methodical approach is transcended by his elegant vision. On two tracks, supporting musicians include members of Spirit, adding to the diverse styles.

what to buy next: *The John Fahey Christmas Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Burnside, 1991, prod. Terry Robb, Don MacLeod) collects 24 tracks of Christmas hymns and secular music, finely polished to a warm sheen. Refined with an effortless melding of blues and spirituals, *The Transfiguration of Blind Joe Death* ♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1967) is Fahey's most ambitious work.

what to avoid: *Old Girlfriends & Other Horrible Memories* ♪½ (Varrick, 1993), though accomplished, is an odd bit of stream of consciousness without the meat of his voluminous and better work.

the rest:

The Yellow Princess ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)
The Voice of the Turtle ♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1968/1996)
Christmas Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1974/1989)
Fare Forward Voyagers ♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1974)
Let's Go ♪♪♪ (Varrick, 1984/1997)
Rain Forests, Oceans, and Other Themes (Varrick, 1987)
I Remember Blind Joe Death ♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Popular Songs of Christmas & New Year's (Varrick, 1988/1996)
God, Time and Casualty ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1990)
The Return of the Repressed: The John Fahey Anthology ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)
The Legend of Blind Joe Death ♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1996)
City of Refuge (PolyGram, 1997)
Requia & Other Compositions For . . . (Vanguard, 1997)
Womblife ♪♪♪ (Table of the Elements, 1997)

worth searching for: Fahey contributed to the highly atmospheric and moody soundtrack to *Country* ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1984) with memorable results.

influences:

Lightnin' Hopkins, Robert Johnson, Leadbelly, Julian Bream

Leo Kottke, William Ackerman, Richard Thompson, Jorma Kaukonen

Patrick McCarty

The Fairfield Four

Formed early 1920s, in Nashville, TN.

Original members: Rev. J.R. Carrethers, vocals; Rufus Carrethers, vocals; Harold Carrethers, vocals; John Battle, vocals. Current members: James Hill, vocals; Isaac Freeman, vocals; Wilson Waters, vocals; Robert Hamlett, vocals; Joseph Rice, vocals. Other members have included: Sam McCrary, vocals; "Preacher" Jones, vocals; James Hill, vocals; and Walter Settles, vocals.

The Fairfield Four is one of the most influential gospel singing groups of the twentieth century. Despite numerous personnel changes, the group continues to extol the power of spirituality and the soulfulness of harmony singing. Organized in the Sunday school of Nashville's Fairfield Baptist Church, the Fairfield Four's most successful period came during the 1940s. Their stirring rendition of "Don't Let Nobody Turn You Around," was recorded during a church service in October 1941. The following year, they won a promotional contest held by the Colonial Coffee Company and landed a spot on a nationally broadcast radio show on WLAC, with hookups over the CBS network. Their appearance was so well received that they remained a regular feature of the station for more than a decade. Between 1946, when the quartet released its first commercial recording, and 1961, the Fairfield Four recorded more than 100 tunes that were released on the Bullet, Delta, Dot, Champion, and Old Town labels. After original member John Battle was stricken with tuberculosis and died in 1946, the Fairfield Four split into two different groups. The quartet led by vocalist Sam McCrary, who joined in the mid-'30s, retained the radio show and ultimately prevailed. A major part of the group's early earnings were channeled into a funeral parlor, the Fairfield Four Funeral Home in Nashville. When the business failed during the winter of

the fairfield four

The Fairfield Four (from left): Walter Settles, Wilson Waters, James Hill, Isaac Freeman **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

1949–1950, several members left to form a new quartet, the Skylarks. A reorganized Fairfield Four maintained a busy pace of touring, radio work, and recordings until 1954, when McCrary received a call to the ministry and the group slowed its activities. Although he attempted to revive the group again in 1958, hiring members of the Indiana-based Silver Quintet, the popularity of *a capella* gospel music was in decline and the group disbanded two years later. They didn't perform together again for more than two decades. A "Quartet Reunion" program in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1980 included a re-formed Fairfield Four that featured McCrary, James Hill, Isaac Freeman, Willie Love, and guitarist Joe Whitaker. Although Love and Whitaker left to rejoin the Voices of Nashville, their slots were ably filled by tenor vocalist Wilson Waters and lead singer Elder Richardson. Harmony singer Robert Hamlett was added in 1984 with Joseph Rice replacing Elder Richardson, who passed away in 1996. The vocal harmonies of the Fairfield Four have been featured on albums by the Nashville Bluegrass Band, John Fogerty, and Steve Earle and in concert with Charlie Daniels, Lyle Lovett, and Elvis Costello. They were designated National Heritage Fellows by the National Endowment of the Arts in 1989.

what to buy: *I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1997, prod. Mark Prentice, Lee Olson) is a memorable tribute to *a cappella* gospel singing. Highlights include guest appearances by Pam Tillis on "Get Away Jordan," Garrison Keillor's moving scripture recitation for the medley "Amazing Grace/The Prodigal Son" and Elvis Costello's lead vocals on the Paul McCartney/Elvis Costello–penned tune "That Day Is Done."

what to buy next: *Standing in the Safety Zone* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1992, prod. Lee Olson), recorded in Nashville between December 1991 and February 1992, is a soulful, harmony-filled celebration of the religious spirit. In addition to harmonizing on traditional gospel tunes, including "Children Go Where I Send Thee," "Keep Me Near the Cross (Servant's Prayer)," and "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," the Fairfield Four join with the Nashville Bluegrass Band for an uplifting rendition of "Roll Jordan Roll."

the rest:
Angels Watching Over Me ♪♪♪ (P Vine, 1991)
Standing on the Rock ♪♪♪ (AVI, 1997)

worth searching for: The Fairfield Four's influential early '50s recordings for the Dot label are sampled on the out-of-print album *One Religion* ♪♪♪.

influences:
◀◀ The Dixie Hummingbirds, Fisk Jubilee Singers, Five Blind Boys of Alabama, Thomas A. Dorsey
▶▶ Amy Grant, Take 6, Staples Singers

see also: *Nashville Bluegrass Band*

Craig Harris

Fairport Convention

Formed 1967, in London, England. Disbanded 1979. Re-formed 1985.

Primary but not complete list includes: Simon Nicol, guitar, vocals; Ashley Hutchings, bass, vocals (1967–69); Judy Dyble, recorder, autoharp, vocals (1967–68); Richard Thompson, guitar, vocals (1967–71); Iain Matthews, guitar, vocals (1967–68); Martin Lamble, drums (1967–69); Sandy Denny, piano, vocals (1968–69, 1974–75); Dave Swarbrick, fiddle, vocals (1969–79); Dave Mattacks, drums, keyboards (1969–74, 1985–98); Dave Pegg, bass, mandolin, vocals (1970–present); Jerry Donahue, guitar, vocals (1972–75); Trevor Lucas, guitar, vocals (1972–75); Bruce Rowland, drums (1974–75); Martin Allcock, guitar, bouzouki, keyboards, vocals (1985–97); Ric Sanders, fiddle (1985–present); Chris Leslie, guitar, fiddle, vocals (1997–present).

One of Fairport Convention's traditional songs, "Sir Patrick Spens," tells of a man who gets reluctantly pressed into service as a seaman and drowns. The story of Fairport Convention is the story of a group of misfits, geniuses, and drinking buddies who manage to become a band—and stay afloat for 30 years and counting. The saga began when some London schoolboys got together at Simon Nicol's parents' house, which was called Fairport, and decided to start a band. They invited a couple of other local characters to join, including librarian Judy Dyble. The band was "discovered" when Joe Boyd, an American impresario who ran the UFO Club in London, heard them and was staggered by the skill of the teenage guitarist, Richard Thompson, on an extended solo during "East West." After the band made its first album, Dyble left and Ashley Hutchings brought in another girl singer, the folk circuit's Sandy Denny. It was Denny who brought the first folk influences to the band; she had many arrangements into which the boys were able to work themselves, and such songs as "A Sailor's Life" began making electrified appearances on Fairport set lists. The band enjoyed modest success until a 1969 van crash killed the drummer, Martin Lamble, and left the remaining members physically and emotionally wounded. They found a new drummer—Dave Mattacks, who played jazz and knew nothing about folk music—brought in traditional fiddler Dave Swarbrick, and retired to a country house, where in a few months *Liege and Lief* was born. The resultant concerts were a massive success; the sound Fairport achieved on that album, strongly grounded in English traditional music, was radical and highly intriguing. *Liege and Lief* split the band. Hutchings left to delve more deeply into traditional sources, while Denny left to concentrate on songwriting. The remaining members continued on the satisfying, if highly uncommercial, folk-rock path, through various personnel changes (including Thompson's departure and Denny's return). By the end of the 1970s, Swarbrick, the only remaining early member, was nearly deaf from his electric violin. The band (which was then, and briefly, called simply "Fairport") was laid to rest. When the reunions started, a strange thing happened: the returning members found that they really enjoyed their own music. By 1985, Fairport Convention was back. The band still holds a yearly reunion at Cropredy, Oxfordshire, near the homes of many members. Many other bands, including Fairport contemporaries Steeleye Span, Pentangle, and the Incredible String Band, have combined rock and folk elements with great success. (In the United States, Bob Dylan and the Band have followed similar muses.) Few, if any, have been able to generate the long-term affection and spirit that Fairport created and sustains.

what to buy: *What We Did on Our Holidays* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1968, prod. Joe Boyd) brings together the band's past and future. It's a microcosm of the band's interests, with compositions by Denny ("Fotheringay") and Thompson ("Tale in Hard Time" and "No Man's Land"), covers of Bob Dylan ("I'll Keep It with Mine") and Joni Mitchell ("Eastern Rain"), electric arrangements of traditional songs ("Nottamun Town" and "She Moves through the Fair"), middle-of-the-road pop ("Book Song"), an instrumental (Simon Nicol's coda "End of a Holiday"), and best of all an anthem (the Thompson-penned "Meet on the Ledge") that's sung at nearly every Fairport concert. Every member of the band is in top form, and Denny is dazzling. *Liege and Lief* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1969, prod. Joe Boyd) is perhaps Fairport's most significant album, for it most fully developed the electric folk format for which the band is best known. Thompson and Swarbrick's "Crazy Man Michael" caps off the album brilliantly; it's a song for the ages. *Jewel in the Crown* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995,

prod. Fairport Convention) is the best offering from Fairport's longest-lived lineup (Nicol/Pegg/Mattacks/Allcock/Sanders).

what to buy next: *House Full* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1986, prod. Joe Boyd, Frank Kornelussen) documents Fairport's first all-male lineup on its American tour, where the band allegedly drank so much they ended up owing money to the venues rather than being paid. Thompson's timid vocals are touching in light of the powerhouse he's become. Swarbrick is front and center with deft fiddling and charming singing. *Expletive Delighted!* ♪♪♪ (Varrick, 1986) showcases the instrumental wizardry of the Nicol/Pegg/Mattacks/Sanders/Allcock lineup.

best of the rest:
Fairport Convention ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1968)
Unhalfbricking ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1969)
Full House ♪♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1970)
Rising for the Moon ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1975)
Encore Encore ♪♪♪♪ (Folkprint, 1979/1997)
Gladys' Leap ♪♪♪½ (Varrick, 1985)
Heyday ♪♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1987)
Five Seasons ♪♪♪♪ (Rough Trade, 1990)
Old-New-Borrowed-Blue ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1996)
Who Knows Where the Time Goes N/A (Green Linnet, 1998)

worth searching for: The video documentary *It All Comes 'Round Again* (1987, prod. Paul Kovit) tells the band's story through the late 1980s. Wonderful historical footage shows the early lineup on "Top of the Pops," the highly hirsute Full House boys with "Now Be Thankful," and the Trevor Lucas–fronted band singing "Polly on the Shore." Interview sequences deftly reveal the personalities associated with the band: diffident, introspective Thompson; imperious, eloquent Hutchings; former fan Sanders; and droll Pegg, cigarette always at the ready. The documentary also includes the only video footage of Sandy Denny that is commercially available.

influences:
⏮ The Byrds, Jefferson Airplane, the Band, Bob Dylan, the Watersons
⏭ New St. George, Mad Pudding

see also: *Sandy Denny, Iain Matthews, Ashley Hutchings, Dave Swarbrick, Richard and Linda Thompson*

Pamela Murray Winters

Marianne Faithfull

Born December 29, 1946, in London, England.

The daughter of a British college lecturer and an Austrian baroness, Faithfull was a beautiful young model with no real singing aspirations until she fell in love with Mick Jagger. He wrote her first hit, 1964's "As Tears Go By," with fellow Rolling Stone Keith Richards. She helped write their "Sister Morphine," but went uncredited until a few years ago. Faithfull's various descents into drug addiction hell are now legendary, including a nearly fatal bout with heroin at the time she broke up with Jagger. But she's always managed to land on her feet, and her ragged, haggard, Dietrich-like voice powerfully reflects her painful experiences. The infamous lady in the rug—Faithfull was found clad in nothing but a floor covering during a drug bust at Richards's home—became a singer in her own right during the late '70s but succumbed to chemical temptations several times during the '80s. She emerged clean, clear-headed, and candid in her 1994 autobiography, which was accompanied by a greatest hits album. Faithfull followed it a year later with her most ambitious and conceptual album, *A Secret Life*, on which she collaborated with director David Lynch's musical collaborator, Angelo Badalamenti (*Twin Peaks, Blue Velvet*).

what to buy: *Faithfull: A Collection of Her Best* ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1994, prod. various) is a surprisingly cohesive 11-song collection that draws from the various and varied aspects of Faithfull's 32-year recording career. Selections range from that first innocent blush of "As Tears Go By" to the bitterly vulgar "Why'd Ya Do It" (from *Broken English*), the moody "Trouble in Mind" theme song, torch numbers from the Hal Willner–produced "Strange Weather," and a sample from the then-upcoming album *A Secret Life*.

what to buy next: *Broken English* ♪♪♪ (Island, 1979, prod. Mark Miller Mundy) couldn't possibly have the dramatic impact today that it did when it was released 17 years ago. There was no way then to be prepared for the stark deterioration of Faithfull's formerly breathy voice, a withered but powerful emotive tool ravaged by drugs and a beautiful life turned hard. Producer Mundy and guitarist Barry Reynolds showcased that voice without obstructing it. *Blazing Away* ♪♪♪ (Island, 1990) is a powerful live album that showcases Faithfull at her dramatic best, backed by people such as Dr. John, former Tom Waits and Elvis Costello guitarist Mark Ribot, and the Band's Garth Hudson. Powerful stuff.

what to avoid: Faithfull's collaboration with *Twin Peaks* and *Blue Velvet* composer Angelo Badalamenti, *A Secret Life* ♪♪ (Island, 1995), is an interesting idea that doesn't work. Both make haunting music on their own, but this is just a little too dull.

the rest:
Marianne Faithfull's Greatest Hits ♪ (Abkco, 1969)
Dangerous Acquaintances ♪♪♪ (Island, 1981)
A Child's Adventure ♪♪♪ (Island, 1983)
Strange Weather ♪♪ (Island, 1987)
20th Century Blues ♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1997)

worth searching for: High-quality sound (at a high price) is the lure of Mobile Fidelity's Ultradisc combination of *Broken English* and *Strange Weather* (Mobile Fidelity, 1995). Real collectors might have a tough time hunting down three rarities—the import-only *Faithless* ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1978), which broke an 11-year recording gap, and her long out-of-print '60s albums *Come My Way* ♪♪♪ (Decca, 1965) and *Faithfull Forever* ♪♪ (London, 1966).

influences:
◀◀ Joan Baez, Buddy Holly, the Everly Brothers, Charlie Parker
▶▶ Björk, Rickie Lee Jones

Doug Pullen

Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon

Formed in LA.

Joseph Falcon (born September 28, 1900, in Rayne, LA; died November 29, 1965, in Crowley, LA), 1 row diationic accordion, drums; Cleoma Breaux Falcon (born May 27, 1906, in Crowley, LA; died April 9, 1941, in Crowley, LA), resonator guitar.

Joe Falcon and Cleoma Breaux went into the temporary recording studio that Columbia had set up in a downtown New Orleans hotel on April 27, 1928, and made the first commercial recordings of Cajun music. His "Allons a Lafayette" was played on Victrolas in the streets of the small prairie towns of southwest Louisiana. Cleoma is the only Cajun woman musician who recorded in the 1920s and early 1930s. The combination of her resonator guitar and his solid button accordion created a sensation, and both were excellent singers as well. Cleoma is reported to have been the creator of the most famous Cajun song, "Jolie Blonde," having taught it to her brother Amédée Breaux for his recording session.

what to buy: A compilation of re-mastered recordings of early Cajun music, *Abbeville Breakdown* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990, prod. Lawrence Cohn) was released as part of Columbia Records' Roots and Blues series. This recording includes two great performances by Cleoma Breaux: "Prenez Courage," which is a rewrite of the Hawaiian standard "Aloha Oe," and the bluesy "Quand Je Suit Partis pour Texas." Joe Falcon is represented by "Poche Town" and the great unaccompanied "Aimer et Perdre." There are also excellent recordings of Cleoma's brothers, the Breaux Freres.

what to buy next: *Cajun Dance Party: Fais Do Do* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994, prod. Lawrence Cohn) is the second release of old Cajun material in the Roots and Blues series. It has four excellent sides of Cleoma Falcon, including the extremely influential "Mon Coeur T'Appelle," which may be the best-known song among Cajuns after "Jolie Blonde." "Le Vieux Soulard et Sa Femme" was the first recording of an ancient French song about a drunk and his wife that has continued to be recast and recorded by everyone from Dewey Balfa to Boozoo Chavis.

the rest:
Live at a Cajun Dance ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1997)

worth searching for: The LP *Cleoma B. Falcon: A Cajun Music Classic* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Jadfel, 1983, prod. Johnnie Allen) brings together many of the important records that Cleoma Falcon recorded with Joe Falcon. Listen to her growl through "Leve Tes Fenetreas Haut" sounding like a Cajun Bessie Smith, or her own "Crowley Waltz," written after almost drowning in the Hudson River. Powerful music from a pioneer woman musician.

influences:
◀◀ Dennis McGee, Leo Soileau
▶▶ Michael Doucet, Iry LeJeune, Mark and Ann Savoy, the Magnolia Sisters

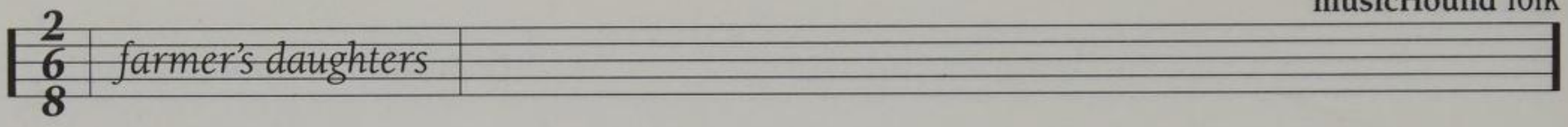
Jared Snyder

Richard and Mimi Fariña /Mimi Fariña

Formed 1963, in Greenwich Village, NY. Disbanded 1966, in California.

Richard Fariña (born 1937, in New York; died April 30, 1966, in Carmel Heights, CA), dulcimer, vocals; Mimi Fariña (born Mimi Baez, April 30, 1945, in Boston, MA), guitar, autoharp, vocals.

A beat-inspired novelist, songwriter, and dulcimer player, Richard Fariña produced three memorable albums in a duo that he shared with his second wife, Mimi Fariña, the younger sister of Joan Baez. One of the most promising performers of early 1960s folk music, Fariña became one of its most tragic characters when a motorcycle accident, following a party for the release of his first novel, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like up to Me,* prematurely ended his life. The son of Irish Cuban parents who emigrated to the United States in the 1920s, Fariña divided his childhood between Cuba, Brooklyn, and northern Ireland, where he



became a member of the IRA before being deported by the British government. After moving to Greenwich Village, he took an active role in the community's folk music scene. An early friend of Bob Dylan, he recorded an album with Dylan (who used the pseudonym "Blind Boy Grunt") and Eric Von Schmidt in 1963. He married singer-songwriter Caroline Hester in 1960, and they were divorced shortly after he fell in love with Mimi Baez, who he met and married in Paris in 1963. Moving to California, near Big Sur, and forming a folk duo with Mimi, Fariña continued to attract acclaim for his songwriting. His song "Pack up Your Sorrows" was covered by Johnny Cash and June Carter, Peter, Paul and Mary, Judy Collins, and Joan Baez. "Reno Nevada" has been re-recorded by Iain Matthews and Fairport Convention, who also recorded his song "The Quiet Joys of Brotherhood." Fariña was also hailed for his prose writing. He wrote several plays and magazine articles. His novel, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like up to Me*, was published in 1966 and reissued in 1983. Mimi, who continued to carry Fariña's name, worked with an improvisational acting troupe in the late 1960s. Although she recorded an album with Tom Jans, *Take Heart*, in 1971 and a solo album, *Solo*, in 1985, much of her attention has focused on a non-profit organization, Bread and Roses, that she founded to provide musical performances in hospitals and prisons.

what to buy: *Best Of* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1971/1988, prod. Maynard Solomon) assembles 26 tracks from Richard and Mimi Fariña's albums *Celebration for a Grey Day* and *Reflections in a Crystal Wind*, and includes the original recordings of "Pack up Your Sorrows" and "Reno, Nevada" and the memorable, politically tinged songs "Sell-out Agitation Waltz" and "House Un-American Blues Activity Dream."

what to buy next: Released two years after Fariña's death, *Memories* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1971, prod. Maynard Solomon) includes studio outtakes, live cuts recorded at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, and several songs that the Fariñas recorded with Joan Baez.

the rest:
Celebrations for a Grey Day ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
Reflections in a Crystal Wind ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966)

worth searching for: A live version of *Celebration for a Grey Day* is included on the multi-artist CD *Folk Music at Newport, Part 1* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1995, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin).

solo outings:
Mimi Fariña:
(With Tom Jans) *Take Heart* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1971)
Solo ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1985)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Jack Kerouac
▶▶ Bob Dylan, Eric Von Schmdt, Tom Rush

Craig Harris

Farmer's Daughters

Formed in Fries, VA.

Becky Barlow, bass, hammered dulcimer, vocals; Susan Gleason, guitar, vocals; Trish Kilby, clawhammer banjo; Helen White, fiddle, guitar, vocals.

This all-female group plays old-time fiddle tunes as well as classic country songs. Their strength is in the lyrical quality of Helen White's fiddle and the rhythmic clawhammer banjo of Trish Kilby.

what to buy: *Farmer's Daughters* ♪♪♪ (Heritage, 1997, prod. Farmer's Daughters) combines old-time rave-ups such as "June Apple" and "Sugar in the Gourd" with old country standards such as the Carter Family's "Bring Back My Blue-Eyed Boy to Me" and Hank Williams's "Alabama Waltz." A medley of "Little Sadie" and "Sail Away Ladies" is the highlight of this recording while the lowlight happens to be when the instrumentals are set aside for a song. If the strength of this band is their instrumental abilities, the weakness is their voices, which detract more than they add to the song.

influences:
◀◀ J.P. Fraley, the Carter Family
▶▶ Primitive Characters

Steve Gardner

Stephen Fearing

Born January 12, 1963, in Horseshoe Bay, British Columbia, Canada.

Stephen Fearing's a stealth performer, lurking between the waves of singer-songwriters that sputter across North America. He's been recording for the last decade and performing for longer than that, garnering admiring fans but no major following—yet. Fearing, a Canadian, spent much of his youth in Ireland and the United States, and his music has been touched by the styles of each country. If anything, he's less Celtic than his years in the Emerald Isle would suggest; there's a funky underpinning to his music that sounds very American. He shares with the Irish an undeniable romantic spirit and a love of the sound of words. The model for his acoustic guitar style was John Martyn, whom he heard while living in Ireland. Per-

haps his greatest inspiration is the Canadian singer Willie P. Bennett, who's become a friend as well as a hero. (Bennett tours as part of Fred Eaglesmith's band.) Fearing's lyrics are elaborate patterns of imagery and sound; he's been moving toward streamlining his writing, but it's still a feast for the literate listener. His melodies are simple but sophisticated, and his voice is friendly, broad-ranging, and rich with nuance. He sometimes has performed with Tom Wilson and Colin Linden as Blackie and the Rodeo Kings.

what to buy: Fearing's *Industrial Lullaby* ♪♪♪♪½ (True North, 1997, prod. Colin Linden) has been termed a "breakthrough" album; publicityspeak, yeah, but this time it's true. The classic Fearing themes of innocents seeking justice, lovers seeking solace, and loners seeking connection are carried through from the songs to the production and instrumental arrangements. Recorded mostly live (with very few overdubs) with personnel from earlier albums in minimalist, industrial studio spaces, it's an exquisite package that marks the depth of the relationship between Fearing and producer Linden.

what to buy next: Fearing's previous album, *The Assassin's Apprentice* ♪♪♪♪ (True North/Cooking Vinyl, 1993, prod. Steve Berlin), boasting guest appearances by Sarah McLachlan and Richard Thompson, is the only one of his albums released in the United States at press time, though *Industrial Lullaby* may soon be available stateside.

the rest:
Out to Sea ♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1988/True North, 1991)
Blue Line ♪♪♪½ (True North, 1991)

solo outings:
Blackie and the Rodeo Kings:
High or Hurtin': The Songs of Willie P. Bennett ♪♪♪♪ (True North, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ John Martyn, Neil Young, Willie P. Bennett, Richard Thompson, Bruce Cockburn, Ferron
▶▶ Fred Eaglesmith

Pamela Murray Winters

Mike Fenton

Born July 10, 1948, in Sheffield, England.

Mike Fenton, a premier autoharp performer residing in Worcestershire, England, has devoted the last 12 years to presenting school programs, appearing at festivals, and teaching autoharp workshops in the British Isles and in the United States. Fenton has been the Galax Autoharp Champion three times and was inducted into the Autoharp Hall of Fame in July 1997. He is known for having one of the fastest and cleanest techniques for playing fiddle tunes on the autoharp, note for note, by using a thumb lead style. Another defining characteristic of his playing is his wonderful open chording on a diatonic autoharp, weaving a magical web with rich chords. Fenton's repertoire includes many well-loved traditional pieces, from beautiful Turlough O'Carolan melodies on his diatonic autoharps to old-timey tunes played on his clawtoharp (an autoharp tuned to include drone strings). Fenton has a nice singing voice and offers some sacred songs, some mountain music, a touch of bluegrass, and a bit of country, which he accompanies in a Carter Family style.

what to buy: *The Best of Mike Fenton 1984–1996* ♪♪♪♪ (Heritage Records, 1996, prod. Mike Fenton, Heritage Records) is a compilation of previous Heritage Record releases and a good mixture of instrumentals and vocal numbers. The autoharp playing reigns supreme throughout, especially highlighted on an autoharp duet with Carole Outwater on "Seamus O'Brien" and his signature fiddle tune, "Rock the Cradle Joe." Fenton is joined on a few selections by Willard Gayheart, Marvin Cockram, Jesse Lovell, Bobby Patterson, and the Mountain Ramblers. Fenton's daughter Natalie adds a nice flute to "Endearing Young Charms." No Fenton compilation would be complete without a sample of his work with the schoolchildren of the English countryside. "Bread and Fishes" is a wonderful example of the eager participation that Fenton is able to encourage in his young audiences. A heartwarming example of Fenton's songwriting talent is "My Privilege," a tribute to the Carter Family that describes how fortunate he feels having known both Maybelle and Sara Carter. This is Fenton's only recording on CD, but any of his recordings are available from Heritage Records, Box 290, Galax, VA 24333.

the rest:
My Privilege ♪♪♪ (Heritage Records, 1985)
Accent on Autoharp ♪♪♪½ (Heritage Records, 1992)
Live at the Downs ♪♪♪½ (Heritage Records, 1993)
Frolicsome! ♪♪♪ (Heritage Records, 1994)
Move over with Mike ♪♪♪ (Heritage Records, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ The Everly Brothers, Doc Watson, Bill Clifton, Eddie Cochran, the Carter Family
▶▶ Bryan Bowers, Les Gustafson-Zook

Heidi Cerrigione

Ferron

Born Ferron Foissy, June 2, 1952, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Emotional lyricism is set to highly syncopated, acoustic guitar–rooted arrangements by singer-songwriter Ferron, who was raised in Toronto and British Columbia and is based in Seattle. Although her early 1980s albums, *Testimony* and *Shadow on a Dime*, were released on her own label (Lucy Records) and distributed by Holly Near's label, Redwood made her a favorite of women's music audiences. Ferron's highly enthusiastic performances and recordings on Warner Bros. and Capitol-distributed Chameleon have enabled her songs to transcend borders—geographical or gender-based. Ferron first attracted attention in Canadian folk music coffeehouses in the early 1970s. Her first two albums, *Ferron* and *Ferron Backed Up*, were self-produced and available, until recently, only in Canada. After meeting and befriending Gayle Scott, an American photographer working on a Canadian film project, Ferron agreed to have Scott take over Ferron's management and help her to form her own label, Lucy Records/Penknife Productions, Ltd., in 1980. Raising $27,000 to record and release her first real studio album, *Testimony*, Ferron spearheaded contemporary folk music. Her follow-up recording, *Shadows on a Dime*, helped solidify her reputation. In 1985, Ferron received a Canadian Arts Council grant to write songs and take piano lessons for a year. When the grant ran out, she continued to work as a carpenter's assistant and bartender, and at a day care center. *Phantom Center* marked Ferron's return to music in 1990. Her subsequent albums—*Resting with the Question*, *Not a Still Life*, *Driver*, and *Still Riot*—continue to showcase her well-conceived compositions.

what to buy: Ferron's albums since 1990 incorporate an array of session players, texturally coloring her songs with instrumental innovation and soulful vocal harmonies. *Not a Still Life* ♪♪♪♪ (Cherrywood Station, 1992) was recorded live at the Great American Music Hall and offers a representative sampling of Ferron's early work.

what to buy next: *Testimony* ♪♪♪½ (Redwood, 1982) and *Shadows on a Dime* ♪♪♪½ (Redwood, 1989) are Ferron at her studio best. With scaled-down arrangements centered around her acoustic guitar and husky alto, songs take a musical exploration of the heart.

what to avoid: Ferron's first two albums, *Ferron* and *Ferron Backed Up*, were self-produced with very limited budgets and a sound quality that leaves much to be desired. Although they went out of print as quickly as they were released, Redwood rereleased them in the late 1980s. While songs on the two albums show hints of her future talents, Ferron's vocals have not yet developed and leave the listener disappointed.

the rest:
Phantom Center ♪♪♪ (Earthbeat, 1990)
Resting with the Question ♪♪♪ (Cherrywood Station, 1992)
Driver ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1994)
Polvo ♪♪♪½ (PolyGram, 1995)
Still Riot ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Joan Baez, Karla Bonoff, Cris Williamson, Holly Near
▶▶ Ani DiFranco, the Indigo Girls

Craig Harris

Fiddle Fever

Formed 1980, in New York, NY. Disbanded 1984.

Matt Glaser, fiddle; Evan Stover, mandolin-fiddle; Jay Ungar, mandolin-fiddle; Russ Barenberg, acoustic guitar; Molly Mason, acoustic bass.

With a repertoire that included bluegrass, folk, Cajun, and swing jazz, Fiddle Fever bridged the traditional sounds of America's hill country and the modern strains of progressive new-grass. An outgrowth of the jazz-influenced string band community that sprung up in New York's Greenwich Village during the mid-1970s, Fiddle Fever was marked by its distinctive three-fiddle arrangements. Mandolin and fiddle players Jay Ungar and Evan Stover had previously worked with David Bromberg's band. Fiddler Matt Glaser, a former member of the Central Park Sheiks, and acoustic guitarist Russ Barenberg, formerly of Country Cooking, first played together in the bluegrass bands the New York All Stars and Breakfast Special. In 1977, they joined with banjo player Tony Trischka in Heartlands. Although that group failed to release an album, they performed on Barenberg's solo debut, *Cowboy Calypso*. Despite its impact on the evolution of bluegrass, Fiddle Fever was only together for a few years and disbanded shortly after the release of the group's second album, *Waltz of the Wind*, in 1984. Its recording of Jay Ungar's instrumental, "Ashokan Farewell," was used as a theme of Ken Burns's PBS documentary on the Civil War in 1991.

what to buy: *The Best of Fiddle Fever* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Fiddle Fever, Glenn Berger) is a sampler of the band's two albums. Original instrumentals, including Glaser's "Poto and Cabengo," Stover's "Calling Jesse," and Ungar's "Ashokan Farewell" and "Melt Down at Indian Point," are balanced by innovative arrangements of traditional fiddle tunes and Bob Wills songs.

what to buy next: *Fiddle Fever* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1981, prod. Fiddle Fever) captures the group in its earliest formation. In addition to performing two Bob Wills songs—"Stay All Night" and "Party for the Old Folks"—the quintet showcases their compositional skills. Stover shows his eccentric musical vision with "Calling Jesse," while Ungar displays his versatility with two instrumentals—"Ashokan Farewell" and "Melt Down at Indian Point"—and a Cajun-ized ditty, "You Low Down Dirty Dog."

the rest:
Waltz of the Wind ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)

influences:

- Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys, Bill Monroe & His Bluegrass Boys, Gid Tanner & His Skillet Lickers, the Woodstock Mountain Revue
- Nashville Bluegrass Band, Tim O'Brien, Chesapeake

see also: *Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, Russ Barenberg*

Craig Harris

editor's choice
9 dobro albums

Jerry Douglas, *Slide Rule* (Sugar Hill)

Various Artists, *The Great Dobro Sessions* (Sugar Hill)

Jerry Douglas & Peter Rowan, *Yonder* (Sugar Hill)

Josh Graves, *King of the Dobro* (CMH)

Flatt & Scruggs, *Foggy Mountain Banjo* (Columbia)

Norman Blake (and Tut Taylor), *Back Home in Sulphur Springs* (Rounder)

Rob Ickes, *Hard Times* (Sugar Hill)

Mike Auldridge, *Mike Auldridge* (Flying Fish)

Sally van Meter, *All in Good Time* (Sugar Hill)

Figgy Duff /Pamela Morgan

Formed 1974, in Newfoundland, Canada. Disbanded 1993.

Pamela Morgan, vocals, acoustic guitar, tin whistle, piano, synth; Noel Dinn, drums, percussion, bodhrán, piano, backing vocals; Dave Panting, bass, mandolin, backing vocals; Geoff Butler, accordion, flute; Rob Laidlaw, bass; Art Stoyles, button accordion.

Figgy Duff was a Newfoundland equivalent to the pioneering British folk rock bands Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, and the Albion Country Band. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the group's repertoire emphasized new arrangements of traditional ballads and tunes they learned from rural Newfoundlanders. Later in the 1980s, however, the group began to perform original songs written by Dinn and Morgan. This change was reflected on Figgy Duff's third album, *Weather out the Storm*, which featured a 50-50 split between original and traditional material. What also marked *Weather out the Storm* as a significant stage in Figgy Duff's evolution was the change from a semi-acoustic sound to dense textures where electronic keyboards were more prominent. *Downstream*, Figgy Duff's last full-length studio effort, moved even further in that contemporary direction. All of the songs were original, and the band had essentially become Morgan, Dinn, and others brought in for recording sessions. Figgy Duff basically stopped on July 26, 1993, when Noel Dinn passed away. Subsequently, Pamela Morgan compiled *Figgy Duff: A Retrospective, 1974–1993* and began developing a solo career. Morgan's first solo album, *On a Wing and a Prayer,* was released in 1996 and featured two songs co-written by Dinn and Morgan that were previously unrecorded—"One Heart" and "Streets of the Night." Also included was Dinn's eloquent solo composition "Heart of Darkness." The rest of the album was taken up by Morgan's originals and a moving interpretation of the traditional ballad "Blackwater Side." Morgan produced Anita Best's *Crosshanded*, a completely *a capella* collection of Newfoundland folk songs, and late in 1997 she brought out *Amber Christmas*, a fantastic seasonal set starring Morgan herself along with many other Newfoundland performers, including Anita Best, Dave Panting, Rick Hollett, George Morgan, and Serguei Tchepournov.

what to buy: *Figgy Duff: A Retrospective, 1974–1993* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Amber Music, 1995, prod. Pamela Morgan) is an excellent overview of Figgy Duff's career, since the tracks document the group's evolution from its beginning years as an acoustic-based band focusing on traditional ballads and tunes to its later years as a folk-rooted but very contemporary Celtic pop group. As added bonuses, this CD includes two previously unreleased tracks and the accompanying booklet has a great photo gallery with shots from all periods of the band's history.

what to buy next: Any of the group's albums are excellent, but they're all different from one another. The first album, *Figgy Duff* ♪♪♪♪ (Hagdown, 1988/Amber Music, 1997, prod. Gary Furniss, Tom Treumuth), features fairly simple (but no less dramatic) arrangements of traditional songs and dance tunes. Their second release, *After the Tempest* ♪♪♪♪ (Hypnotic/A&M, 1982/Amber Music, 1997, prod. Tom Treumuth), also focuses on traditional material, but the arrangements are more sophisticated with the use of electronic keyboards to fill out the sound. *Weather out the Storm* ♪♪♪♪ (Hypnotic/A&M, 1990/Amber Music, 1997, prod. Tom Treumuth, Gary Furniss) didn't come out until eight years later, and marked even more changes. Half of the album consists of original songs, and keyboards are a larger part of the dense textures. Figgy Duff's final effort was an even more radical departure. There are no traditional pieces on the moody *Downstream* ♪♪♪♪ (Hypnotic/A&M, 1993/Amber Music, 1997, prod. Noel Dinn, Pamela Morgan, Daryn Barry, Gary Furniss) and the accordions and fiddles are just a small part of the lush instrumental textures. Try 'em all or pick the one that appeals to your taste.

worth searching for: Pamela Morgan and Noel Dinn were deeply inspired by fiddler Emile Benoit and co-produced and co-arranged his *Vive La Rose* ♪♪♪♪ (Amber Music, 1992). Also in a traditional vein was *The Colour of Amber* ♪♪♪♪½ (Amber Music, 1992), for which Morgan teamed up with fellow Newfoundland folk singer Anita Best.

solo outings:

Pamela Morgan:

On a Wing and a Prayer ♪♪♪♪ (Amber Music, 1998)

influences:

◀◀ Emile Benoit, Rufus Guinchard, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span

▶▶ Rawlins Cross, the Great Big Sea, Anita Best, Loreena McKennitt

Ken Roseman

Filé

Formed 1983, in LA.

Members include: Ward Lormand, accordion, vocals; David Egan, piano, vocals; D'Jalma Garnier, fiddle, guitar, banjo, vocals; Kevin Shearin, bass; Peter Stevens, drums.

Combining elements of zydeco, blues, and swing, Filé is one of the most progressive bands playing any form of Cajun music.

what to buy: *La Vie Marron (The Runaway Life)* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Filé, David Rachou) boasts a new lineup, and finds Filé leaning more heavily on its blues roots without sacrificing any of its Cajun boisterousness.

the rest:

Cajun Dance Band ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)

2 Left Feet ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Beausoleil, the Hackberry Ramblers, Zachary Richard

▶▶ Beau Jocque & the Zydeco Hi-Rollers, Evangeline

Bob Cannon

Sally Fingerett

See: Four Bitchin' Babes

Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

Formed 1983, in Takoma Park, MD.

Cathy Fink (born August 9, 1953, in Baltimore, MD) guitar, banjo, vocals; Marcy Marxer (born February 26, 1956, in MI), guitar, hammered dulcimer, accordion, vocals.

Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer have made their greatest impact with acoustic-based children's music. Their albums have received numerous awards from *Parent's Choice Magazine* and the American Library Association. Fink and Marxer first worked together on Fink's 1982 solo album, *Doggone My Time*, a bluegrass and string band–influenced album that also included Mike Auldridge on dobro and Michael Stein on fiddle. Although they recorded an adult-oriented album, *Fink and Marxer*, in 1989, they've focused since on children's music. A folk-rooted banjo and guitar player and yodeler, Fink launched her musical career in Montreal in 1973. While she was initially a soloist, she soon joined up with Canadian singer-songwriter Duck Donald. During the six years that they worked as a duo, Fink and Donald released three albums, including Fink's first children's album, *I'm Gonna Tell*, in 1980. The duo's success, however, was short-lived. By 1981, they had disbanded, with Fink relocating to Takoma Park, Maryland, where she still lives. Fink recorded several memorable solo albums. *Grandma Slid down the Mountain*, a children's album, was co-produced by Ken Whitley, the producer of Raffi's early albums. *The Leading Role* is a heartfelt tribute to the women of country music and includes songs by Ola Belle, Ferron, Hazel Dickens, and Alice Gerrard.

Marxer, who plays guitar, mandolin, and percussion, cut her musical teeth in a Michigan-based group, the Bosom Buddies

String Band. Although she first played with Fink as a session player, their partnership has continued to grow and their albums, since 1989, have all been collaborative efforts. Fink and Marxer have worked extensively with topical singer-songwriter Si Kahn. In addition to producing and performing on Kahn's albums, *I Have Seen Freedom* and *Goodtimes and Bedtimes*, they joined Kahn on a cassette tape version of the popular children's books *The Runaway Bunny* and *Goodnight Moon* that was produced by Harper-Row.

what to buy: *A Cathy and Marcy Collection for Kids* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer) brings together 15 tracks from their albums of children's music. While several songs, including "Brush Your Teeth" and "January, February, March," make educational lessons amusing, other tunes aim straight for the funny bone. "Jump Children" is a dance-inspiring anthem, while "Peanut Butter and Jelly" is a celebration of a child's favorite foods.

what to buy next: *Blanket Full of Dreams* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996) offers a musical setting for nap time and moments of quiet reflection. An all-original outing, the collection focuses on lullabies and tender tunes, including Fink's "Goodnight, Goodnight," "All in a Night" and "Cowgirl's Lullaby" and Marxer's "Time to Sleep," "Swingtime Lullaby," and "It's Nighttime." "Grasshopper Sittin' on a Sweet Potato Vine" is a traditional fiddle tune with new humorous lyrics by Fink.

the rest:
Fink & Marxer ♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
Doggone My Time ♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Help Yourself! ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
A Parents' Home Companion ♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)

solo outings:
Cathy Fink:
Grandma Slid down the Mountain ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1984)
The Leading Role ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985)
When the Rain Comes Down ♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)

Marcy Marxer:
Jump Children ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986)

influences:
◀◀ Patsy Montana, the Coon Creek Girls
▶▶ Si Kahn, John McCutcheon, Lou and Peter Berryman

Craig Harris

Alec Finn

See: De Danann

Archie Fisher

Born in Glasgow, Scotland.

The product of a musical household, Archie Fisher has become one of the seminal figures of the Scottish folk revival. He was born in Glasgow, to a Gaelic-speaking island mother and a police inspector father, both of whom sang all the time. He has seven sisters, who acted, he says, as "a catchment area for fellow musicians," but also as an audience and as singing partners. During the early 1960s, Archie and his sister Ray spent some time in a skiffle band before recording their first sides of Scottish music in 1963. They were joined by their parents and sisters on a 1965 release credited to "The Fisher Family." When Ray married and moved away, Archie began to establish himself as a top songwriter, guitarist, and vocalist. By the late 1960s, he had made many appearances on television shows, including the popular *Here and Now,* and many on BBC Schools Radio, where his original songs were used as illustrations of themes of industrialization. Many of his original songs became part of the Scottish folk repertoire through these appearances. During the 1970s he toured with Irish performers Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, and arranged and produced several of their albums. During the 1980s, he toured and recorded as a duo with Canadian singer and instrumentalist Garnet Rogers.

In addition to his career as a performer, Fisher has also been an important organizer and presenter of traditional music. From 1988 to 1992 he directed the Edinburgh Folk Festival. He produced radio features and documentaries for BBC Radio Tweed in southern Scotland and eventually launched the BBC show *Traveling Folk*, which he has hosted for more than a decade.

what to buy: *Sunsets I've Galloped Into* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1988, prod. Garnet Rogers) is a collection of recently written songs, some from Fisher's pen and some from others'. Fisher's own pieces include "The Shipyard Apprentice," a song he wrote back during the 1970s, and "The Black Horse," a recitation, or, as he puts it, a "song without a melody." Songs by others include Graham Miles's "Yonder Banks," Kieran Goss's "All That You Ask Me," and Stewart MacGregor's "The Presence," all fine songs that sound great in Fisher's smooth baritone. A few traditional songs round out the package. The sound is fuller and more produced than on Fisher's previous albums, owing to the presence of piano, bass, and synthesizers as well as guitars, flute, and fiddle, played by accompanists Garnet Rogers and David Woodhead.

what to buy next: Archie Fisher's classic LP *The Man with a Rhyme* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1977/1997, prod. Sandy Paton) has recently been reissued on CD. It features mostly traditional songs and a few new ones written in the traditional mold. It contains Fisher's classic songs "The Witch of the West-Mer-Lands" and "Dark-Eyed Molly," which were made famous in folk circles by Stan Rogers. Among the traditional songs, "The Wounded Whale," which Fisher put together from versions noted in whalers' log-books, is particularly interesting, as are the two Jacobite songs "Twa Bonnie Maidens" and "Welcome Royal Charlie." The love song "Helen of Kirkconnell Lea" was recorded at the original sessions but did not fit on the LP version; it is included here as a bonus track. In addition to his own guitar, Fisher is accompanied by the Ladies of the Lake: Wendy Grossman (concertina, banjo, dulcimer), Kathy Westra (cello), Lani Herrmann (fiddle), Ann Mayo Muir (flute), and Lorraine Lee (dulcimer). Fisher's Topic LP from 1976, *Will Ye Gang, Love* ♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1976/Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Tony Engle, Tony Russell), has been reissued in the Green Linnet Celtic Classics series. It contains Fisher's gentle voice and guitar performing traditional songs of various types as well as songs he wrote himself. Among the former, one song was learned from Jeannie Robertson, but most seem to have drawn on the great collections of Gavin Greig and Dean Christie. A particularly interesting one is a work song sung by oyster-dredgers, whose lyrics are obtuse but beautiful. Among the original songs, "Lindsay" is one of Fisher's best-known "traditionalesque" numbers, while "Men O' Worth" deals with the contemporary problems of the shift from a farming and fishing economy to an industrial one in northeast Scotland. In addition to Fisher's guitar, Allan Barty plays fiddle and mandola, and John Tams adds melodeons.

the rest:
Archie Fisher ♪♪♪ (Celtic Music, 1968)

worth searching for: *The Fisher Family* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1965) is a collector's item, an LP featuring Archie and his sisters Ray, Cilla, and Audrey, as well as his parents. *Off the Map* ♪♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1986) is a live album of Archie with Garnet Rogers, and it's one of his best collections of traditional and original songs.

influences:

- Ewan MacColl

If you like Steve Fisher, you might also like:

- Stan Rogers, Garnet Rogers, Ray Fisher, Cilla Fisher

Steve Winick

Steve Fisher

Born November 24, 1954, in Tulsa, OK.

Steve Fisher is a rousing Texas singer-songwriter who specializes in original songs that tell stories from the bottom of the heart. He writes about gambling old spinsters ("Aunt Martha"), innocence lost in a whisper ("Childhood Days"), and keeping the faith ("The Unbeliever"). Playing his old sunburst Martin guitar, Fisher has toured extensively in America ("There isn't a coffeehouse I don't know") and has enjoyed major success as a winner at the Kerrville Folk Festival. He started playing piano and guitar at age 14, influenced primarily by Elton John and Neil Young. While attending Texas A&M, he brought the family piano with him so that he could practice his songs. He found work selling oil field equipment in Houston after college, but kept up his singing and songwriting in area clubs. In 1984 he joined a Southern-rock band playing mandolin and keyboards, and learned how to entertain rowdy audiences with his between-songs storytelling. In 1987, Fisher settled in Longview, Texas, and began playing McCann's Street Bar and Grill as its chief performing musician. He recorded the now out-of-print, self-produced cassette *That's My Toy* in 1989. After releasing another cassette collection of his songs, *Nobody Home*, in 1991, the cassette and its title track were brought to the attention of Waterbug Records. In 1995 Fisher compiled songs from both his previous cassettes and some new originals into one compact disc, *A Boy's Life in Texas*. The beckoning open road, strangers intent on unlocking mysteries, and love entanglements are some of Fisher's broader themes, which get plenty of airplay at his concerts.

what's available: *A Boy's Life in Texas* ♪♪♪ (Waterbug Music, 1995, prod. Steve Fisher) is a selection of 15 country/folk tunes that capture Fisher's particular brand of Southern storytelling at its best. *Zassafras Music News* says: "Fisher's art is like light hitting the surface of a river . . . this is music that takes its time."

worth searching for: *The Waterbug Sampler* ♪♪ (Waterbug Music, 1997, prod. various) is a collection of songs by Waterbug artists and has one new song by Fisher entitled "The Time Is Now."

influences:

- James Taylor, B.W. Stevenson, Van Morrison, John Prine, Guy Clark

If you like Steve Fisher, you might also like:

- Chuck Brodsky, Loudon Wainwright, Bill Morrissey, John Gorka, Dar Williams

TJ McGrath

Five Chinese Brothers

Formed 1987, in New York, NY.

Tom Meltzer, vocals, rhythm guitar, mandolin; Paul Foglino, bass, vocals, banjo; Neil Thomas, piano, organ, accordion, vocals; Kevin Trainor, lead guitar, vocals, ocarina (1987–94); Stephen B. Antonakos, guitars, vocals (1994–present); Dave Helberg, drums (1987–91); Charlie Shaw, drums (1991–95); Pete DeMeo, drums (1996–present).

The core of this urban country band met at Columbia University during the early 1980s, when Meltzer and Foglino played in the Special Guests (not a country group). Trainor and Thomas at that time were in Elmo & the Doobers, mixing country classics, humorous originals, jazzy jams, and "Amazing Grace." Meltzer does the majority of the Brothers' singing and songwriting, specializing in a convincing astonishment at the passage of time and a general bemusement regarding the opposite gender. The music looks back to classic 1950s models without sounding self-consciously retro, with bluesy slide guitar and lots of accordion for variety.

what to buy: After the quintet released a number of singles on the Diesel Only label (in earlier versions than appeared on album), it released its debut album, *Singer Songwriter Beggarman Thief* ♪♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1994, prod. Five Chinese Brothers), which contains many songwriting gems, including "Paul Cezanne," perhaps the only country song about Cubism. (The label's name is also its toll-free number).

what to buy next: *Let's Kill Saturday Night* ♪♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1997, prod. Five Chinese Brothers) returns to the strong level of songwriting found on the debut, while sounding more energetic than ever.

the rest:
Stone Soup ♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1995)
A Window Shopper's Christmas ♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Merle Haggard, George Jones, Gram Parsons, the Rolling Stones

Steve Holtje

The Flatlanders

Formed 1970, in Lubbock, TX.

Jimmie Dale Gilmore, vocals, guitar; Joe Ely, vocals, harmonica, dobro, guitar; Butch Hancock, vocals, guitar; Tommy Hancock, fiddle; Syl Rice, string bass; Tony Pearson, mandolin; Steve Wesson, musical saw.

Spawned during roughly the same era as the *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*–era Byrds and the Flying Burrito Brothers, the Flatlanders represented that period's clash between traditional and radical values: the attempt to build on the legacies of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams while gaining a higher consciousness and rejecting the outdated symbols of a bygone era. Perhaps the group's fatal error was to attempt this in Nashville, which didn't want to hear about such nonsense, rather than L.A., which likely would have taken to the band's lonesome west Texas warblings like it took to the Eagles and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

what's available: *More a Legend Than a Band* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Royce Clark), is a reissue of the Flatlanders' original album, which, in 1972, only saw the light of day on 8-track tape. It's one of the great lost albums and contains the seeds of a generation of west Texas talent that has since gone on to fame, if not fortune. Gilmore's tremulous voice hovers above the proceedings on most of the tracks, which include two of his finest songs, "Dallas" and "Tonight I'm Gonna Go Downtown." Wesson's musical saw may as well be a sitar amidst these country & Eastern musings. Butch Hancock contributes a handful of tunes, including the mournful "She Had Everything," while Ely settles mostly for being the session's hot-shot guitarist. Prompted by the growing reputation of these three as solo artists, Charly reissued the album in 1980, and Rounder a decade later in a slightly different configuration. Shelby S. Singleton Jr., who owned the original sessions, got into the act in 1995, re-releasing the album under the moniker Jimmie Dale Gilmore and the Flatlanders, with the then-trendy title *Unplugged* ♪♪♪♪ (Sun, 1995, comp. prod. Jim Wilson, Shelby S. Singleton Jr.). It includes two fewer tracks than the Rounder disc and substitutes for two others. The Rounder disc is the better reissue.

influences:
◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Williams, Eastern Religion 101
▶▶ Joe Ely, Butch Hancock, Jimmie Dale Gilmore

see also: *Joe Ely, Butch Hancock, Jimmie Dale Gilmore*

Daniel Durchholz

Flatt & Scruggs

Formed 1948. Disbanded 1969.

Lester Flatt (born Lester Raymond Flatt, June 19, 1914, in Overton County, TN; died May 11, 1979), guitar, mandolin; Earl Scruggs (born January 6, 1924, in Flintville, NC), banjo.

Does there exist a country music lover who hasn't heard "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" by Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs? Their in-

flatt & scruggs

Béla Fleck (l) with Tony Trischka **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

strumental virtuosity still has everyone else playing catch-up. Flatt got his start with Charlie Monroe's band before joining younger brother Bill Monroe's band in 1944. Earl Scruggs played banjo and guitar on radio, jamming with the Morris Brothers as a teenager and with John Miller and His Allied Kentuckians as an adult before joining Monroe's Blue Grass Boys in late 1944. Flatt & Scruggs heightened the quality of Monroe's sound considerably: Lester's steady, subtle guitar work and mandolin trilling perfectly supported and offset Earl's arpeggiated three-fingered banjo work, an "overdrive" technique now known as "Scruggs"-style picking. When the duo left to form the Foggy Mountain Boys in 1948, Monroe became so embittered that he didn't speak to either of them for decades.

Flatt & Scruggs signed with Mercury records and made their first solo recordings, "Rollin' in My Sweet Baby's Arms" and "Salty Dog Blues" among them. They joined Columbia Records in 1951 and increased their exposure when they began their regular show for Martha White Flour on WSM in 1953. "'Tis Sweet to Be Remembered," "Cabin in the Hills," "Cryin' My Heart out over You," and "Goin' Home" were solid hits, but by the late 1950s, bluegrass was a novelty on country radio playlists. Flatt & Scruggs had to build their career upon the flashy innovation of their music and the unusually high quality of their band (which through the years featured Mac Wiseman, Curly Seckler, Cedric Rainwater, Jim Shumate, Josh Graves, and Paul Warren). Flatt & Scruggs achieved snob appeal when they were "discovered" by the college folk crowd of the early 1960s, and their concerts at Vanderbilt University and Carnegie Hall were mainstream career highlights. In 1962 their version of *The Beverly Hillbillies* theme, "The Ballad of Jed Clampett," became the first bluegrass song to hit #1. A song written for Bea Benederet's character, "Pearl, Pearl, Pearl," also charted highly. Though the CBS sitcom demeaned country people with its ironic tone, Flatt & Scruggs made several good-natured appearances on the program, which did more for their career than all their years on the road or the radio. In 1967 the soundtrack of the film *Bonnie & Clyde* featured Flatt &

Scruggs's 1948 recording of "Foggy Mountain Breakdown"; the recording was an enormous hit and sparked a new bluegrass boom in the United States. Ironically, it was also the last career peak for the duo. While Scruggs wanted to extend traditional bluegrass music into pop, rock, and jazz, Flatt resisted, as did many of the group's hard-core fans. Lester left, taking the Foggy Mountain Boys—renamed the Nashville Grass, the band would be the training ground for the young Marty Stuart—with him. Though they became friendly again shortly before Flatt's death in 1979, the duo never worked together again. Flatt cemented his position as a traditionalist and publicly made up with Monroe (Scruggs would do so in 1994). Scruggs grew his hair long and (with his sons Gary and Randy) started the Earl Scruggs Revue. Though both musicians recorded many critically acclaimed LPs through the years, the music they created together remains a precious part of our American heritage.

what to buy: An immensely satisfying introduction to this influential and irreplaceable team can be found on *The Essential Flatt & Scruggs: 'Tis Sweet to Be Remembered* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia Legacy, 1997, compilation prod. Bob Irwin). This two-disc set features their biggest hits and most memorable work for Columbia.

what to buy next: Their first years as a groundbreaking solo act are smartly documented on *The Complete Mercury Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1992, compilation prod. Greg Geller). This hot 28-song collection features everything they recorded for Mercury, including previously unreleased material.

what to avoid: Don't let the title fool you. *Golden Hits* ♪ (Hollywood/IMG, 1987) is a poorly made, low-budget collection.

the rest:
Foggy Mountain Banjo ♪♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1961)
Songs of the Famous Carter Family ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1961)
At Carnegie Hall ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1962)
Live at Vanderbilt University ♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1964/1996)
(With Doc Watson) *Strictly Instrumental* ♪♪♪ (County, 1967)
Columbia Historic Edition ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982)
20 All-Time Great Recordings ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
You Can Feel It in Your Soul ♪♪♪½ (County, 1988)
(With the Johnson Mountain Boys) *Blue Ridge Cabin Home* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1990)
Don't Get above Your Raisin' ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)
Golden Era ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)
20 Greatest Hits ♪♪ (Deluxe, 1994)
On Foggy Mountain ♪♪½ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
Foggy Mountain Jamboree ♪♪♪ (County, 1996)

worth searching for: If you've just got to have everything, hit the import shops and catalog services for *Flatt & Scruggs 1948–1956* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994) (a 4-disc set), *Flatt & Scruggs 1959–1963* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1992) (a 6-disc set), and *Flatt & Scruggs 1964–1969* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994) (a 7-disc set). These sets have everything they recorded in those years, with dozens of previously unreleased studio tracks and material from live shows to boot. Pick an era and dig in.

solo outings:
Lester Flatt:
Live—Bluegrass Festival ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1986/1995)
Lester Raymond Flatt ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992)
At His Best ♪♪ (Hollywood/IMG, 1994)
Living Legend ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1995)
Greatest Performance ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1996)
Heaven's Bluegrass ♪♪ (CMH, 1996)
Pickin' Time ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1996)

Lester Flatt & Nashville Grass:
Fantastic Pickin' ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1976/1996)
Greatest Bluegrass Hits, Volume 1 ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1995)

Earl Scruggs:
Dueling Banjos ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1973/1984)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Mac Wiseman, Ralph Stanley

▶▶ The Osborne Brothers, Reno & Smiley, Ricky Skaggs, the Ghost Rockets, Steve Martin, Marty Stuart, Béla Fleck

Ken Burke

Béla Fleck /Béla Fleck and the Flecktones

Born July 10, 1958, in New York, NY. Flecktones formed 1990, in Nashville, TN.

Béla Fleck, banjo; Howard Levy, keyboards, harmonica (1990–92); Victor Lemonte Wooten, bass guitar; Roy "Future Man" Wooten, Synth-axe Drumitar.

Banjo player Béla Fleck is widely regarded as one of the most innovative and influential musicians to ever pick up the five-string. Beginning in bluegrass, Fleck was a key member of the influential New Grass Revival before taking the banjo into jazz fusion with the Flecktones and demonstrating a versatility many thought the instrument didn't possess. Born in New York, Fleck began learning the banjo at 15 and played with Tasty Licks and Spectrum before joining the New Grass Revival in

1982. He formed the Flecktones soon after the Revival disbanded in 1988.

what to buy: *Flight of the Cosmic Hippo* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1991, prod. Béla Fleck) contains piano- and harmonica-driven jazz, incorporating influences from Irish waltzes to African drumming. From the ethereal "Star of the County Down" to the soaring "Turtle Rock," this is the best Flecktones album.

what to buy next: In *Tales from the Acoustic Planet* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1995, prod. Béla Fleck), Fleck took a break from the Flecktones to record with what he called "some of my all-time favorite guys." Jazzmen Chick Corea and Branford Marsalis and pop pianist Bruce Hornsby are among those joining bluegrassers Tony Rice, Jerry Douglas, and Sam Bush for 14 songs rooted in jazz fusion coupled with infectious grooves.

the rest:

Crossing the Tracks ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980)

(With Tony Trischka and Tom Adams) *Rounder Banjo Extravaganza* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)

(With the Flecktones) *Béla Fleck and the Flecktones* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1990)

(With the Flecktones) *UFO Tofu* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1992)

(With the Flecktones) *Three Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1993)

(With the Flecktones) *Live Art* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Tony Trischka, Earl Scruggs, Charlie Parker

▶▶ Alison Brown, Pete Wernick

Douglas Fulmer

Matt Flinner

Born March 14, 1969, in Pueblo, CO.

Having been born in Colorado and lived in Utah and Idaho, mandolinist Matt Flinner has spent most of his life near the Rocky Mountains, which he sometimes credits as influencing the wide-open sound of his playing. Originally a banjo player, Flinner won the Winfield National Championship on the instrument in 1990, then began concentrating on mandolin and won the same award in that category the following year. Flinner has backed Tim & Mollie O'Brien, Tony Trischka, Sally Van Meter, Tony Furtado, and, more recently, Judith Edelman.

what's available: The fine *The View from Here* ♪♪♪½ (Compass, 1997, prod. Todd Phillips) makes for an impressive debut, with a core band of Flinner, bassist-producer Todd Phillips, and guitarist David Grier. A jazz-influenced picker, Flinner wrote all 10 of the album's instrumentals and brought in Tim O'Brien, Stuart Duncan, Darol Anger, and Mike Marshall for individual tracks.

influences:

◀◀ Béla Fleck, David Grisman, Miles Davis, the Bothy Band

see also: *Judith Edelman*

Brian Mansfield

Benton Flippen

Born July 18, 1920, in Surry County, NC.

Not simply an old-time fiddle player, Benton Flippen plays a style all his own that can express the anguish of the blues, the inspiration of gospel, and the joy of a square dance. Benton has played since the late 1940s with a number of bands, including the Green Valley Boys, the Camp Creek Boys, the Smokey Valley Boys, and the Dryhill Draggers.

what's available: *Old Time, New Times* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994) features powerful fiddle, banjo, and string band music on 27 songs recorded between 1949–93, including new and old recordings and previously unreleased radio transcriptions.

influences:

◀◀ Fiddlin' Arthur Smith, the Camp Creek Boys, the Smokey Valley Boys

▶▶ Kirk Sutphin, Fred Cockerham & Tommy Jarrell

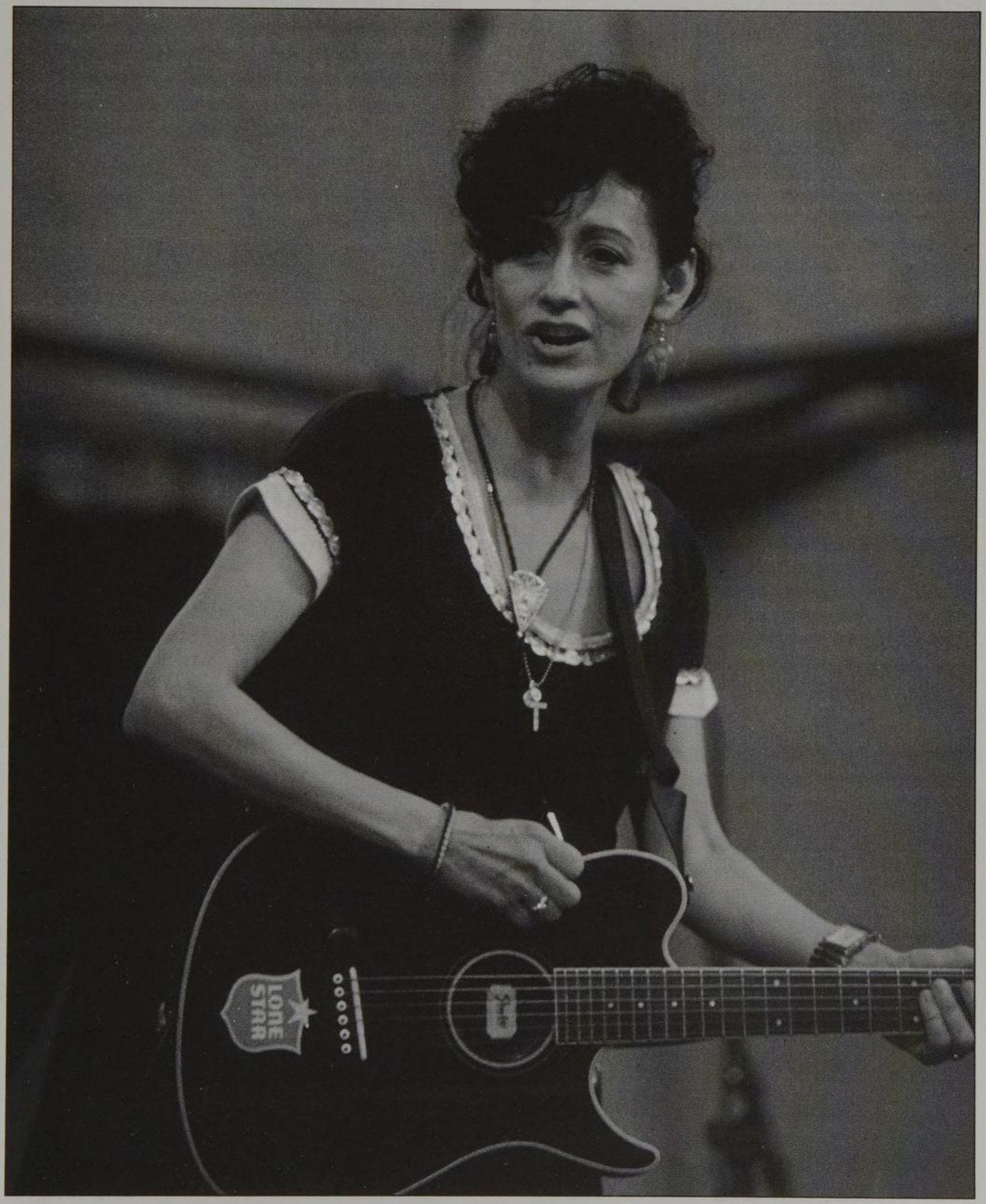
Douglas Fulmer

Rosie Flores

Born September 10, 1950, in San Antonio, TX.

Dwight Yoakam's *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.* is often held up as the "alternative" linchpin of the late 1980s new-traditionalist movement, but the real dust was kicked up by Rosie Flores's self-titled 1987 solo debut. A sassy southern California–based Texan who had apprenticed in an all-woman rock band called the Screamin' Sirens, Flores sings with a raspy authority and a fiery grace capable of straddling Tex-Mex, blues, rockabilly, and even girl-group pop. After Warner Bros. dropped her in 1988, Flores moved to Austin, Texas, and eventually signed with Oakland, California–based HighTone. Despite living in a city that helped trigger the current alternative-country boom, Flores has forsaken country-rock in favor of exploring the rawer rockabilly

Rosie Flores **(© Jack Vartoogian)**


LONE STAR

2
8
0 *robin flower*

old time music

Old Time Music (a term first coined in the 1920s) is the hillbilly music from the rural American South, which laid the foundation for all subsequent styles of country music (from bluegrass to Hank Williams to Shania Twain). It includes ancient unaccompanied ballads, topical American songs, fiddle and banjo breakdowns for dancing, sacred songs from the Primitive Baptist and Sacred Harp traditions, and a pervasive African American influence, not only from blues music, but also from the banjo (probably of African origin). Old time music began as purely a rural music but, nowadays, it's as likely to be played by software engineers, college professors, and lawyers as by farmers, blacksmiths, or coal miners. The two major instruments used in old time music are fiddle and 5-string banjo, which is played with the fingers rather than with fingerpicks. Both make liberal use of many different tunings. Other instruments used in old time music include the guitar, mandolin, autoharp, harmonica, dulcimer (Appalachian and hammered), and upright bass. Today, old time music is flourishing (after nearly dying out in the 1950s) and continues to be played informally in people's homes, at dances, and at festivals and contests. Many of the most important old time musicians have considered music an avocation rather than a career; it's still more often shared with kinfolk, friends, and neighbors than watched on a TV screen.

Suzy Thompson

roots she flaunted in a late-1970s bar band called Rosie & the Screamers. She collaborated with childhood heroes Wanda Jackson and Janis Martin on 1995's *Rockabilly Filly* and with Ray Campi on 1997's *A Little Bit of Heartache*.

what to buy: *A Honky Tonk Reprise* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1987/Rounder, 1996, prod. Pete Anderson) is a reissue of her stunning 1987 self-titled Warner Bros. debut, which ranges from such neo-traditional romps as "Crying over You" and "Heartbreak Train" to such sobering ballads as "Somebody Loses, Somebody Wins" and "God May Forgive You (But I Won't)." The latter—a Harlan Howard/Bobby Braddock composition that eclipses Lyle Lovett's similar "God Will"—has been resurrected as a Flores-inspired fixture in Iris DeMent's live show. The Rounder reissue comes with six bonus tracks, including a heart melting cover of Skeeter Davis's "End of the World."

the rest:
After the Farm ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1992)
Once More with Feeling ♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1993)
(With Wanda Jackson and Janis Martin) *Rockabilly Filly* ♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1995)
(With Ray Campi) *A Little Bit of Heartache* ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1997)

worth searching for: Rosie's faithful cover of "My Own Kind of Hat" appears on the Merle Haggard tribute *Tulare Dust* ♪♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1994, prod. Tom Russell, Dave Alvin).

influences:
◀◀ Wanda Jackson, Brenda Lee, Patsy Cline
▶▶ Iris DeMent, k.d. lang

David Okamoto

Robin Flower

Born 1950, in Cleveland, OH.

Robin Flower has not only the musical chops on mandolin and guitar to win the admiration of such new-acoustic-music peers as Darol Anger and Laurie Lewis, but also the skillful feminist songwriting sensibility to be a hero in the women's music movement. This ability to succeed in two very different scenes at once made her one of the most interesting figures of the early '80s. She grew up in a working-class section of Cleveland. Her mother was from Kentucky and sang Appalachian ballads and both parents played harmonica and were active in the union, civil rights, and anti-war movements. At 22, Flower quit her post-office job, bought a Harley-Davidson, and traveled to the West Coast. She met banjo player Mary Wings in Portland, Oregon, and was so impressed she took up the guitar and mandolin. After playing in an all-female, Latin-rock band, Be Be K'Roche, and an all-female jazz band, Baba Yoga, Flower recorded her first solo album on her own label, then graduated to Flying Fish. After releasing four albums in nine years, she disappeared from the national scene.

what's available: *1st Dibs* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish Records, 1984, prod. Mitch Greenhill) is a splendid showcase for Flower's picking and songwriting. Laurie Lewis and Crystal Reeves provide strong, flashing fiddle lines for Flower to perforate with her spray of prickly mandolin notes. Flower's songs are full of

strong, independent women, but she deflates any hint of self-righteousness with a sly wit. *Babies with Glasses* ♪♪ (Flying Fish Records, 1987, prod. Robin Flower), billed to Robin Flower & the Bleachers, reinforces the emphatic syncopation of her music by employing a rhythm section on every cut. The integration of electric and acoustic instruments isn't always smooth and the writing is uneven, but there are still special moments.

worth searching for: *More Than Friends* ♪♪½ (Spaniel Records, 1979, prod. Robin Flower, Susan Colson) is Flower's self-released debut and features only five vocal numbers among the 11 cuts. *Green Sneakers* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish Records, 1982, prod. Terry Garthwaite) is the best example of Flower's acoustic picking. Accompanied by such West Coast stalwarts as Lewis, Barbara Higbie, Sally Van Meter, and Beth Weil, Flower puts her songs through surprising chord changes and jazzy substitute chords and never loses her joyful momentum.

influences:

◀◀ Mary Wings, Aunt Molly Jackson, Barbara Dane

▶▶ Ferron, Laurie Lewis, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer

Geoffrey Himes

Flying Burrito Brothers

Formed 1968, in Los Angeles, CA.

Gram Parsons, vocals, guitar (1968–70); Chris Hillman, vocals, guitar, bass (1968–72); Chris Etheridge, bass (1968–75); "Sneaky" Pete Kleinow, steel guitar (1968–71, 1974–present); Michael Clarke, drums, harmonica (1969–72); Bernie Leadon, guitar, banjo, dobro, vocals (1969–71); Rick Roberts, guitar, vocals (1970–73); Al Perkins, pedal steel (1971–72); Byron Berline, fiddle (1971–73); Roger Bush, bass (1971–73); Kenny Wertz, guitar (1971–73); Al Munde, banjo, guitar (1972–73); Don Beck, pedal steel (1972–73); Erik Dalton, drums (1972–73); John Beland, guitar (1981–present); Joe Scott Hill, bass, vocals (1974–present); Floyd "Gib" Gilbeau, fiddle, guitar, vocals (1974–present); Gene Parsons, drums (1974–present); Skip Battin, bass (1976–present); Ed Ponder, drums; Jim Goodall (1985–88).

Formed by ex-Byrds Chris Hillman and Gram Parsons, the Flying Burrito Brothers are generally considered a transition period for Parsons between the Byrds and his solo work. But the group, arguably the first to play what's now considered country-rock, still performs despite the absence of its two founders. During the early 1980s a version of the group relocated to Nashville and released a series of moderately successful country singles as the Flying Burrito Brothers and, simply, the Burrito Brothers (the biggest of which, "She Belongs to Everyone but Me," reached #16 in 1981). A group including Sneaky Pete, Skip Battin, Greg Harris, and Jim Goodall also recorded as the Flying Brothers.

what to buy: *The Gilded Palace of Sin* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1969, prod. Flying Burrito Brothers, Larry Marks, Henry Lewy) was a grand experiment that fused notions of country music, California hippie rock, and Southern soul. Parsons and Hillman were writing some of their best songs—among them "Sin City" (later cut by Dwight Yoakam) and "Hot Burrito #1" (covered by Elvis Costello)—and also covered Muscle Shoals classics "Do Right Woman" and "Dark End of the Street." For a thorough overview, *Farther Along: The Best of the Flying Burrito Brothers* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1988, prod. various) contains 21 cuts, including nine from "The Gilded Palace of Sin" and some rare outtakes.

what to buy next: Not quite the groundbreaker that *Gilded Palace* was, *Burrito Deluxe* ♪♪♪½ (A&M/Edsel, 1970, prod. Jim Dickson, Henry Lewy) nevertheless offers some fine moments in the same vein. It also contains the Burritos' version of "Wild Horses," which Mick Jagger and Keith Richards allegedly wrote for Parsons (according to the same legend, he re-arranged "Honky Tonk Woman" as "Country Honk" for the Rolling Stones).

what to avoid: The quality of the band's recordings took a sharp drop after Parsons left, so all but the most die-hard fans could live without anything recorded after the group left A&M. Be especially wary of *Eye of a Hurricane* ♪½ (One Way, 1994), a European-only release that finds the band a shell of its former self.

the rest:

The Flying Burrito Bros ♪♪♪½ (A&M/Mobile Fidelity, 1971)
Last of the Red Hot Burritos ♪♪♪ (A&M/Rebound, 1972)
Close up the Honky Tonks ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1974)
Flying Again ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975)
Airborne ♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
Sleepless Nights ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1976)
From Another Time ♪♪ (Shiloh, 1976)
Close Encounters to the West Coast ♪♪ (Relix, 1978)
Live from Europe ♪♪ (Relix, 1986)
Back to the Sweethearts of the Rodeo ♪♪ (Appaloosa, 1987)
Cabin Fever ♪♪ (Relix, 1989)
Best of the Flying Burrito Brothers ♪♪½ (Relix, 1995)
California Jukebox ♪♪ (American Harvest, 1997)
Sin City ♪♪ (Relix)

worth searching for: Byrd fanatics can seek out the import *Dim Lights, Thick Smoke and Loud, Loud Music* ♪♪ (Edsel, 1993).

influences:

◀◀ The Byrds, Hank Williams, Memphis/Muscle Shoals soul

dan fogelberg

The Eagles, Gram Parsons, the Desert Rose Band, the Jayhawks, Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Son Volt

see also: *The Byrds, Gram Parsons, Chris Hillman, Alan Munde*

Brian Mansfield

Dan Fogelberg

Born August 13, 1951, in Peoria, IL.

Dan Fogelberg was raised in the Midwest, rose to prominence on the West Coast amidst southern California's burgeoning folk-rock singer-songwriter scene of the early 1970s, and ended up in Boulder, Colorado—a fitting final destination for a "quiet man of music," to borrow one of his better-known lyrics. He dropped out of art school at the University of Illinois in 1971 and moved to Los Angeles to try his hand at a music career; he earned a deal with Columbia (eventually settling on the CBS subsidiary Full Moon/Epic). As Fogelberg's career progressed, his music veered away from the West Coast's country-pop stylings and more toward an unlikely mix of sentimental ballads and atmospheric pro-rock. The ballads are what eventually made him famous, likely on the strength of Fogelberg's distinctive high-tenor voice. He became a staple of adult-contemporary radio stations during the late 1970s and early 1980s with such hits as "Longer" and "Leader of the Band." Since the mid-1980s, Fogelberg has shown an increasing and generally healthy willingness to experiment with other styles—sometimes with refreshing results, like 1985's bluegrass-oriented *High Country Snows*, other times less successfully (1993's world-music-influenced *River of Souls*).

what to buy: Even after more than a quarter-century and a dozen albums, Fogelberg's debut, *Home Free* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972, prod. Norbert Putnam), still stands as his best work, simply because it's so unaffected by the more commercial considerations of his subsequent efforts. Such songs as "To the Morning" and "Hickory Grove" capture the innocence of his Illinois youth at an early enough stage in his career that he could still feel it pulling on him.

what to buy next: *High Country Snows* ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1985, prod. Dan Fogelberg, Marty Lewis) was a welcome venture into bluegrass, with guest appearances by the likes of Doc Watson, David Grisman, Chris Hillman, and Herb Pedersen. For a straightforward collection of chart successes, *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1982, prod. various) is a serviceable document despite its revealingly yuppified cover photo. *Portrait: The Music of Dan Fogelberg* ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1997, prod. various) covers more of Fogelberg's career and spreads the results over four discs. It's more than most will want, but it's not a bad investment for someone switching their collection from vinyl to CD.

what to avoid: *Windows and Walls* ♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1984, prod. Dan Fogelberg) represents the depths of Fogelberg's shallowness; hardly a song on here is even worth hearing. *Love Songs* ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1995, prod. various) isn't so much bad as it is unnecessary, an apparent attempt by the label to rehash Fogelberg's hits one more time after he'd moved on to a different record company.

the rest:

Souvenirs ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1974)
Captured Angel ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1975)
Nether Lands ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1977)
(With Tim Weisberg) *Twin Sons of Different Mothers* ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1978)
Phoenix ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1979)
The Innocent Age ♪♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1981)
Exiles ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1987)
The Wild Places ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1990)
Greetings from the West ♪♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1991)
River of Souls ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1993)
(With Tim Weisberg) *No Resemblance Whatsoever* ♪♪ (Giant, 1995)

worth searching for: Sony packaged three of Fogelberg's '70s albums, *Souvenirs/Captured Angel/Netherlands* ♪♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1997, prod. various) together as a budget-line box set. *Home Free* and *Captured Angel* were paired together on a 1987 cassette that can still be purchased from some retail outlets.

influences:

Cascades, Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Bruce Cockburn

Garth Brooks, Billy Dean, David Wilcox, James McMurtry

Peter Blackstock and Brian Mansfield

Red Foley

Born Clyde Julian Foley, June 17, 1910, in Blue Lick, KY. Died September 19, 1968, in Fort Wayne, IN.

Possessed of a smooth, trained baritone voice and an easy manner, Red Foley is often credited with making country music more palatable to a mainstream audience; he had several country hits that also charted on the pop hit parade, including 1950's "Chattanoogie Shoeshine Boy," which charted #1 both pop and country. Other of his #1 country hits that also were successful as pop fare included "Smoke on the Water," "Birm-

ingham Bounce," and "Goodnight, Irene" (with Ernest Tubb). He was equally at home with country boogies, sentimental traditional fare, pop-styled ballads, and such gospel numbers as "Peace in the Valley." An early country radio star on WLS' *National Barn Dance* and the *Renfro Valley Barn Dance*, Foley became host of the Prince Albert segment of the Grand Ole Opry beginning in 1946; he left in 1954 to host ABC's *Ozark Jubilee*, one of the first nationally televised country music shows. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1967.

what's available: *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991, prod. Country Music Foundation) contains a good sampling of the versatility of this country star, with original versions of such landmark hits as "Old Shep," "Tennessee Saturday Night," "Tennessee Border," "Peace in the Valley," "Alabama Jubilee," "Midnight," and "Sugarfoot Rag."

what to avoid: For years, *The Red Foley Story* **woof!** (Decca/MCA, 1964), a two-LP set of treacly remakes, was the only greatest-hits package available of this great and important artist. Avoid it.

influences:

◀◀ Bradley Kincaid, Rev. Thomas Dorsey

▶▶ Jim Reeves, Willie Nelson

Randy Pitts

Sue Foley

Born March 29, 1968, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Musician magazine made a good call when it cited Sue Foley's "little girl nudge that draws the ear in a crowded genre." Not that she's light on musicianship. She's an engaging singer not afraid to take chances with material, and with her trademark paisley Telecaster she's a whip-snap guitarist. Foley lived a while in Vancouver before moving to Austin, Texas. The toothsome redhead could have quintupled her press by tarting it up even a little, but she stuck to business and always fronted good, no-shuck bands. (Her drummers have been S.P. Leary–influenced Jason Moeller and the undisputed king of the Texas shuffle beat, Freddy "Pharoah" Walden.) Foley has toured France, Holland, Sweden, Norway, and Japan and has done big-time TV shows in her native Canada. Critics who compare her to Bonnie Raitt are blues-clueless; Foley has better material and plays more guitar than Raitt has since the 1970s.

what to buy: *Young Girl Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Antone's, 1992, prod. Derek O'Brien, George Rains) was a lauded debut that featured a winsome "(Me & My) Chauffeur Blues" that does Memphis Minnie proud and an infectious cover of Betty James's "Little Mixed Up."

what to buy next: The 1990s most upbeat bluesgrrl surprises with two well-done Dylan covers on *Big City Blues* ♪♪♪ (Antone's, 1995, prod. Stephen Bruton) and doesn't disappoint with straight-on "Howlin' for My Darlin'" and "One Hundred Dollar Bill" (originally by Howlin' Wolf and Buddy Guy, respectively). A guilty pleasure is the instrumental "Girl's Night Out" with the Antone's Fun Girls (Toni Price, Sarah Brown, etc.) whooping and yipping in the background.

the rest:
Without a Warning ♪♪ (Antone's, 1993)

influences:

◀◀ Memphis Minnie, Earl Hooker

▶▶ Debbie Babcock, Cricket Taylor

Tim Schuller

David Folks

Born June 23, 1956, in Lansing, MI.

With a style that encompasses urban and rural images, rich metaphors, spiritual themes, moving ballads, and ambitious fingerstyle guitar work, David Folks is a singer-songwriter with a special ability to reach listeners on an emotional level. Not surprisingly, Folks is gaining a well-deserved national reputation. Both his independently produced debut CD, *Roadside Park*, and his newest recording, *Refusing to View*, have earned air play in numerous folk venues, appealing to listeners who enjoy the vocal styles of Bruce Cockburn and John Gorka. A clinical psychologist by day, Folks draws his audience into a warm space of feeling and introspection, which he supports with elegant moral ambition and a touch of Zen.

what to buy: *Refusing to View* ♪♪♪♪ (Portable Recordings, 1996, prod. Michael Kind, David Folks) showcases the artist's poetic depth and instrumental excellence. "Down from the Cumberland" restates the old adage "no man is an island," or in this case a mountain, as the writer pulls his head down from the clouds and returns home from a retreat. In "The Elegance of Fools," stream-of-consciousness lyrics paint a painful picture of violence in the urban ghetto: "In the church of the NRA they tithe to the gun machine, with the blood of children and bystanders." "Hercules" contrasts a shattered illusion of grandiosity with a soothing cello line. "The Playing Field at Eton" describes seasons of youthful love: "I'll catch the dew, to

conray fontenot

bring you our holy water sweetened by the days we ran . . . on the playing field at Eton." "Duncan's Gun," an acoustic blues-flavored presentation of the Civil War, is a rude awakening for those with a propensity for romanticizing armed conflict. The closing prayer "Jahwe" imparts hope: "I am a doubting man, but I saw the evergreen glow in the moonlight, and I'm putting my heart in your hand . . . may the love in my heart be the will you impart."

what to buy next: Folks's debut CD, *Roadside Park* ♪♪♪ (Portable Recordings, 1994, prod. David Folks), features a worthy collection of original songs, along with a fine fingerstyle-guitar arrangement of the traditional Irish melody "She Moved through the Fair." "His Way" presents an artist's frustrated search for self-direction. "Wounded Man" draws on Folks's experience as a father and son, describing a rift between generations of men. Folks asks an important question in "What Is a Home?" with touching images of a janitor and a homeless woman. "Here and Now," an upbeat tune about living in the present and experiencing the Tao, provides a refreshing contrast to the artist's plaintive poetic tendencies. *Roadside Park* is a respectable first effort by a capable—although seemingly depressed—musical poet.

influences:

◀◀ The Weavers, Michael Smith, Richard Thompson, Nick Drake, Joni Mitchell, John Cage

▶▶ Jan Krist

Art Wojtowicz

Canray Fontenot

Born October 22, 1922, in L'Anse Rougeau, LA. Died July 29, 1995, in Welch, LA.

With steel blue eyes and a smile that could melt any heart, Canray Fontenot played the finest traditional Creole fiddle in Louisiana. Son of legendary accordionist Adam Fontenot, Canray grew up in a house that was constantly full of the area's musicians coming to visit with his father. His wiry bluesy fiddling deeply influenced the playing styles of Dewey Balfa, Michael Doucet, and Edward Poullard. He began working with the nephew of Amédée Ardoin, accordionist Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, and during the 1940s and early 1950s he led a string band that shared the stage with a very young Clifton Chenier. Chenier convinced Fontenot to return to music in the mid-'60s when he had given up on music. His songs "Les Barres de la Prison," "Bonsoir Moreau," and "Joe Pitre a Deux Femmes" (amongst others) are still played in updated versions by many young zydeco bands.

what to buy: *Louisiana Hot Sauce, Creole Style* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1992, prod. Chris Strachwitz) is a compilation of Fontenot in a variety of settings, including duets with Michael Doucet, the Ardoin Family, the Poullard Brothers, Freeman Fontenot, and Beausoleil.

what to buy next: Fontenot and Bois Sec stopped off in Washington, D.C., after a successful performance at the Newport Folk Festival and recorded *Les Blues du Bayou* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Melodeon, 1965, prod. Richard Spottswood). It catches them in their prime. The two never played a tune through the same way twice, but there is no lack of authority in their playing.

the rest:

Louisiana Cajun French Music from the Southwest Prairies, Vol. 2: 1964–1967 ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976)
Cajun Fiddle Styles, Vol. 1: The Creole ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1988)
La Musique Creole ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1997)

worth searching for: Side two of *The Cajuns Vol. 1* ♪♪♪♪ (Gazell, 1973, prod. Sam Charters) features Ardoin Brothers Orchestra with Fontenot. These are the only recordings of Fontenot playing with Gustave Ardoin (son of "Bois Sec" Ardoin, on accordion) who died in a tragic accident. Fontenot considered his work with Gustave to be some of his finest music.

influences:

◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Dennis McGee

▶▶ Michael Doucet, Clifton Chenier, Balfa Brothers

see also: *Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin*

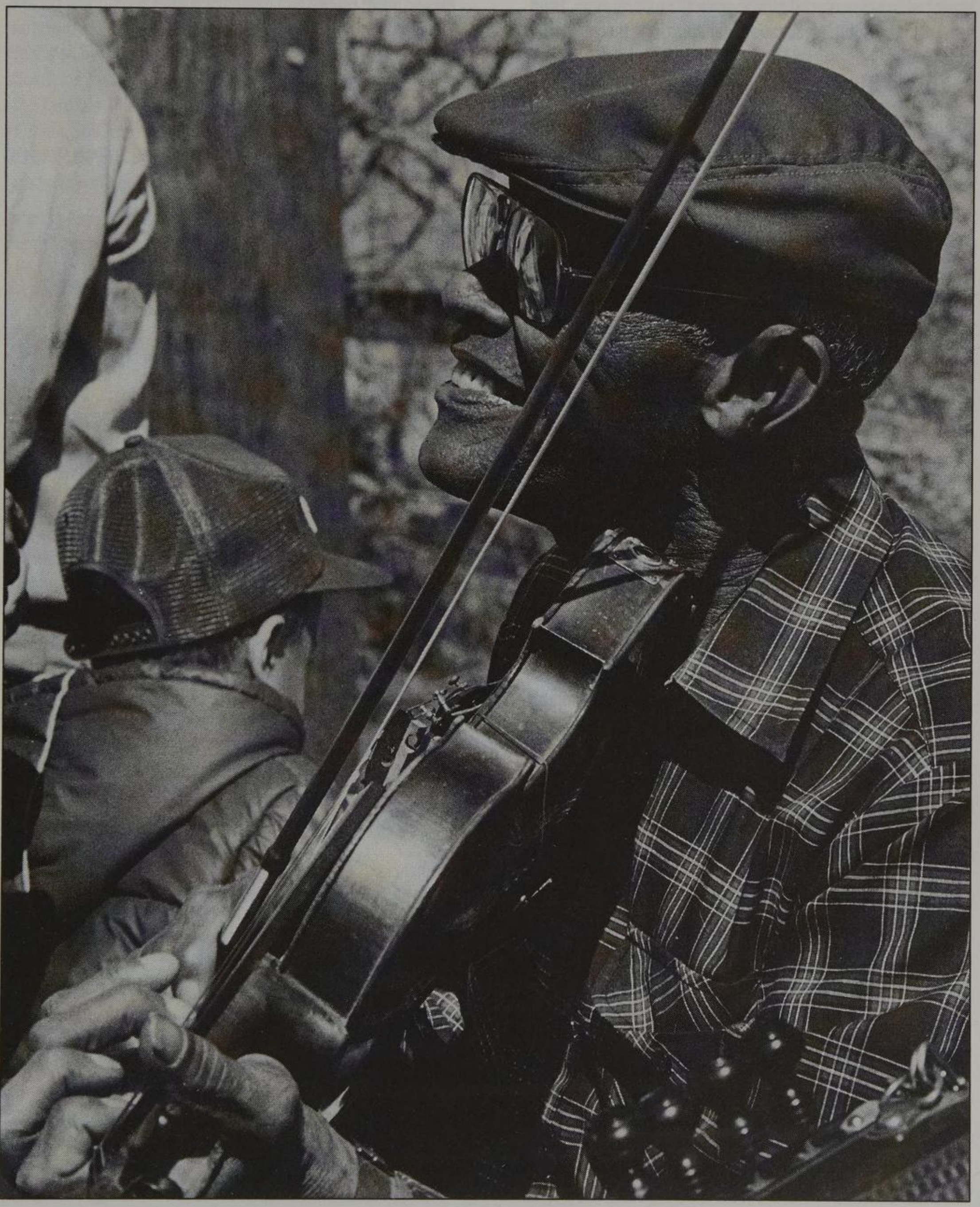
Jared Snyder

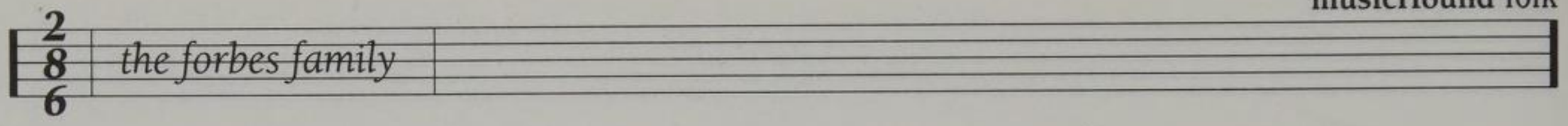
Steve Forbert

Born 1955, in Meridian, MS.

Already saddled with the "New Dylan" tag because of his raspy voice and guitar-harmonica accompaniment, Forbert debuted in 1978 with *Alive on Arrival*, a charming concept album celebrating his country-boy-moves-to-the-Big-Apple dreams. His proclamations of peach-fuzzed optimism were so earnest and life-affirming that the scores of critics who adopted him as their folk-rock Peter Pan didn't want him to ever grow up. Forbert

Canray Fontenot **(© Jack Vartoogian)**





managed to score one hit single, 1980's "Romeo's Tune," and send a not-so-subtle declaration of maturity via the snide title of his 1980 album, *Little Stevie Orbit*, before a six-year feud with Columbia Records kept him out of the record stores. Forbert re-emerged on Geffen Records—older, wiser, and, no surprise, much more cynical. But like John Hiatt's recent work, such albums as *Mission of the Crossroad Palms* and *The American in Me* are short on dreams but still full of hope, the work of a battle-scarred veteran who is learning to adapt his idealistic beliefs to the daunting pressures of adulthood.

what to buy: *Alive on Arrival* ♪♪♪♪½ (Nemperor, 1978, prod. Steve Burgh) remains a joyful testament to youthful idealism, thanks to such timeless songs as "Goin' down to Laurel," "Steve Forbert's Midsummer Night's Toast," and "What Kinda Guy?" *Little Stevie Orbit* ♪♪♪♪ (Nemperor, 1980, prod. Pete Solley) ushers in the harder-rocking, more-mature Forbert with "Get Well Soon," "If You Gotta Ask, You'll Never Know," and the gorgeous "Song for Katrina." *Steve Forbert* ♪♪♪½ (Nemperor, 1982, prod. Steve Burgh) is an unjustly forgotten album that features the rousing "Ya Ya (Next to Me)" and his funniest song, "He's Gotta Live up to His Shoes." *The American in Me* ♪♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1992, prod. Pete Anderson) is the grown-up bookend to *Alive on Arrival*, using the reflection and self-doubt of "You Cannot Win 'Em All" and "Responsibility" as tools for resilience, not resignation.

what to buy next: Forbert's 1982 tour with his road band, the Flying Squirrels (anchored by future Shawn Colvin/Rosanne Cash producer John Leventhal), produced his most memorable rock 'n' roll-driven shows. *King Biscuit Flower Hour Presents* ♪♪♪½ (KBFH/BMG, 1996) captures a fiery set at Long Island's My Father's Place, mixing his best-known material with convincing romps through Chuck Berry's "Too Much Monkey Business," the Searchers' "When You Walk in the Room," and a lovely reading of the Troggs' "Love Is All Around."

what to avoid: *Jackrabbit Slim* ♪♪ (Nemperor, 1979, prod. John Simon) spawned his hit, "Romeo's Tune," but compared to the rest of his catalog, the horn-driven, string-drenched production now sounds more syrupy than soulful.

the rest:
Streets of This Town ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1988)
What Kinda Guy: The Best of Steve Forbert ♪♪♪½ (Epic/Legacy, 1993)
Mission of the Crossroad Palms ♪♪♪ (Giant, 1995)
Rocking Horse Head ♪♪♪ (Paladin, 1996)
Here's Your Pizza ♪♪½ (Paladin, 1997)

worth searching for: *Arriving Live* (Nemperor, 1978) is a promotional EP with live versions of "You Cannot Win If You Do Not Play," "Steve Forbert's Midsummer Night's Toast," and the unreleased "Steve Forbert's Moon River."

influences:
◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Dylan, Chuck Berry
▶▶ Michael McDermott, Joe Henry, Will T. Massey

David Okamoto

The Forbes Family

Formed 1976, in PA.

Homer Forbes, vocals, banjo, fiddle; Lisa Forbes Roberts, vocals; Lori Forbes Slate, vocals, bass; Jay Forbes, vocals, mandolin.

This group of siblings recorded several country/bluegrass albums in its home state until eventually relocating to North Carolina to focus more on bluegrass gospel music. By the late 1980s, after four albums on Rebel Records, family obligations led to the Forbes Family's breakup. In 1994, following the release of a collection of their earlier material, they returned to record two remarkable albums.

what to buy: *Best of the Early Forbes Family* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1994, prod. Homer Forbes) is 18 tracks long and includes a couple of standouts written by Claire Lynch among its many treasures. *I'll Look to Him* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1995, prod. Ron Rhoads Jr.) is distinguished by the group's gorgeous *a cappella* rendition of the Molly O'Day gospel number, "I'll Face Nobody's Record but Mine."

what to buy next: *In the Shadow of Your Wings* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1996, prod. Ron Block, Forbes Family) is the latest and most polished effort by the group, aided by the members of Alison Krauss's band Union Station (minus Krauss).

the rest:
Farewell ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1994/1997)

influences:
◀◀ The Marshall Family, Claire Lynch
▶▶ Alison Krauss, the Cox Family

Stephen L. Betts

Julia Fordham

Born August 10, 1962, in Portsmouth, Hampshire, England.

Is Fordham a jazz, pop, or folk singer? In truth, she's all three, which makes her one of those artists with considerable talent who fall between the cracks of regimented radio formats. Possessed of a rich contralto voice that at times is reminiscent of jazz diva Nina Simone, Fordham rose through the ranks,

singing backup for Mari Wilson and Kim Wilde. She's been a songwriter since her teens, and her experience is plainly in evidence on her four albums, for though her songs tend to focus mostly on lost love, the situations never repeat themselves, and Fordham injects surprising insights and pathos into each of them. Still, it's understandable that some listeners find her a bit of a cold fish, mostly due to the studied, every-hair-in-place production of her first three albums.

what to buy: *Porcelain* ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1989, prod. Grant Mitchell, Hugh Padgham) was an adult-contemporary and VH-1 favorite thanks to the exquisite title track, the gentle Latin rhythms of "Genius," and the lyrically compelling "Girlfriend."

what to buy next: *Falling Forward* ♪♪♪½ (Virgin, 1994, prod. Larry Klein, Julia Fordham) benefits from slightly less restrained performances that show off the extraordinary range and expressiveness of Fordham's voice.

the rest:
Julia Fordham ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1988)
Swept ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1991)
East West ♪♪♪½ (Virgin, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Nina Simone, Mari Wilson, Lisa Stansfield, Joni Mitchell
▶▶ Jewel

Daniel Durchholz

The Foremen

Formed 1990, in Los Angeles.

Roy Zimmerman, leader, songwriter, arranger (left in 1997); Doug Whitney, guitar, banjo, mandolin, washboard, harmonica, tuba, washtub bass; Andrew Corwin, upright bass; Kenny Rhodes, percussion.

Political satire and folk music were most outrageously combined by the Los Angeles–based quartet the Foremen. Dressed in matching suits and lavender ties, the group spoofs the sounds and down-to-earth approach of late '50s and early '60s collegiate folk groups, including the Chad Mitchell Trio, the Limeliters, and the Kingston Trio. Their tongue-in-jowl songs, written by ex-bandleader Roy Zimmerman, are Zappa-like examinations of contemporary society. The band continues to get the last laugh. Their anthemic tune, "Ain't No Liberal," has been embraced by the New Right while their performance of their hard-hitting indictment "Ollie Ollie off Scot Free" was featured on Oliver North's nationally syndicated talk show in February 1996. Although Zimmerman left the band to seek a still-unlaunched solo career, the Foremen continue to perform his material.

what to buy: *Folk Heroes* ♪♪♪½ (Metaphor Records, 1993/ Reprise, 1995, prod. Tom Paley) is a delightful fusion of Kingston Trio–like arrangements and the no-holds-barred topical lyrics of Roy Zimmerman. Songs take humorous jabs at President Clinton ("Do the Clinton"), Rush Limbaugh ("Russian Limbaugh"), and Oliver North ("Ollie Ollie off Scot Free"). "Ain't No Liberal" is a tongue-in-jowl anthem for America's conservatives.

what to buy next: With their second major album, *What's Left?* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1996, prod. Tom Paley), the Foremen continue their musical assault on American politics while expanding their folk roots to include arrangements reflecting additional West Coast pop and rock influences. The album includes non-partisan lampoons of the presidential conventions—"Chicago (Love Song to a Democrat)" and "San Diego"—and a Tom Paxton–esque look at voting, "What Did You Do on Election Day?"

the rest:
Sing It Loud: Live at Luna Park ♪♪½ (Metaphor, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Frank Zappa, Bonzo Dog Band, Monty Python, Kingston Trio, Chad Mitchell Trio, the Limeliters, the Smothers Brothers, Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton
▶▶ Moxy Früvous, Washington Squares

Craig Harris

John Forster

John Forster wants to be Tom Lehrer real bad, and fortunately he isn't real bad at Lehreresque humor. He's even got the right background: he began singing satirical songs while an undergraduate at Harvard. He's heartily endorsed by fellow New Englander and certifiably funny person Christine Lavin. If you still doubt his sense of humor, ponder this: he produced two albums for Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen.

what's available: The title track of *Entering Marion* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1993, prod. John Forster) is an overextended sex joke: it's funny the first couple of times, but it's not worth entering more times than that. The most biting track is "Fusion," which skewers Paul Simon right through the dashiki. A duet with Lavin, "Way Down Deep (You're Shallow)," would make a fine wedding dance for many Hollywood denizens. The subject matter of *Helium* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1997, prod. John Forster) may have more staying power. The title track is a marvel, with helium-induced kazooing, among other delights. "In the Closet" is social commentary of

the Lehrer kind, as Forster asks and then tells. Other topics that may or may not endure include O.J. Simpson and Prince Charles.

influences:

◀◀ Tom Lehrer, Christine Lavin

▶▶ Moxy Früvous, Trout Fishing in America

Pamela Murray Winters

Fotheringay

See: Sandy Denny, Fairport Convention

Four Bitchin' Babes

Formed 1990.

Christine Lavin, guitar, vocals (1990–97); Patty Larkin, guitar, vocals (1990–92); Julie Gold, piano, vocals (1990–92); Camille West, guitar, vocals (1997–present); Megon McDonough, guitar, vocals; Sally Fingerett, piano, guitar, vocals; Debi Smith, guitar, bodhrán, vocals (1994–present). Temporary Babes have included: Cheryl Wheeler, Kristina Olsen, Janis Ian, and Mary Travers.

Start with 1/3-dozen richly gifted singer-songwriters, add 3/4-cup married life, 5 kids, 4-part harmony vocals, one piano, a dollop of sharp social commentary, and a wardrobe to die for. Put the combination on the road, allow to steep for eight years, and record occasionally—and you've got Four Bitchin' Babes. Multi-talented women of the '90s, the Babes compose their own music, write their own lines, play their own instruments, and do their own hair and makeup.

Sally Fingerett grew up on Chicago's south side and parlayed her musical roots in classical, folk, and blues into a prestigious New Folk Award for songwriting at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas. In addition to her three solo CDs on the Amerisound label, and a fourth on the way, Sally, who's now based in Columbus, Ohio, has written and produced music for movies and television. Her song "Home Is Where the Heart Is" has been recorded by Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, and Peter, Paul & Mary, and she has appeared with PP&M on their PBS television special, "Lifelines." Megan McDonough, also from Chicago, has 10 recording projects behind her. Her voice has been heard all over television—singing the theme for an HBO Olympic ice skating special (which won her a cable TV ACE Award) and enlivening a Danielle Steele made-for-TV movie—and her face has been seen in commercials. Her musical theater career has really taken flight in recent years, from productions of *Pump Boys and Dinettes* and *Beehive* to her triumphant box-office-record-breaking portrayal of Patsy Cline in *Always Patsy Cline*. Debi Smith, a Washington D.C. native, may be best known as half of the recording and performing sibling duo the Smith Sisters, who have four albums on Flying Fish Records. Debi has a new solo effort as well. A magnet for awards—Washington Area Music Awards (Wammies), American Song Festival, *Billboard*, ASCAP—a frequent guest on *A Prairie Home Companion*, and possessor of the longest most lustrous locks in folk music, Debi is also the official capitol city Schmooze Babe: she has supped at the Gores' house. Camille West, of Glens Falls, New York, was introduced to the Babes in 1997 by departing founding Babe Christine Lavin, with whom she shares a keen knack for comic topical music. "She's smart as a whip, cute as a button, and clever to boot," says Lavin. "She puts the gal in galvanizing." Adds Fingerett: "We love her . . . she's under 5'-4", so we can borrow her clothes." Camille has won both the Golden Link Folk Festival Performer competition and the New Jersey Folk Festival New Folk competition. She has also been featured at the annual Boston Festival of Funny Songwriters and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. "Being a Babe is like belonging to the sorority we were never asked to join in college," say the Babes.

After the first Four Bitchin' Babes tour and recording in 1990, Babe membership underwent several shifts. Original member Patty Larkin left to pursue her solo career. Replacing Patty was Julie Gold, known for her Grammy-winning tune "From a Distance," who settled in for the recording of *Buy Me, Bring Me, Take Me . . . Volume 2*. When Megon took time off to have her baby, stellar temporary replacements included Kristina Olsen, Cheryl Wheeler, Janis Ian, Mary Travers, and Debi Smith, who became a permanent member after Julie's departure, and was on hand for the recording of the group's Shanachie debut, 1995's *Fax It, Charge It, Don't Ask Me What's for Dinner: More Life According to Four Bitchin' Babes*. "We're often asked if we like each other as much as it appears on stage," say the Babes. "How could we not? It's a traveling pajama party. We're best friends from childhood who didn't meet until we were in our late thirties. We go on Babe retreat, sleep in and eat out . . . and get paid! The essence of being a Babe is that you juggle your child care, get your clothes out of the closet, gather up your curlers and makeup, and go. Then, when you get home from work, you go back to grocery shopping and monitoring your kids' television viewing."

what to buy: The Babes are at their funniest in live performance, when the audience gets a chance to be part of the pajama party. *Buy Me, Bring Me, Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume 2* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1993, prod. Four Bitchin' Babes, Steve Rosenthal) also offers the opportunity to hear the massively successful ballad "From a Distance" performed by its writer, Julie

Gold, in a spare setting that doesn't overstate its pieties. Among Lavin's tracks is a charming cover of "Sealed with a Kiss."

what to buy next: For a studio sound, try *Fax It, Charge It, Don't Ask Me What's for Dinner* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1995, prod. Dan Green). It includes a backup band with horns, strings, and percussion, so the sound is much more produced than the live albums, which seldom feature anything more than the odd guitar or piano backing.

the rest:
Buy Me, Bring Me, Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume 1 ♪♪♪ (Philo/ Rounder, 1990)
Gabby Road ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

worth searching for: *Laugh Tracks* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Christine Lavin) is a compilation album; each Babe has one cut.

solo outings:
Megon McDonough:
My One and Only Love ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996)

Sally Fingerett:
Enclosed ♪♪♪ (Amerisound, 1983)
Unraveled ♪♪♪½ (Amerisound, 1991)
Ghost Town Girl ♪♪♪½ (Amerisound, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Christine Lavin, Cheryl Wheeler, Fred Koller
▶▶ Try the babes individually

Neal Walters and Steve Holtje

The Four Preps

Formed 1956, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1968.

Bruce Belland, lead tenor; Ed Cobb, bass (1956–66); David Sommerville, bass (1966–68); Marvin Inabnett, high tenor; Don Clark, high tenor; Glen Larson, baritone.

Capitol signed this vocal group to a long-term contract while the members were 16 and still in high school, and they paid off with several huge hits over the next few years. They honed a carefully rehearsed, low-key stage act founded on their choir-boy harmonies and fine-tuned around the light topical humor favored by contemporaries the Kingston Trio, Peter, Paul and Mary, and the Limeliters. Belland and Larson wrote the group's best-known songs—"26 Miles (Santa Catalina)," "Big Man," "Down by the Station," "More Money for You and Me (Medley)"—and the Preps appeared in films (*Gidget*) and on television shows (*Ozzie and Harriet, The Ed Sullivan Show, American Bandstand,* and *The Lawrence Welk Show*). "More Money for You and Me," a parody of their contemporaries (among them, the Fleetwoods, the Platters, the Four Freshmen, the Kingston Trio, and Dion and the Belmonts), recorded live in 1961, is a snapshot of them at their best. And though their 1964 "Letter to the Beatles" gently parodies the growing commercialism of what would become known as "rock," they couldn't compete with the update. An attempt to use Phil Och's "Draft Dodger Rag" as a comedy song shows how far out of touch they had gotten by the end. Meanwhile, Cobb produced and wrote "Dirty Water" and "Sometimes Good Guys Don't Wear White" for the Standells and "Tainted Love" for Gloria Jones (it was later a worldwide hit for Soft Cell in 1982). Recently, Cobb, Belland, David Sommerville (he was lead singer on the Diamonds' "Little Darlin" before joining the original Preps), and former Association member Jim Yester have somehow found time to perform as the New Four Preps.

what's available: *The Four Preps* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol Collector's Series, 1989, prod. Ron Furmanek) is about all you really need to capture the Preps' essence, with all the irresistible, syrupy early hits and late misfires, with added B-sides and outtakes. *The Best of the Four Preps* ♪♪♪ (WEA Special Products, 1993) contains four tracks not included in the Collector's Series disc, but do you really need their version of "Moon River"?

worth searching for: Their straight version of "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" (not the parody on "More Money for You and Me") is on the hard-to-find *Capitol Sings Jerome Kern* ♪♪½ (Capitol, 1992), alongside tracks by Judy Garland, Peggy Lee, and Nat King Cole. *When AM Was King* ♪♪½ (Capitol, 1992) includes "26 Miles (Santa Catalina)" and cuts by other Capitol hitmakers of the '60s, including Tennessee Ernie Ford, Bobby Darin, and Grand Funk Railroad.

influences:
◀◀ The Limeliters, the Kingston Trio, the Four Freshmen
▶▶ Peter, Paul and Mary

see also: *The Limeliters, The Kingston Trio, Peter, Paul and Mary.*

Leland Rucker

Michael Fracasso

Born February 10, 1952, in Steubenville, OH.

Through events that shaped his life, Michael Fracasso has been able to draw from three distinct musical landscapes to create his rootsy folk-country sound. A native of mill town–area Ohio, Fracasso was educated in Catholic schools and reared in working class neighborhoods, which explains his songs' frequent subject matters—religious mores and Midwestern life. In 1978

Fracasso relocated to New York City, where he soaked up the folk coffeehouse scene frequented by Steve Forbert, Suzanne Vega, and Cliff Eberhardt. His songwriting reflected the thoughtfulness and the introspective spirit of his folk surroundings. But by 1991 Fracasso was on the move again; this time, he ended up in Austin, Texas, where he lives today. Naturally, the Texas connection provided Fracasso with the country kick that embellishes his compositions. The gorgeous country waltz, "Door #1," a duet with fellow-Austinite Lucinda Williams, makes his first album, *Love & Trust*, a must. His second set, *When I Lived in the Wild*, has a folkier feel, although the sneering "How Very Inconvenient" rocks as hard as any Rolling Stones song. His ability to travel through various territories and still maintain his melodic ground, which in turn smoothes his nasal-tinged voice, makes Fracasso an artist on the verge of conquering more than just Lone Star State soil.

what to buy: *Love & Trust* ♪♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1993, prod. Michael Fracasso, Mike Hardwick) offers Fracasso's folk-country hybrid with elegance and depth. Whether he's questioning the effects of religion on "Wise Blood," examining the perils of love on "Door #1," or telling a story about mama's little girl turned high-fashion model in "Apple Pie," Fracasso always has something important to say.

the rest:
When I Lived in the Wild ♪♪♪½ (Bohemia Beat, 1995)

worth searching for: Fracasso joined Austin buddies Iain Matthews and Mark Hallman to form the Hamilton Pool side project, a Buddy-Holly-meets-Beatles-with-harmonica group. The trio recorded an album, *Return to Zero* ♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1995, prod. Mark Hallman), but if you want a quick taste of their work and a slew of other cool acts like Webb Wilder, Timbuk 3, Alejandro Escovedo, and Don Walser, pick up *The Watermelon Sampler, Volume 1* ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1995, prod. various).

influences:
◀◀ Steve Forbert, Bob Dylan, Buddy Holly
▶▶ Jimmy LaFave, Iain Matthews, the Silos

Mario Tarradell

Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter /Amy Fradon

Formed 1987, in NY. Disbanded 1995.

Amy Fradon (born 1960s, in NY), vocals; Leslie Ritter, vocals.

Amy Fradon studied dance and choreography at New York University. But the New York–born daughter of a cartoonist for *The New Yorker* and an illustrator for the *Brenda Starr* comic strip has made her greatest impact as an impassioned, folk-rooted vocalist and skillful songwriter. Fradon first attracted acclaim for her songs while still in college. Auditioning for the campus Rathskeller Coffeehouse on a lark, she was booked for her first gig. She continued her involvement with music after moving to Woodstock, New York, during the mid-1970s. In 1979, she learned to sing harmony with a "side line" band that featured Robbie Dupree, Cane Roberts (Alice Cooper Band), Eric Parker (Joe Cocker Band), and Gary Bonner (the Turtles). After making her recording debut with Happy Traum on his *Bright Morning Star* album, she became a much-in-demand background singer and performed with members of Orleans, the Fabulous Rhinestones, Happy and Artie Traum, Rick Danko, and John Sebastian. Together with her long-time partner, Leslie Ritter, she formed her first original band, Amy and the Shoppers. After becoming absorbed with acoustic music while on the road with the nationally touring company of *Pump Boys and Dinettes*, she formed an acoustic duo with Ritter that recorded six albums. Since 1995, Fradon has sought her fortune as a solo performer. In addition to her musical career, she maintains a successful private practice as a voice teacher and conducts workshops in *Being Vocal: Using Vocal Sound As a Healing Tool.*

what to buy: Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter were preparing to go their separate ways when two fans provided the money to record a final album. The result, *Take Me Home* ♪♪½ (Shanachie/Cachet, 1993, prod. Scott Petito), remains their most successful effort with more than 20,000 copies sold. A harmony-filled recording, the album includes a memorable interpretation of John Lennon and Paul McCartney's "Rain," as well as a cover of "Your Move," written by Jon Anderson of Yes.

what to buy next: Fradon and Ritter's skills at interpreting the songs of other writers are showcased on *Delphys: Ocean Born* ♪♪ (Delphys, 1992, prod. Kim Rosen, Cathie Malach), which features the poems and chants of Kim Rosen and Cathie Malach, and *Flyin' on the Wings of Heaven* ♪♪ (Flyin' on the Wings of Heaven, 1988, prod. Amy Fradon, Judi Bachrach), which features poems and songs written and sung by Judi Bachrach.

the rest:
Crystal Song ♪♪ (Crystal Song, 1987)
Amy & Leslie ♪♪ (Alcazar, 1990)
Requiem Songs: For the Victims of Nationalism ♪♪ (Albany, 1996)

worth searching for: Fradon's solo recording debut came with a self-produced cassette, *Bootleg: Amy Fradon Live!* (self-re-

leased, 1996, prod. Amy Fradon), recorded during an intimate house concert performance .

influences:

Joni Mitchell, Elton John, Neil Young, Linda Ronstadt, Diana Ross, the Stylistics, Bonnie Raitt, Emmylou Harris

Happy and Artie Traum, Ilene Weiss, Margo Hennebach

Craig Harris

J.P. and Annadeene Fraley

Formed in KY.

J.P. Fraley (born c. 1922), vocals, fiddle; Annadeene Fraley (born July 15, 1913; died April 12, 1996), vocals, guitar.

Though their two available recordings were made 20 years apart, J.P. and Annadeene Fraley manage to reach far beyond the walls of time with their emotion-filled, deftly delivered fiddle tunes, borne out of the hills surrounding their northeastern Kentucky home. She had been a featured vocalist on numerous radio programs since age 13; he had a local reputation as a skilled fisherman as well as a fine fiddler. The couple married in 1946, but wouldn't begin playing together on a regular basis until the late 1950s. J.P. had beaten famed fiddler Buddy Spicher in a contest he had entered on a whim. More contests followed, and the couple also made numerous appearances at folk festivals as well. The couple made their first recording during 1973, while J.P. was working in brickyards and as a troubleshooting expert on coal-cutting equipment for the National Mine Service. Retired by the early 1990s, they resurfaced in 1995 to record what would be their second—and final—album.

what to buy: *Maysville* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Mark Wilson) boasts more than two dozen fiddle tunes, both covers and Fraley originals. It's perfect music for a cool summer evening, relaxing on the front porch.

what to buy next: *Wild Rose of the Mountain* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1973, prod. Guthrie T. Meade, Mark Wilson) features fewer tunes than their other collection, but its 18 cuts are still packed with tradition and excellence.

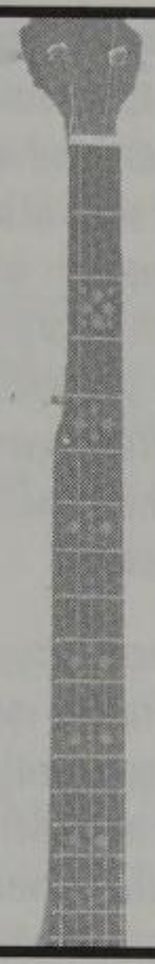
worth searching for: Although it doesn't contain performances by the Fraleys, the collections *Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky, Volumes One and Two* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997) are indicative of the pervasive music of the Kentucky and Ohio River regions that influenced, and was ultimately influenced by, J.P and Annadeene Fraley. Guthrie "Gus" Meade, who helped compile the Fraley's recordings, gathered more than 70 field recordings for these two indispensable collections.

influences:

Roy Acuff, Ed Haley

Buddy Thomas, J.B. Miller

Stephen L. Betts



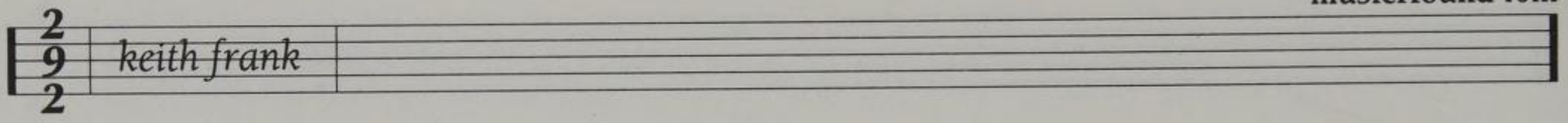
editor's choice
10 acts to watch

Susan McKeown
Mad Pudding
Kate MacLeod
Stephen Fearing
Lisa Moscatiello
Mary Jane Lamond
Toshi Reagon
Kings of Calicutt
Moxy Früvous
Old Blind Dogs

Jackson C. Frank

Born 1943, in Buffalo, NY.

Jackson Frank's story reads like what: a cautionary tale? a dark fantasy? a made-for-TV movie? Not quite any of those, but it's still a sad and fascinating story. As a child, Frank was badly scarred in a school fire that killed half of his classmates. Guitar playing was suggested as therapy, and insurance payments left Frank a wealthy, if damaged, youth. He traveled to London to join the young minstrels there and was soon appearing regularly on the folk circuit and sharing a house with Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel, and Al Stewart. Simon produced Frank's self-titled 1965 album. Sandy Denny was, for a time, his girlfriend, and she helped popularize many of his songs, notably "You Never Wanted Me" and Frank's best-known song, "Blues Run the Game." A lush lifestyle and several trips back and forth across the Atlantic soon depleted Frank's fortune, and he was also beginning to show signs of mental illness. By the end of the decade, he'd begun to fade into poverty and ill health. Frank's



"rediscovery" came in the 1990s. Thanks to his guardian, Jim Abbott (who traced him through a flea-market album autographed to Frank by Al Stewart), he now lives in an assisted-living facility. He bears the visible physical and mental scars of his often nightmarish life, but his gifts are still apparent: wit, charm, and dignity. A guitar stands beside his bed. In his prime, Frank was a fine folk guitarist, and his vocal style suggests a man confiding in himself about his own thoughts. His songwriting is what will be most remembered. "Blues Run the Game" is included in the Simon and Garfunkel box set *Old Friends*.

what's available: *Blues Run the Game* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mooncrest, 1996, prod. Paul Simon, Peter McKeel) is essentially Frank's 1965 album, with several 1975 tracks added. Frank's songwriting gifts are evident in the title song (which alludes to his belief in the universality of human misery, yet carries a wistful upwardness in its melody) and many of the others; he stands comfortably among his housemates and touring-musician buddies of the early 1960s. Everyone who ever loved a Simon and Garfunkel album should own this one as well.

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel

▶▶ Sandy Denny, Stan Rogers, David Wilcox

see also: *Simon and Garfunkel*

Pamela Murray Winters

Keith Frank

Born 1973, in Oberlin, LA.

Like many of his peers, Keith Frank broke into music playing in his family's band. His father, Preston Frank, led the Swallow Band in the 1980s when it featured Keith's great uncle, Carlton Frank, on fiddle and well-known drummer Leo Thomas. Preston eventually filled the band with his children, including sons Keith and Brad and sister Jennifer on bass, and renamed the group the Preston Frank Family Band. As Keith has moved out on his own he has created a reputation based on a very tight band which can bowl you over with the hypnotic quality of their grooves, like a James Brown or a Fela Kuti, taking the dancers for a ride. Frank has been an enormous success in his local market and has had little reason so far to sign with a label larger than Maison de Soul or to pack up and travel, but it is no reflection on the power of his music.

what to buy: *You'd Be Surprised* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1997, prod. Floyd Soileau, Fred Charlie) has a sound that is hot—and sells big—in southwest Louisiana, proving that Frank knows his local market well. Nobody is going to win a Pulitzer for the lyrical content of zydeco music, but Frank's grooves are infectious and the band always plays with feeling. His lyrics are better than most and the deadpan backup vocals of his sister Jennifer give his band a unique quality. You hear Frank trying out different sounds, looking for the next beat that will replace double clutching or the minor key grooves that have become so popularized that they have become passé. His flirtations with reggae on "Fred, the Rasta Man," "Who Remembers," and a Sly and Robbie–influenced cover of "Bad Boys" are fascinating and make Frank sound like the prairie's answer to Black Uhuru.

what to buy next: *What's His Name?* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1994, prod. Keith Frank, Floyd Soileau) was Frank's first recording as leader. The band is tight and very much in sync with their leader. He covers a couple of classic Boozoo Chavis tunes ("Motor Dude Special" and "Zydeco Hee Haw") and demonstrates that he can play them with all the power and spunk of a 21-year-old.

the rest:

Movin' on Up! ♪♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1995)
Only the Strong Survive ♪♪♪♪ (Maison De Soul, 1996)

worth searching for: On *Let's Dance: Preston Frank and His Zydeco Family Band* ♪♪♪♪ (Lanor Records, 1991, prod. Lee Lavergne), Keith Frank helps his father out by playing the guitar and contributing vocals.

influences:

◀◀ Beau Jocque, Boozoo Chavis, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin

▶▶ Zydeco Force, Chris Ardoin, Geno Delafose

Jared Snyder

Bob Franke

Born July 25, 1947, in Hamtramck, MI.

A spiritual thread runs though the songs of singer-songwriter Bob Franke. An influential presence on the Cambridge and Boston folk scene for more than two decades, Franke is one of contemporary acoustic music's most-covered tunesmiths. Garnet Rogers, John McCutcheon, David Wilcox, Lui Collins, June Tabor, Tony Rice, Claudia Schmidt, and Peter, Paul and Mary are among the many artists who have covered such Franke songs as "The Great Storm Is Over," "Hard Love," "For Real," "Thanksgiving Eve," and "Beggars to God." Growing up in the suburbs of Detroit, Franke began playing guitar and writing

songs at the age of 14. As an English literature student at the University of Michigan in the mid-1960s, he became absorbed by the folk scene centered around the Ark, a folk club in Ann Arbor. He continued to perform as a street musician after moving to Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1969 to attend the Episcopal Theological School. While he eventually dropped out of the school, his musical career has continued to grow. Although he supported his aspirations with full-time work at a candy company in Salem, Massachusetts, until the late 1980s, Franke continued to spread his musical message. His 1976 debut album, *Love Can't Be Bitter All the Time*, was followed by a memorable live recording, *One Evening In Chicago*, in 1983. Franke has subsequently released three albums on Flying Fish and two on the Rounder-distributed Daring Records. In 1978, he helped organize a folk music coffeehouse, Saturday Night in Marblehead, at the Church of St. Andrew in Marblehead, Massachusetts. Twelve years later, he was commissioned by the ODC Dance Company of San Francisco to compose the songs for a ballet, *The Velveteen Rabbit* .

what to buy: *In This Night* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. Darleen Wilson) is a powerful fusion of spirituality and acoustic folk- and blues-rooted melodies. Franke's expressive acoustic and National steel guitar playing and baritone vocals are enhanced by such Boston-area musicians as Richard Gates (bass), Lorraine Lee (harp), Liz Hammil (harmonica), Martin Grosswendt (lead electric and acoustic guitars and dobro), Billy Conway of Morphine (drums), and background vocalists Rod MacDonald, Geoff Bartley, and Catherine David. In addition to Franke's interpretation of his oft-covered tune "Thanksgiving Eve" and his gutsy sci-fi ballad "Invasion of the Money Snatchers," the album includes "A Velveteen Love Song," one of the songs he wrote for a ballet interpretation of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. "I'm a Mainframe, Baby" is a computer-aged satire set to an acoustic blues shuffle.

what to buy next: *For Real* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. John Miller) demonstrates the potency of Franke's songwriting. While he shows his skill at writing love songs ("Christine") and humor ("Fuji Blues"), he makes his most lasting impression with his original interpretations of his now-classic tunes "For Real" and "Beggars to God."

the rest:
Love Can't Be Bitter All the Time ♪♪ (Fretless, 1976)
One Evening in Chicago ♪♪½ (Great Divide, 1983)
Brief Histories ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
The Heart of the Flower ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1995)
Long Roads, Short Visits ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1997)

worth searching for: A live recording of Franke's "The Great Storm Is Over," recorded during Christine Lavin's singer/songwriter retreat on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, is included on *Follow That Road* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994).

influences:
◀◀ Mississippi John Hurt, Tom Paxton, Bob Gibson, Steve Goodman, Christianity
▶▶ Geoff Bartley, Lorraine Lee, Noel Paul Stookey, Richard Shindell

Craig Harris

Alasdair Fraser

Born May 14, 1955, in Clackmannan, Scotland.

Alasdair Fraser's versatility has made him one of the most well-traveled and sought-after fiddlers Scotland has ever produced. Fraser's fingers soar over the strings with finesse, while his bowing produces a sound so expressive, you could almost swear his fiddle has voice and is singing. His great love of Scotland's traditional music shines through as he plays familiar reels, strathspeys, and airs that delight listeners around the world. Saying Fraser is an award-winning fiddler hardly does him justice. He won the Open competition of the Scottish National Mod Fiddle Championship two years in a row, and has since won similar national Scottish fiddling competitions in other countries, including the U.S. and Canada. He has appeared on television programs such as *CBS Sunday Morning*, been heard on radio's *A Prairie Home Companion*, and played on the soundtracks of such movies as *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Spitfire Grill*. Fraser has performed and recorded with a variety of virtuoso performers, including Chris Norman, Tim Gorman, Jean Redpath, Itzhak Perlman, Twila Paris, and Derek Bell. He is not only a fine performer and musician, but also excels at music composition, especially evident on his album *Dawn Dance*. His teaching skills are displayed through his two summer fiddle programs and his attendance workshops at numerous Scottish Festivals. In order to teach the art of Scottish fiddling, Fraser uses his deeply felt Scottish heritage, his wry sense of humor, and his amazing ability to encourage others.

what to buy: On *Dawn Dance* ♪♪♪♪ (Culburnie, 1995), Fraser displays his amazing flair for composition. Entirely original work, this album boasts the unusual claim of being new music that unquestionably carries with it the traditional Scottish feel. Fraser is joined by a host of excellent musicians, including Eric Rigler on bagpipes and Chris Norman on flutes, who perform

beautifully together. Particularly inspired is "Independence Trail/Galen's Arrival," commemorating the arrival of his son, Galen, into his life. This album won the INDIE Award for "Celtic Album of 1995."

what to buy next: *The Driven Bow* ♪♪♪♪ (Culburnie, 1988, prod. Alasdair Fraser, Jody Stecher) is a delightful collection of traditional tunes of Scotland and Nova Scotia. Fraser teams up with guitarist Jody Stecher to recreate a portion of Scottish and Cape Breton tradition which invites listeners to get up and dance. Fraser and a cast of excellent musicians, Eric Rigler and Chris Norman included, make up the wonderful ensemble Skyedance. Their album, *Way out to Hope Street* ♪♪♪♪ (Culburnie, 1997), features a delightful selection of mostly original tunes, beautifully arranged for fiddle, pipes, flutes, keyboards, bass, and percussion.

what to avoid: *The North Road* ♪♪ (Sona Gaia, 1989, prod. Billy Oskay, Alasdair Fraser, Paul Machlis) has more of a New Age feel than any of Fraser's other work, which leaves it feeling a little hollow, despite some excellent tunes and performances.

the rest:
Portrait of a Scottish Fiddler ♪♪♪ (Brownrigg, 1984/Culburnie, 1996)
Skyedance ♪♪♪ (Culburnie, 1986)

influences:
Iain Fraser, Buddy MacMaster, Willie Fernie, Paul Machlis
Bonnie Rideout, Natalie McMaster, Ashley MacIsaac

Jo Hughey Morrison

Gail Fratar

See: Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar

Free Hot Lunch!

Formed 1985, in Madison, WI. Disbanded 1991.

Jeff Berg, guitars, vocals; John Corning, guitar, mandolin, electric guitar, vocals; Jeff Laramie, guitar, vocals.

Madison, Wisconsin, is more than a thousand miles from an ocean. But that didn't stop harmony-singing trio Free Hot Lunch! from sounding like a Jimmy Buffett ensemble with a sense of humor. Beach Boys–like vocals, surf guitars, and lyrical absurdity gave the group one of the quirkiest approaches to acoustic-based music. Accompanied by such Midwest musicians as Randy Sabien (violin) and Peter Deakman (bass), the trio produced two hilarious recordings. In addition to applying their wit to Buffett-like themes, including the joys of drinking ("Tequila Sheila" and "I Hate to Wake up Sober in Nebraska") and ocean life ("Home of the Whales"), the trio poked harmless fun at sexuality ("Sex in a Volcano" and "Sex by Mail"). "Penguin Love," the title track of their 1986 album, ponders how penguins kiss.

what to buy: The off-the-wall concert antics of Free Hot Lunch! are captured on their wacky album *Eat This* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Lee Crooks). Although it opens with an uplifting version of John Sebastian's folk-swing tune "Lovin' You," the album successfully spotlights the group's songwriters. Jeff Berg emerges as a somewhat-serious wordsmith on such songs as "Home of the Whales" and "Barfly" while ditties like "Sidewalks on Parade," "Sex in a Volcano," "Touch Tone Lullaby," and "Hymn #694" help establish John Corning as the trio's comic backbone.

what to buy next: Jimmy Buffett–style surf-folk and comic vision are combined on *Penguin Love* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. Free Hot Lunch!, Lee Crooks), an album that shows the trio at their most absurd. With instrumental support from Jeff Eckels (bass), Randy Sabien (violin), Todd Steward (drums, percussion), John Torrell (drums), Kathy Mueller (keyboards), and Frank Furillo (harmonica), the group pays tongue-in-jowl homage to cookies ("Oreos"), a dividend-paying tree ("The Money Tree"), and the joys of romance ("Make Love Stay") and sex ("Sex by Mail"). Avian life is humorously celebrated during "Be a Duck Tonight" and the title track.

influences:
Jimmy Buffett, the Beach Boys, Bonzo Dog Band, the Lovin' Spoonful
Uncle Bonsai, the Foremen, Moxy Früvous, Christine Lavin

Craig Harris

Alan Freeman

Born June 11, 1943, in Brooklyn, NY.

Alan Freeman was born in Brooklyn but made his way to West Virginia in 1974 and never looked back. A year or so after his arrival, he heard Richard Fariña play dulcimer and was hooked. Not willing to settle for the conventional limitations of the instrument, he added a fifth string and developed a tuning that enables him to play a full chromatic scale in several different keys. This makes the dulcimer more versatile and takes it beyond the realm of the modal, mountain sound. Freeman's taste in music runs from traditional Appalachian fiddle tunes to Texas swing to ragtime and beyond. He makes his home in Charleston, where he plays occasional local concerts with fiddler Jenny Allinder.

what's available: Don't let the title fool you—*The Mountain Dulcimer* ♪♪♪ (JMP Records, 1996, prod. Jim Martin) is not just a collection of scary modal mountain tunes. Freeman is quite capable of those, but this disc includes well-known traditional tunes like "Blackberry Blossom," not-so-well-known ones like "Battle of the Somme," and ragtime tunes like "Dill Pickle Rag." There's an instrumental version of the Carter Family's "Bully of the Town" and even the Peruvian melody "El Condor Pasa" combined in medley with Irving Berlin's "Blue Skies" (it works). Freeman's belief that the mountain dulcimer can play any kind of music with just about any instrument is confirmed on this recording. He's assisted by flat-pick guitarist Robin Kessinger on several pieces, by Mark Payne on banjo, and by Dave Bing on fiddle—West Virginians, all. "Seneca Square Dance," with Bing on fiddle, is especially nice. There's one composition by Freeman. Some of this is high-energy, hard-driving music; some of it is slow and contemplative; all of it is enjoyable. This disc might be hard to find in record stores but is available from JMP Productions, PO Box 152, St. Albans, WV 25711.

influences:

◀◀ Richard Fariña, Glenn Smith, Norman Blake, J.P. Fraley

▶▶ David Schnaufer, Don Pedi

Dave Shombert

Freewill Savages

See: Carol Elizabeth Jones and James Leva

The Freight Hoppers

Formed 1993, in Bryson City, NC.

Frank Lee, banjo, vocals; David Bass, fiddle; Cary Fridley, guitar, vocals; Hanne Jorgensen, bass.

Everything about the Freight Hoppers suggests motion, starting with the group's name and the title of their album, *Where'd You Come from, Where'd You Go?* But there's a part of them that's more about stasis—preserving old-time music, the pre–World War II style out of which bluegrass and country later grew. Fortunately, they're hardly stuck-in-amber puritans about it, billing themselves as "acoustic music that rocks." Since emerging on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion* in 1996 (after placing second in a national talent contest for people from small towns with fewer than 2,000 residents), the Freight Hoppers have done as much as any contemporary group to keep the old stuff alive.

what's available: *Where'd You Come from, Where'd You Go?* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. John Herrmann) is as scrupulously detailed as a Library of Congress field recording. It includes extensive liner notes and credits on the origins of its 16 songs, and even has fiddle and banjo keys for each song. The Freight Hoppers tend to jack up the tempos quite a bit, rendering "Cotton Eyed Joe" at a frantic pace that will leave you breathless. Other highlights include the Coon Creek Girls' "How Many Biscuits Can You Eat This Morning?" and the album-closing *a cappella* spiritual "Bright Morning Stars." Though hardly groundbreaking, the Freight Hoppers render everything with abundant energy and skill.

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family, the Red Clay Ramblers, the Skillet Lickers, Uncle Dave Macon

▶▶ Primitive Characters, Red Mountain White Trash

David Menconi

French, Frith, Kaiser and Thompson

See: Richard Thompson

Gideon Freudmann

Born March 8, 1962, in Saratoga Springs, NY.

The cello has been turned into an expressive folk-pop instrument by Gideon Freudmann. His four solo albums have spanned inventive, Beatle-esque instrumentals and unique interpretations of such classics as "Somewhere over the Rainbow," as well as lyrical songs that recall the 1960s art-rock of Tom Rapp's Pearls Before Swine. The youngest of five children, Freudmann, who grew up in Storrs, Connecticut, studied classical music and cello as a child In his early teens, and became absorbed with songwriting. Temporarily dropping the cello, he began playing piano. He didn't return to the cello until he helped form a high school rock band. He continued to study the instrument as a performance major at the University of Connecticut. Although Freudmann moved to Boston for a year, he relocated to the secluded woods of western Massachusetts, where he still lives. In 1987, he recorded an album, *Holiday Clocks*, with a cello and guitar duo. As a solo performer, Freudmann recorded several self-produced cassettes and a CD, *Fellini's Martini*, that were released on his own independent record label, CelloBop. His most recent albums, released by Gadfly, have reflected different sides of his musical persona. *Banking Left* spotlighted his songwriting with his cello accom-

panied by guitar, banjo, piano, percussion, and bass. *Cellobotomy* is an all-instrumental mixture of solo cello pieces and tunes with overdubbed cello, steel drums, guitar, and percussion. *Adobe Dog House* combines songs and instrumentals.

what to buy: *Adobe Dog House* ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1997, prod. Gideon Freudmann) is Freudmann's widest reaching outing. In addition to provocative instrumentals that he performs solo by overdubbing cello, keyboards, guitar, and percussion, he shows the dark side of his emotions with five original tunes. He sings of being in a "state of turmoil, upheaval, and unrest" on "Geography," and of living in a "fantasy world of my own" on "Rhapsody Hill."

what to buy next: For those who have trouble with Freudmann's vocals, *Cellobotomy* ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1995, prod. Gideon Freudmann) is an all-instrumental romp that extends the possibilities of the cello.

the rest:
Holiday Clocks ♪♪ (Hopewell, 1987)
Wet Asparagus ♪♪ (CelloBop, 1990) (cassette only)
The Waldo Variations ♪♪ (CelloBop, 1991) (cassette only)
Banking Left ♪♪ (Gadfly, 1995)

worth searching for: Freudmann recorded an instrumental 45 RPM single, "The Raging Peasants," on the obscure Don't Records label in 1992.

influences:
◀◀ Penguin Cafe Orchestra, Pearls Before Swine, Dan Hicks, Mose Allison, the Beatles

▶▶ Deb Pasternak, Peter Mulvey, Dee Carstensen

Craig Harris

Glenn Frey

See: The Eagles

Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude

Formed as Freyda and the Attaboys, 1991. Disbanded c. 1995.

Freyda Epstein, violin, viola, vocals; Ralph Gordon, bass violin; Bob Vasile, guitar, cittern, vocals.

A fanciful fusion of folk, classical, and jazz might be the best description for the music of Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude. Freyda Epstein's earthy voice combines with the sensuous strains of violin, bass violin, and guitar to create compelling and memorable music. With one of the best voices in the business, Epstein has mastered not only the highly expressive use of her voice, but also the ability to write meaningful songs and arrangements to best display that talent. Ralph Gordon's bass violin and Bob Vasile's guitar and backing vocals are the perfect backdrop for Epstein's skills, and the collaboration of the three talents has proven to be an exciting mix. Epstein and Gordon are no strangers to creating beautiful music together, having formerly worked together for a number of years with Trapezoid. Pulling on the folk roots of that experience, they teamed up with Vasile (formerly of the Pratie Heads) and apparently found working together highly inspiring. The resulting work is a creative, imaginative, and thoroughly enjoyable mix of styles of acoustic music. Although the group only made one recording, they attained high critical acclaim for their many performances at such venues as the Winnipeg Folk Festival, the 1992 Folk Alliance Conference, and Summerfolk.

what's available: The group's only album, *Midnight at Cabell Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House Records, 1993), is special not only because of the inventive music, but also because of the way it was recorded. Using a stereo microphone technique, they attempted to capture the essence of the instruments interacting with each other, rather than just capturing each instrument's individual sound. The result is a bit like being in the concert hall, coming across more alive than most studio recordings. The depth of their work is well displayed on this album, from the rhythmic instrumental music of "Kopanitsa" to the thought-provoking song "Potter's Wheel." The eclectic selection even includes a Telemann sonata in a chamber-music style. Despite its diversity, the album flows together nicely, meant to be heard as a whole.

solo outings:
Freyda Epstein:
Globalullabies ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Lorraine Duisit, Magpie, Vicky Pratt-Keating, Béla Fleck, Trapezoid

▶▶ Paul Reisler, Jem Moore & Ariane Lydon, John McCutcheon

see also: *Trapezoid*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Kinky Friedman

Born Richard Friedman, October 31, 1944, in Palestine, TX.

Everything about Kinky Friedman is a joke. He's a Jew born on Halloween in Palestine—Texas, that is. His take on country music is both reverent and irreverent. A University of Texas

grad with a degree in psychology, Friedman opted to psych out the country music establishment with his band Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys. The band released three albums during the 1970s, filled with Friedman's razor wit and affectionate nod to Texas swing and traditional country. The song titles alone were worth a good laugh—"Ride 'Em Jewboy," "Let Saigons Be Bygones," "They Ain't Making Jews Like Jesus Anymore," and his signatory "Asshole from El Paso," renamed "Lasso from El Paso" to appease delicate sensitivities. Friedman's popularity didn't stretch out much beyond the Texas border, though he was a favorite on college campuses across the country. He incurred the wrath of many a stiff-necked country music exec, but Friedman and the Jewboys were also invited to perform at the venerable Grand Ole Opry in 1975 and later toured as part of Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue. His reign of terror ended with the 1970s as Friedman turned his attentions to writing detective novels in which he's the main character. His first eight books have been translated into 14 languages; his ninth, *The Love Song of J. Edgar Hoover,* was published in late 1996.

what to buy: Fortunately, a recent revival of interest in Friedman's off-color music has resulted in the reissue of two of his first three albums and two new, mostly live recordings. He was at the peak of his powers and his cultish popularity when *Kinky Friedman* ♪♪♪ (Varese Vintage, 1974, prod. Kinky Friedman) came out. It features some of his most incisive, smarmy humor, with such songs as "Homo Erectus," "Something's Wrong with the Beaver," and "They Ain't Makin' Jews Like Jesus Anymore," plus guest shots from fellow mavericks Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings, who were only slightly more well-known at the time.

what to buy next: Aficionados might want to track down *Old Testaments & New Revelations* ♪♪½ (Fruit of the Tune, 1992, prod. Kinky Friedman, Chinga Chavin). The anthology features mostly live recordings and is a fairly uneven career retrospective, stretching from his first recording, "Schwinn 24," in 1964 to an in-studio performance of "They Ain't Makin' Jews Like Jesus Anymore" on the Don Imus radio show.

the rest:
Sold American ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1973)
From One Good American to Another ♪♪ (Fruit of the Tune, 1995)

worth searching for: Arguably his best album, *Lasso from El Paso* ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1976, prod. Kinky Friedman) is also one of the hardest to find. It's out of print and hasn't been reissued domestically on CD. Since there's not much call for Friedman's offbeat music, it might stay that way.

influences:
- Bob Wills & the Texas Playboys, Raymond Chandler, Doug Sahm
- Austin Lounge Lizards

Doug Pullen

Lefty Frizzell

Born William Orville Frizzell, March 31, 1928, in Corsicana, TX. Died July 19, 1975.

Before George Jones and Merle Haggard, there was Lefty Frizzell, whose famous "blue yodel" and curlicued vocal style has influenced generations of country singers who followed him, including Jones, Haggard, Willie Nelson, Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, and Randy Travis. Frizzell got his nickname after a schoolyard fight in the Texas oil town where he grew up. Determined to be a country singer, Frizzell cut his teeth on the music of Jimmie Rodgers, Ernest Tubb, and such honky-tonk artists of the 1940s as Ted Daffan. He parlayed a demo session at a Dallas studio into a deal with Columbia Records, which released the first of his many signature songs, "If You've Got the Money, I've Got the Time," to popular acclaim in 1950. It was the beginning of a revolution in country music, as Frizzell's resonant honky-tonk sound replaced the more traditional, unadorned vocal style common at the time. At the height of his popularity during the early 1950s, Frizzell became the first artist to place four songs on *Billboard*'s Top 10 country singles charts. Immensely popular throughout the decade, he made some bad career moves—like leaving the Grand Ole Opry shortly after joining—that derailed his momentum for a few years. But the "Lefty Sound" didn't disappear for long, with such songs as "The Long Black Veil" and "Saginaw, Michigan" reviving his commercial fortunes and returning him to the good graces of Nashville's power elite. After the mid-1960s, Frizzell—whose younger brother David formed a popular 1970s duo with Dottie West's daughter, Shelly—seldom enjoyed the kind of commercial success his legend would suggest. But his name and influence have lived on, thanks to the dozens of singers who've cited him (Willie Nelson cut an album of his music) and recorded his songs.

what to buy: With so few of his records available now, it's best to pick up *The Essential Lefty Frizzell: Look What Thoughts Will Do* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1996, prod. various), as comprehensive a collection of the influential singer's work as you'll find on these shores. The 34-track, two-CD set rounds up his biggest hits and a few B-sides, including "If You've Got the

Money, I've Got the Time," "Saginaw, Michigan," and "The Long Black Veil."

what to buy next: The archival Rhino label does a nice job of summarizing Frizzell's chart hits on one 18-song disc with *The Best of Lefty Frizzell* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, compilation prod. James Austin), which features re-mastered versions of 14 hits and four B-sides recorded between 1950 and 1965.

the rest:
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987)
American Originals ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1993)
20 Golden Hits ♪♪♪ (TeeVee, 1995)
That's the Way Love Goes: The Final Recordings of Lefty Frizzell ♪♪♪ (Varese Vintage, 1996)

worth searching for: The German label Bear Family, known for its exhaustive collections and reissues, has assembled a dozen CDs' worth of Frizzell's recordings into the sprawling box set *Life Like Poetry* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1985, prod. various), which includes just about everything he ever recorded.

influences:
◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Ernest Tubb, Ted Daffan
▶▶ Merle Haggard, George Jones, Randy Travis, Garth Brooks, Willie Nelson

Doug Pullen

The Front Porch String Band

See: Claire Lynch

Front Range

Formed late 1980s, in Denver, CO.

Bob Amos, guitar, lead vocals; Mike Lantz, mandolin, vocals; Peter Schwimmer, banjo (left band, 1989); Ron Lynam, banjo, vocals (1989–present); Duane Webster, bass (left band, 1986); Pat Carbone, bass (1986–91); Bob Dick, bass, vocals (1991–present).

One of the more fascinating bluegrass success stories of the early 1990s, Front Range parlayed a pair of self-distributed albums (*So Many Pathways* and *The Road Home*), extensive regional touring, radio airplay, and a wealth of distinctive original material into a significant national presence and a high-profile recording deal with Sugar Hill. The Colorado band, noted for its tradition-oriented sound, the powerful banjo picking of Ron Lynam, tight vocal-trio harmonies, and the songwriting of Bob Amos, has since recorded four critically acclaimed albums.

what to buy: *Back to Red River* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Charles Sawtelle, Front Range), the most fully realized of the band's albums, seamlessly blends traditional bluegrass power, Western themes and material, and Bob Amos originals into a distinctive package. The title song and "The Hills That I Call Home" received considerable—for a bluegrass band—radio airplay.

what to buy next: *The New Frontier* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. Charles Sawtelle, Front Range), the band's national debut, showcased original material by Amos, Lynam, and Lantz alongside classics by Charlie Monroe and the Stanley Brothers. *One Beautiful Day* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Front Range), which features seven Bob Amos originals, is the band's first all-gospel recording.

the rest:
Ramblin' on My Mind ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Hot Rize, the Stanley Brothers
▶▶ Loose Ties, the Left Hand String Band

Jon Hartley Fox

The Fugs

Formed 1965, in New York, NY. Disbanded 1969. Re-formed 1984 and 1994.

Tuli Kuferberg, vocals, percussion (1965–69); Ed Sanders, guitar, vocals (1965–69, 1984–present); Ken Weaver, drums, vocals (1965–66); John Anderson, bass (1965–67); Vinnie Leary, guitar (1965–67); Pete Stampfel, guitar, fiddle (1965–66); Steve Weber, guitar (1965–66); Lee Crabtree, keyboards (1966–67); Pete Kearney, guitar (1966–67); Charles Larkey, bass (1967–68); Dan Kootch, guitar (1967); Ken Pine, guitar (1967–68); Bill Wolf, bass (1968); Bob Mason, drums (1968); Richard Lee, organ (1968); Howard Johnson, tuba, saxophone (1968); Julius Watkins, french horn (1968).

The Fugs were possibly the first punk band of the rock era. Hardly able to play instruments, the Fugs traded on a raw folk-rock sound that backed neo-beat poets Sanders and Kuferberg, who wrote most of the band's material. The songs went beyond drugs, sex, and anti-war paeans to deliberate filth ("Coca-Cola Douche") that was calculated to shock. Still, there was a method to its madness, grounded in the '50s beat scene. Poet Allen Ginsberg contributed to the Fugs' lyrics, and one of the few songs that received radio play, "How Sweet I Roamed from Field to Field," was an adaptation of a work by romantic poet William Blake.

what to buy: Of what remains available, *The Fugs First Album* ♪♪♪♪ (ESP, 1965/Fantasy, 1994, prod. Harry Smith) has plenty

of antisocial sentiments via "Slum Goddess," "I Couldn't Get High," and more.

what to buy next: *The Fugs Second Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1994, prod. Harry Smith) is pretty much the same, though a little less self-concerned with "Kill for Peace" and "Morning, Morning," their most popular ballad.

the rest:
Live from the '60s ♪♪♪ (Big Beat, 1995)
Refuse to Be Burnt Out ♪♪♪½ (Big Beat, 1995)
The Real Woodstock Festival ♪♪♪ (Big Beat, 1995)
No More Slavery ♪♪♪ (Big Beat, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Allen Ginsberg
▶▶ Holy Modal Rounders

Lawrence Gabriel

Jesse Fuller

Born March 12, 1896, in Jonesboro, GA. Died January 29, 1976, in Oakland, CA.

Jesse Fuller, who sang and played such instruments as guitar, harp, kazoo, and "fotdella," a stove-shaped percussive device made of foot pedals and padded hammers, was the living bridge between two eras. He grew up under grim, tough conditions, having been "smoked over a fire in a gunnysack, not even told of his mother's death in 1903 until a month after the event," according to 1958 liner notes. He lived long enough, though, to wander the country, settle in Los Angeles, become a musician in the 1950s, and record several albums. Many of his songs, including "San Francisco Bay Blues" and "Beat It on down the Line," inspired such Bay Area rockers as the Grateful Dead and Janis Joplin. He took advantage of the 1960s folk and blues revival, performing at coffeehouses and festivals throughout Europe and the U.S. until his death.

what to buy: With yodeling and moaning reminiscent of both Leadbelly and country singer Merle Travis, Fuller's classic *Jazz, Folk Songs, Spirituals & Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Good Time Jazz, 1958/Original Blues Classics, 1993, prod. Lester Koenig) is full of astounding guitar picking and a rhythmic style that unquestionably influenced rock 'n' roll. The instrumental "Tiger Rag" and Fuller's spooky, lively take on "Stagolee" are among the many highlights.

what to buy next: *San Francisco Bay Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Contemporary/Fantasy, 1963, prod. Lester Koenig), a clear influence on country-leaning 1960s rock bands, contains Fuller's happy-but-sad take on the classic "John Henry" and his own title track.

the rest:
The Lone Cat Sings and Plays Jazz, Folk Songs, Spirituals, and Blues ♪♪♪ (Good Time Jazz, 1961)
Favorites ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1965)
Brother Lowdown (Fantasy, 1992)

worth searching for: Where "Take This Hammer" opens *Jazz, Folk Songs . . .* on an immediately familiar note, *Frisco Bound* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993), a collection of recordings from 1955 and 1967, focuses on more obscure—but just as wonderful—acoustic blues and country songs. Standouts are the previously unreleased "I'm Going to Sit down at the Welcome Table," and the recollection of wandering the U.S., "Leaving Memphis, 'Frisco Bound."

influences:
◀◀ Merle Travis, Jimmie Rodgers, Leadbelly, Bukka White, Son House, Charley Patton, Emmett Miller, Mississippi Sheiks
▶▶ The Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Hank Williams, Rev. Gary Davis

Steve Knopper

Tret Fure

Born March 18, 1951, in IA.

Tret Fure has collaborated musically with singer-songwriter Cris Williamson as engineer, co-producer, and guitarist on Williamson's recordings and tours since the early 1980s. A dynamic pop-rock performer on her own, Fure has recorded four hard-driving solo albums: *Tret Fure*, *Time Turns the Moon*, *Edges of the Heart*, and *Terminal Hold*. Raised in Illinois and northern Michigan, Fure attended the University of California in Berkeley. Beginning her musical career at the age of 19, she toured and recorded with British pop-rocker Spencer Davis in the late 1970s. Recording her self-titled debut album in 1973, produced by Lowell George of Little Feat, Fure toured as opening act for Poco, Yes, and the J. Geils Band. Switching over to the production side of recording, in 1981 Fure secured a position as a recording engineer with Olivia Records and began working with Williamson. In addition to collaborating on the albums *Postcards from Paradise* and *Between the Covers*, Fure produced, engineered, and played guitar on several of Williamson's solo albums, including *Blue Rider*, *Live At Carnegie Hall*, and *Prairie Fire*.

old time fiddle

Old Time fiddling encompasses an amazingly wide variety of styles! Some (like Earl Johnson or Gid Tanner) are extremely rough and rowdy, while others (like Buddy Thomas or Benton Flippen) are smoother and more melodic. What these disparate fiddlers all have in common is a steamroller rhythm, which is what makes the tunes so danceable. Of course there are even exceptions to that, like the evocative fiddling of Posey Rorer with Charlie Poole, which somehow manages to be both delicate and sturdy at the same time. Not all old time tunes are fast breakdowns, either. There are many other rhythms and tempos, including waltzes, polkas, rags, and airs. Old time fiddlers often like to use open tunings in addition to the standard GDAE; this adds evocative overtones to the sound of the fiddle, and allows adjacent strings to be touched upon by the bow, which adds to the polyrhythmic aspect of old time fiddling. Some old time fiddlers, like Tommy Jarrell, bow with many short strokes, while others, like Ralph Blizzard, favor a long-bow technique. There's also a lot of variation in intonation, especially among older fiddlers who grew up prior to the days of radio and phonograph records, when regional styles were more distinct.

Suzy Thompson

Edges of the Heart ♪♪♪ (Second Wave, 1986)
(With Cris Williamson) *Postcards from Paradise* ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1993)

influences:

Spencer Davis, the J. Geils Band, Little Feat, Joan Jett

Laura Love, Ani DiFranco

see also: *Cris Williamson*

Craig Harris

Tony Furtado

Born October 18, 1967, in Oakland, CA.

Tony Furtado twice (1987 and 1991) won the national Banjo Championship and played with Laurie Lewis & Grant Street from 1987 to 1990. Furtado has been sporadically picking with Sugarbeat since that time. He also spent time with the Rounder Records Banjo Extravaganza tour, beginning in 1990.

what to buy: On *Full Circle* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Stuart Duncan), Furtado assembled a first-rate group of musicians—including David Grier, Stuart Duncan, Jerry Douglas, and John Reischman—for 12 songs ranging from traditional to contemporary and relying on a full ensemble sound. Highlights include John Jackson's blues guitar and vocals on "Trouble in Mind" and Furtado's duet with clawhammer banjoist Mark Schatz on "Turned Around."

what to buy next: *Within Reach* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Jerry Douglas, Mike Marshall, Tony Furtado) finds Furtado still taking the banjo to new frontiers with a collection of originals, traditional songs, and an inspired cover of the Beatles' "I Will," with Alison Krauss handling the lead vocals.

the rest:

Swamped ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
(With others) *Rounder Banjo Extravaganza: Live!* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Roll My Blues Away ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)

influences:

Laurie Lewis & Grant Street, Sugarbeat

Alison Brown, Scott Vestal, Tony Trischka

Douglas Fulmer

what to buy: Fure and Williamson's second full collaboration, *Between the Covers* ♪♪♪½ (Wolf Moon/Goldenrod, 1997, prod. Cris Williamson, Tret Fure), documents both their love for each other and the brilliance of their harmonious songs. The Williamson-penned tune "Honeymoon" captures the romance of their honeymoon in Taos. Fure's original song "To See the Light" is enhanced by the harmonies of the San Francisco–based choir Voicestra.

what to buy next: *Time Turns the Moon* ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1991, prod. Tret Fure) is a powerful sampling of Fure's hard-rocking tunes.

the rest:

Tret Fure ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
Terminal Hold ♪♪½ (Second Wave, 1984)

Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Formed mid-1960s. Disbanded 1973.

Dave Crowder, guitar (until 1969); JoAnn "Claire June" Stokes, guitar (until 1969); Malcolm Owen, fiddle; Dick Zaffron, fiddle, mandolin;

Eric Olson, banjo; Bobbie Thompson, guitar (1969–72); Vickie Owen, mountain dulcimer (1969–73); Blanton Owen, banjo (1969–73); Bill Hicks, fiddle (1970–73).

The Fuzzy Mountain String Band was born out of a scene of informal musical jam sessions that existed in Durham, North Carolina. Eventually these jam sessions turned into bands that proved to be important in the string band revival of the 1970s. The first important group was the Hollow Rock String Band, led by Alan Jabbour who now heads up the Folklife Center of the Library of Congress. In 1967 another band formation came out of these jam sessions when Dave Crowder, Dick Zaffron, Malcolm Owen, Eric Olson, and JoAnn Stokes got together and started calling themselves the Fuzzy Mountain String Band. The lineup of the band changed over the six-year period that the band was together, but the driving twin fiddle sound remained the same over their two-album history with then-upstart Rounder Records. The influence this "big band" string band (and the Highwoods String Band, for that matter) possessed can still be heard in many of the young old-time string bands at fiddlers conventions today. The Fuzzy Mountain String band had an ear for playing the music as it was played before any of us were even around.

what's available: *Fuzzy Mountain String Band* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Fuzzy Mountain String Band) was compiled from their two out-of-print Rounder LPs, *Fuzzy Mountain String Band* and *Summer Oaks & Porch*. The CD contains 33 living, breathing old-time tunes that are heard often in jam sessions today.

influences:

- Tommy Jarrell, the Hollow Rock String Band, Kyle Creed, Fred Cockerham
- The Red Clay Ramblers, the Highwoods String Band

Steve Gardner

G

Jon Gailmor

Born late 1940s, in PA.

Shunning a career as a Seals and Crofts–like pop-folk performer, Jon Gailmor has built his reputation with environmentally minded children's songs and straight-ahead, acoustic guitar–based arrangements. His songs, including "Dirt!," "Edifice Complex!," and "Gonna Die with a Smile If It Kills Me," present complex subjects in an easy-to-understand format. The politically minded slant of Gailmor's songs comes naturally. The son of an outspoken reporter and radio talk show host of the 1930s and '40s who was blacklisted during the days of Communist Red baiting, Gailmor was raised on the music of Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie. His sister, Wendy Newton, is the founder of the Green Linnet Record label. Although he recorded a heavily produced duo album, *Peaceful Kingdom*, during the early 1970s, he became frustrated by the pressures of the commercial record industry and moved to Europe, where he worked as a street musician. Shortly after his return to the United States, he moved to the hills of Vermont.

A radio show of children's music that he hosted served as Gailmor's introduction to the younger members of his audience. Although planned as a one-time event, the show was so successful that it was expanded into a weekly program, *Just Kiddin'*, on a Burlington, Vermont, radio station. The title track of his album *Dirt!* received an honorary mention as Best Children's Song of 1984 from the National Academy of Independent Record Distributors. Gailmor's 1995 album, *Childish Eyes*, is an adult-oriented view inspired by his children Cathy, Aaron, and Maya.

what to buy: Gailmor's best work are the songs that he's written for the younger members of his audience. His most successful effort remains his 1984 album, *Dirt!* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1982, prod. Doug Jaffe, Jon Gailmor). In addition to an uplifting version of Doris Penn's anthem, "How Can I Keep from Singing?" the collection showcases Gailmor's witty songwriting. "Edifice Complex" satirizes the loss of the natural habitat, while "Letters" voices children's fears of the boom and the Cold War. The title track is an ode to the childhood joys of getting dirty.

what to buy next: *Gonna Die with a Smile If It Kills Me* ♪♪♪½ (Fretless/Philo, 1980) was Gailmor's first solo album after returning from his self-imposed retreat to Europe. Besides adult-oriented songs like "Long Ago Lady/For the Love of Vermont" and "Last Sun," the album offered the first glimpse at his abilities to write and perform songs for youngsters. In addition to fun-filled interpretations of Leon Rosselson's "Jumbo the Elephant" and Greg Brown's "Rooty Toot Toot for the Moon," Gailmor serves up amusing originals, including "Randy and Ned Go to School," about two canines in search of an education, and the title track, which serves as the theme song for his children's music radio show.

what to avoid: *Peaceful Kingdom* was a major label attempt to transform folk-minded Gailmor into a pop-folk performer in

competition with Seals and Crofts and Loggins and Messina. The result is regrettable with the over-production obscuring his unique talents.

the rest:
Passing Through ♪♪♪ (Green Mountain, 1979)
Generations ♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987)

influences:
◀◀ Arlo Guthrie, Greg Brown, Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Si Kahn, John McCutcheon

Craig Harris

Les & Gary Gallier

Formed 1987, in Springfield, MO.

Les Gallier (born March 29, 1951, in Tulsa, OK), mountain dulcimer, guitar, percussion; Gary Gallier (born January 23, 1949, in Tulsa, OK), mountain dulcimer, dulcette.

Les Gallier has been a musician, playing drums then guitar, since he was eight years old. His older brother, Gary, used to drive him to gigs. Gary started playing dulcimer at age 30 and built his first instrument out of 1/4-inch plywood. As his building improved, so did his playing, and he won the National Dulcimer Championship in 1987. He gave Les the third dulcimer he built, which hung on the wall for two to three years. Les finally started exploring the instrument with little or no help from Gary and eventually won the 1990 Winfield title on his own. They hold the distinction of being the only brothers to win the national title on the same instrument. They started playing together in 1987, meshing their quite individual dulcimer styles with Les's guitar prowess. They compose virtually all their own material, blending influences from classical, Irish, rock, jazz, and mountain styles. Despite Les's rock 'n' roll guitar background, his compositions for dulcimer have an almost classical flair while Gary's compositions mix elements of Irish music with jazz and an adventuresome attitude. Despite these individual differences, they have found wide acceptance for their music among traditional dulcimer players and are regularly featured as both a duo and as soloists at festivals and workshops throughout the Midwest and South.

what to buy: *On the Wing* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Thumb Music, 1993, prod. Les and Gary Gallier) is an album of original "new acoustic music" and features large doses of great dulcimer playing in combination with violin and cello (David Wilson of Kentucky Standard Band), dobro and mandolin (Bo Brown), bass (Mike Lindauer), Heart Drum (Ariane Lydon), Caxixi and Mawapu (Jem Moore), and/or guitar (Tia Kirwin). In this case, "new acoustic music" means a blend of influences from classical to jazz and from Gypsy to new age. This is a very nice album of exceptionally "hot" dulcimer playing.

what to buy next: *Race to the Gate* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Thumb, 1989, prod. Gary Gallier) is a double CD that combines an earlier cassette release, *Crossed Roads* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Thumb Music, 1986, prod. Gary Gallier), with a complete album of new material. It also features a large helping of original material by the Gallier brothers but adds several traditional fiddle tunes to the mix. Bo Brown on guitar, mandolin, and dobro and David Wilson on bass, fiddle, mandolin, cello, and piano again provide stellar support. The Gallier brothers' recordings are available from Dancing Thumb Music, P.O. Box 4922 G.S., Springfield, Missouri 65808.

influences:
◀◀ Jerry Rockwell, David Schnaufer
▶▶ Tull Glazener, Hollis Landrum

Neal Walters

Annie Gallup

Born in MI.

Annie Gallup was born in Michigan, lived for a time in Seattle, and now lives in Asheville, North Carolina. If geography teaches the traveler, Gallup has learned from her travels. Her songs can't be pinned down to a particular genre or regional style. An extraordinary lyricist whose songs read like poetry, she sings in a rich alto that carries an undertone of regret. But she's no sob sister; her melodies are often lively and fluid, and her acoustic guitar playing matches them well.

what's available: *Cause and Effect* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flyaway Hair, 1994, prod. Bruce Jay Paskow, Barry Gruber) has one of Gallup's best lyrics, the chorus of "Grandma's Best China," in which birds sing "cup-of-tea, cup-of-tea, sugar sugar, cheer-up." *Backbone* ♪♪♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME CD, 1996, prod. Annie Gallup, David Lange) has even more charming lyrics that link constellations and freckles, love and condom dispensers, and passion and Rapid City. *Courage My Love* ♪♪♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME CD, 1998, prod. David Seitz) moves Gallup closer to the beat-folk of Rickie Lee Jones, and the style suits her well. You can hear the fun behind "Anything Is Possible"—and for Gallup, the sentiment makes an apt motto.

influences:
◀◀ Dave Van Ronk, Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell, Victoria Williams

marvin gaster 303

Rachel Bissex, Patrice O'Neill

Pamela Murray Winters

Beppe Gambetta

Born in Italy.

Genoa, Italy's Beppe Gambetta has developed a reputation on both sides of the Atlantic as one of today's most distinctive and accomplished acoustic guitarists. His stylistic range is broad, mixing flatpicking, fingerstyle guitar, and a variety of unusual tunings. A fine, if understated, vocalist, Gambetta led noted Italian country band Red Wine before branching out on his solo career.

what to buy: A series of duets, mostly on bluegrass classics, recorded around the country with the likes of David Grier, Alan Munde, Dan Crary, and Norman Blake, *Dialogs* ♪♪♪½ (Alcazar, 1995, prod. Beppe Gambetta) shows Gambetta more than capable of holding his own in this fast company. Highlights include the duets with Danny Weiss (on Gambetta's "Slow Creek") and a slightly tongue in cheek version of "All You Need Is Love" with Mike Marshall.

what to buy next: *Good News from Home* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Mike Marshall, Rob Griffin), a soulful, low-key album, blends Gambetta's continental roots with some hot bluegrass picking seasoned with a nice mixture of traditional and traditional-sounding Mediterranean material. Gambetta sings two tunes in Italian and two in English.

the rest:

(With Tony Trischka) *Alone and Together* ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1994)

influences:

Doc Watson, Clarence White, Tony Rice

David Grier, Scott Nygaard

Michael Parrish

Art Garfunkel

Born Arthur Garfunkel, November 5, 1941, in New York, NY.

The masterful harmony singer with Paul Simon in Simon and Garfunkel through the 1960s, Art Garfunkel's solo albums concentrate on his main asset—his choir-boy voice. That worked up to a point. Without Simon as an artistic foil and songwriter, Garfunkel's work reached an artistic dead-end during the '80s.

what to buy: *Garfunkel* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1990, prod. various) is a best-of that covers the bases and includes all his Top 40 hits save 1974's "I Shall Sing."

what to buy next: *Angel Clare* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1973, prod. Roy Halee, Art Garfunkel) is his most powerful solo recording, with nice versions of Van Morrison's "I Shall Sing" and Randy Newman's "Old Man." *Watermark* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977, prod. Phil Ramone) is a worthy collaboration with writer Jimmy Webb.

what to avoid: Steer clear of *Lefty* ♪ (Columbia, 1988, prod. various), if for no other reason than his treacly version of "When a Man Loves a Woman."

the rest:

Breakaway ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975)
Fate for Breakfast ♪♪ (Columbia, 1979)
Scissors Cut ♪½ (Columbia, 1981)
Up 'til Now ♪♪ (Sony, 1993)
Across America ♪♪½ (Discovery, 1997)
Songs from a Parent to a Child ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1997)

influences:

Sam Cooke, Judy Garland, Beach Boys

Stephen Bishop, Babyface, Jackson Browne, Bobby Kimball

see also: *Simon & Garfunkel*

Leland Rucker

Marvin Gaster

Born December 21, 1934, in Sanford, NC.

Marvin Gaster is the last in a line of old-timey two-finger banjo pickers from Lee County, North Carolina. He bought his first banjo when he was about 12 and learned the style from his uncle, the great Henry Gaster. He played at square dances and other events in the area until the 1950s, when he stopped performing to concentrate on being a father, farmer, and teacher. Gaster picked up the banjo and fiddle again during the late 1960s.

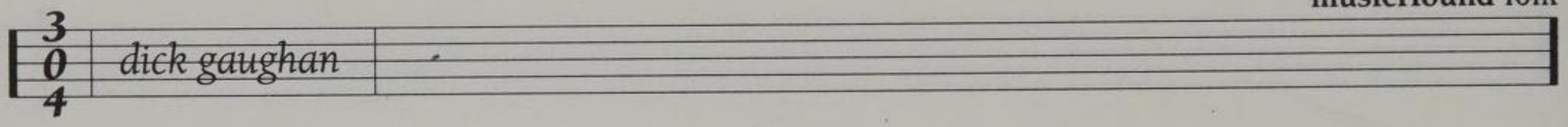
what's available: Backed by some of the best pickers in and around Lee County, the 24 songs on *Uncle Henry's Favorites* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Bob Carlin) were recorded informally in the musicians' homes. An important recording documenting the local traditional musical styles of Lee County.

influences:

Skillet Lickers, Bascom Lamar Lunsford

Benton Flippen, Kirk Sutphin

Douglas Fulmer



Dick Gaughan

Born May 17, 1948, in Leith, Scotland.

There are a handful of singers that come to mind who just have "it," that elusive quality that causes the soul to resonate through the sheer sound of their voice. Nusrat Ali Khan, Sarah Carter, Umm Kulthum, Robert Johnson . . . certainly a list of this type must also include Dick Gaughan. Any description of the man's talents must begin with the voice. His fierce passion for his native Scotland and its people must follow a close second. After that, one can list his skills a composer, his devotion to the fight for social justice, his gift for finding and interpreting the songs of others, and his talents as a guitarist. Gaughan grew up in a close-knit community in the town of Leith, which is now part of Edinburgh. His father, an emigrant from Ireland, was a fiddler and speaker of the Irish language; his mother was a Scot with a repertoire of songs from the highlands in both English and Gaelic. It was in this household steeped in song that Gaughan was raised. He began working as a professional musician in 1970. He was an early member of the Boys of the Lough and appears on their first album. A founding member of the Scottish folk rock group Five Hand Reel, Gaughan has more recently founded and produced the group Clan Alba. Gaughan is also interested in formal composition and has composed music for several BBC TV films. A passionate singer who wears his love of land on his sleeve, he is clearly the finest contemporary interpreter of traditional Scottish ballads know as the "Muckle Sangs" ("big songs"). To these he brings a power, warmth, and immediacy that bring life to these songs of great antiquity. He is also a master interpreter of the songs of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. His deep commitment to social justice is always present in his music and has deeply influenced younger performers like Billy Bragg.

what to buy: *Handful of Earth* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1981/1992, prod. Dick Gaughan) is simply a landmark recording. Gaughan is in perfect voice and the balance between truly superb political commentary and traditional Scottish music is stunning. The incredible beauty Gaughan brings to Burns's "Now Westlin Winds" is enough to make the recording a must have, but listen to the passion in "The Snows They Melt the Soonest" if you need a further example of Gaughan's gift. His versions of Leon Rossellson's "The World Turned Upside Down" and Ed Picket's "Workers Song" are as powerful performances of politically conscious material as you can find.

what to buy next: *A Different Kind of Love Song* ♪♪♪♪½ (Appleseed, 1997, prod. Dick Gaughan, Carsten Linde) may not be of the magnitude of *Handful of Earth* simply because it does not contain the traditional Scottish pieces to offset the social commentary, but so what. The passion can be heard throughout, from the amazing "Stand up for Judas" through his introspective interpretation of Joe South's "The Games People Play." The Appleseed people have added a bonus version of "The World Turned Upside Down" and a great Scots love song, "Lassie Lie Near Me," that helps to bring a little balance to those overwhelmed by the overt political material.

the rest:

More Forever ♪♪♪½ (Leader, 1972)
(With Boys of the Lough) *The Boys of the Lough* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1973)
Gaughan ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1978/1994)
(With Andy Irvine) *Parallel Lines* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1983/Appleseed, 1997)
Live in Edinburgh ♪♪♪♪½ (Celtic Music, 1985)
True and Bold: Songs of the Scottish Miners ♪♪♪ (Struc, 1986)
Call It Freedom ♪♪♪½ (Celtic Music, 1989)
Live in Edinburgh ♪♪♪♪½ (Appleseed, 1994)
Sail On ♪♪♪♪ (Appleseed, 1996)

worth searching for: And now for something completely different—a Dick Gaughan instrumental record. *Coppers and Brass* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1977/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Tony Engle) shows just what a skilled instrumentalist lies beneath that magnificent voice. This record sets his string play in a very traditional context and Gaughan plays through a set of reels, jigs, hornpipes, and marches. If you are a guitar player or are interested in traditional Celtic tunes you'll find plenty of pleasure on this recording.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Broonzy, Bert Jansch, Luke Kelley, Woody Guthrie, Ewan McColl

▶▶ Billy Bragg, Silly Wizard, Mary Black

see also: *Boys of the Lough, Andy Irvine*

Jared Snyder

Frankie Gavin

Born 1956, in Corrandulla, Co. Galway, Ireland.

Raised in a musical family of North-East County Galway, just across Lough Corrib from the Connemara *Gaeltacht* (Gaelic-speaking area), Frankie Gavin grew up surrounded by traditional music to become one of Ireland's finest fiddle players. He is a supreme technician and can produce the most complex and intense fiddle music while remaining absolutely at ease on the

instrument. One of his main sources of inspiration is the music of emigrant Irish performers who recorded in the United States during the 78 era. In particular, Gavin credits Galway piper Patsy Touhey, Sligo fiddle player James Morrison, Leitrim flute player John McKenna, and the Flanagan Brothers, originally from Waterford, for expanding, through their recordings, his repertoire of techniques and tunes as well as the general flavor of his music. A remarkable solo artist, Gavin is perhaps better known as one of the founders of the long-lived Irish group De Danann (or De Dannan, as they spell it now). Gavin was still of school age when the band came together during the early 1970s in music sessions held around Spiddal, County Galway, then home of Gavin's longtime partner-in-crime, bouzouki player Alec Finn. After coming to the United States for the first time in 1976 to participate in the extraordinary festivities surrounding the bicentennial celebration in the nation's capital, the band toured again the following year and, on that occasion, Gavin recorded his first solo album for the New York label Shanachie. Being an outstanding flute and whistle player as well, Gavin was inspired to make a flute album, *Croch Suas É—Up and Away*, in 1983. His accompanist this time was Leitrim fiddle and piano player Charlie Lennon, whose excellent compositions in traditional style have become well known through Gavin's performances. In 1985 Gavin participated in the recording of Lennon's *The Emigrant Suite*. He would again appear on Lennon's second suite, *Island Wedding*, recorded in 1991 for RTE. In the interval, Gavin produced one of his best albums and a landmark of Irish music when he recorded *A Tribute to Joe Cooley* in 1986 with accordionist Paul Brock. Gavin and Brock had first met Cooley and each other in 1973, shortly before the legendary accordionist's untimely death. Another outstanding solo album, *Frankie Goes to Town*, followed in 1991. That same year, Gavin was touring in France with De Dannan accordion player Aidan Coffey and guitarist Arty McGlynn when the trio was recorded during a concert in Paris. This exceptional recording, released in 1994 as *Irlande* by the French world-music label Ocora, as well as the few 1984 tracks from German festivals made available on *Ireland*, show the kind of powerhouse performances De Danann audiences have been rewarded with all these years. Although the band released a new album in 1996, it appears Gavin is busy nowadays with all kinds of solo ventures. But as long as Gavin and Finn continue to play music together, no one will be surprised to see De Dannan get on the road once again.

what to buy: *Traditional Music of Ireland* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1977, prod. Richard Nevins, Daniel Michael Collins) was Gavin's first solo album, recorded during a De Danann tour in the United States. The recording may show its age in the less than stellar sound quality, but Gavin's fiddle playing is riveting, and Alec Finn's trademark bouzouki accompaniment is just what's needed. *Frankie Goes to Town* ♪♪♪♪♪ (The Bee's Knees, 1989/Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Frankie Gavin), the first album to be released on Gavin's own label, could not be more aptly titled. Gavin, often performing duets with himself by doubling on second fiddle, viola, or flute, plays up a storm on a variety of old and newer tunes. Among the latter are some of Gavin's own compositions, as well as a good number of tunes by his favorite composer, Charlie Lennon, who happens to be his piano accompanist for most of the album. *Irlande* ♪♪♪♪½ (Ocora, 1994, prod. Radio France, Association Culture et Musique Irlandaises), available through Harmonia Mundi, is a live recording made in France in 1991 and featuring Gavin with Aidan Coffey (accordion) and Arty McGlynn (guitar). The pace is furious, yet the performance is incredibly tight, and the interplay between the musicians will make your head spin. This is truly superior musicianship at work, of the kind that can be heard whenever De Danann appears in concert. And Gavin's opening remarks on styles of vocal encouragement to the musicians are priceless, even if probably lost on the original French audience.

what to avoid: *An Irish Christmas* ♪♪ (The Bee's Knees, 1992/Shanachie, 1996, prod. Frankie Gavin, Carl Hession), retitled *Shamrocks and Holly—An Irish Christmas Celebration* and credited to Frankie Gavin with the Carl Hession Orchestra for its U.S. release, contains very little Irish traditional music, namely Tommy Coen's great reel "Christmas Eve," and a lot of rather cheesy arrangements of Christmas standards.

worth searching for: Although only available in the United States as imports, Gavin's two albums on the Gael-Linn label are "must have" for Irish music devotees. *Croch Suas É—Up and Away* ♪♪♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1983, prod. Frankie Gavin, Charlie Lennon, Jackie Small) is officially Gavin's "flute album," even though he also plays fiddle, tin whistle, and even accordion on it—he combines all of them on one track credited to "Frankie Gavin's Irish Orchestra"—with Charlie Lennon (piano) and Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh (bodhrán) accompanying. The playing is as good as it gets and the material reflects Gavin's main sources of inspiration: old tunes from the 78 era, and new compositions like those of Charlie Lennon. *A Tribute to Joe Cooley* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1986, prod. Frankie Gavin) proves, if needed, that Gavin takes after James Morrison in more ways than one and that, like the great Sligo fiddler of the 1920s, he is an awesome duet player. His partner here is accordion player Paul Brock, of recent Moving Cloud fame, who shares with Gavin a

passion for early recordings of Irish and Irish-American music, and their accompanist on piano is none other than Charlie Lennon, one of the best in the business. As it should be for a tribute to Joe Cooley, the famous accordion player from Peterswell, County Galway, the pace of the music is relaxed, so that the interplay of the two lead instruments can be savored in all its intricacies. Gavin was one of the guest musicians on Andy Irvine's excellent *Rainy Sundays . . . Windy Dreams . . .* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1980, prod. Dónal Lunny). Gavin's performance of Tommy Coen's reel "Christmas Eve" is definitely one of the highlights of the album, as is the Bulgarian "Paidushko Horo" on which he plays fiddle and flute. *Ireland* ♪♪♪♪ (WDR, 1993, prod. Christian Scholze, Jean Trouillet, Jan Reichow), a collection of live recordings made in Germany, includes five tracks featuring Gavin solo or with Belfast flute player Desi Wilkinson and master uilleann piper Liam O'Flynn.

influences:

⏪ Patsy Touhey, James Morrison, John McKenna, Flanagan Brothers

⏩ Seán Kane, Tommy Peoples, Paddy Glackin, John Carty

see also: *De Danann*

Philippe Varlet

General Humbert

See: Mary Black

Frank George

Born 1928, in Bluefield, WV.

Frank George was born in Bluefield, West Virginia, and has lived in that area most of his life. George won his first contest in 1937, playing a banjo made for him by his grandfather, who also made him a fiddle and taught him to play both. Heavily influenced by Virginia fiddler Jim Farthing, George was a master of the fiddle and banjo by the time he was a young man. Military service took him to Europe, where he met—and played music with—Scots and Irish people. The British Isles are the source of much of Appalachian music, and George returned to the United States with a deep understanding of Celtic music as well as his own. Today, George is still a master of the fiddle, banjo, mountain dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, piano, and the bagpipes. He still lives in West Virginia and passes on his traditions at festivals and music camps around the state.

what to buy: *Reflections of the Past* ♪♪♪♪ (Roane Records, 1996, prod. David O'Dell) presents George on fiddle and Dave O'Dell on banjo. O'Dell, one of West Virginia's finest banjo players from the younger generation, has played music with George for years. The fiddle/banjo combination is part of the very core of Appalachian old-time music, and this particular combination is one of the best. Neither instrument dominates the other; they are woven together seamlessly in a manner that tells you these guys have been playing together for a long time and understand each other very well. George's fiddling moves from an almost blues-like style on "Train on the Island" to a decidedly Celtic sound on "Loch Lavan." Throughout, O'Dell's banjo playing is precise and strong. Many of the tunes are old-time standards, a few with an unusual twist. There are also a few relatively unknown tunes, including the delightful "Green Mountain Reel." The sound quality is remarkably good, and it comes as a surprise to learn that this was not recorded in a studio. This might be hard to find at a record store, but can be obtained directly from Roane Records, Rte. 3, Box 293, Spencer, WV 25276.

what to buy next: You can hear an earlier incarnation of George and O'Dell on *The Cedar Point String Band* ♪♪♪ (Roane Records, 1997, prod. David O'Dell). This was originally recorded in 1983, and the band consisted of Frank, Dave, and guitarist Bob Roark (now deceased). The tunes are nearly all old-time standards, such as "Liberty" and "Sourwood Mountain." The recording is not quite as clear as on *Reflections of the Past*, but it certainly isn't bad. Also available directly from Roane Records at the above address.

influences:

⏪ Jim Farthing, Harvey Sampson

⏩ Too many young old-time fiddlers to count

Dave Shombert

Paul Geremia

Born in RI.

Guitarist/singer/songwriter Paul Geremia has spent the last 30 years traveling across what he calls "Uncle Sam's backyard," performing classic acoustic country blues and folk music with authenticity, flair, and a personal touch. Geremia began playing professionally in 1966, serving his musical apprenticeship during the era of folk "rediscovery" that gave him the opportunity to absorb firsthand the musical influences of such country blues innovators as Son House, Skip James, Bukka White, and Sleepy John Estes. He recalls these players with unabashed respect and affection, and his commitment to the genre is evident in his performances and recordings. Geremia plays finger-

style on six- and 12-string guitars, often using a slide and open or altered tunings, and occasionally adds rack harmonica. In addition to Mississippi Delta styles, Geremia's fluency extends to the East Coast "Piedmont" blues tradition of players such as Blind Willie McTell, Blind Blake, Pink Anderson, and Barbecue Bob Hicks. He is unparalleled as an interpreter—and perpetuator—of McTell's musical legacy.

what to buy: *I Really Don't Mind Livin'/My Kinda Place* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. Paul Geremia, others), clocking in at more than 70 minutes, combines two of Geremia's LP releases. *I Really Don't Mind Livin'*, from 1982, included all-original material. *My Kinda Place*, from 1986, featured outstanding covers of material by Lonnie Johnson, Leadbelly, McTell, Scrapper Blackwell and others, as well as some originals. Packaged together on one CD, they offer an essential introduction to Geremia's repertoire. *Gamblin' Woman Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1993, prod. Uwe Kranner) licensed from the Austrian label Shamrock Records, is an ideal complement to the Flying Fish set, covering artists such as Blind Lemon Jefferson, Big Bill Broonzy, Peg Leg Howell, McTell, Hicks, James, and others. *Live from Uncle Sam's Backyard* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997, prod. Chris Frymire) is a crisply recorded June 1991 live performance from Minneapolis that accurately captures the energy and audience rapport endemic to a Geremia show.

what to buy next: *Self Portrait in Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1994, prod. Uwe Kranner), also licensed from Shamrock, is more of the same good stuff. Guest spots from octogenarian violinist/mandolin Howard Armstrong and upright bassist Rory McLeod add texture to the release.

worth searching for: If you can find these out-of-print vinyl LPs, buy 'em: *Just Enough* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1968), *Paul Geremia* ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1973), and *Hard Life Rockin' Chair* ♪♪♪ (Adelphi, 1973). Geremia also did a guest spot on Peter Keane's CD, *The Goodnight Blues* ♪♪½ (Northeastern, 1991).

influences:

◀◀ Willie McTell, Pink Anderson, Skip James, Scrapper Blackwell, Son House, Mississippi John Hurt, Leadbelly

▶▶ Roy Book Binder, Steve James, John Hammond, Larry Johnson, Paul Rishell

Bryan Powell

Mark Germino

Born in NC.

Possibly because of his rebellious streak, stellar Nashville singer/songwriter Mark Germino has never tasted much commercial success, despite one truly classic country-rock song. "Rex Bob Lowenstein," his opus, is the story of a beloved old-fashioned (and crotchety) Southern DJ who gets replaced by a computerized playlist and locks himself in the studio playing thrash music. Though it applies to all kinds of radio stations, the song was most prophetic about country radio, which became hugely successful and blandly regimented right around 1991. Germino, a Vietnam veteran, sings with the punch and twang of Steve Earle, but he has a much more explicit social conscience. His backing band, the Sluggers, plays with the rocking consistency of the E Street Band.

what to buy: *Radartown* ♪♪♪½ (Zoo, 1991, prod. R.S. Field) contains "Rex Bob Lowenstein" and a lot of funny songs, including "Lerdy and Bo's Totalitarian Showdown," about love, freedom and injustice; it never went anywhere commercially.

what to buy next: With humor and hillbilly eloquence, Germino spins great tales on *Rank & File* ♪♪♪ (Winter Harvest, 1995, prod. Owsley Manier, Steve Roberts), including "Rosemary's New Constitution," about a black woman standing in line to vote and fantasizing about being elected president.

what to avoid: *London Town & Barnyard Remedies* ♪♪½ (RCA, 1986, prod. Paul Samwell-Smith), Germino's debut, isn't quite as fleshed-out as his later releases.

worth searching for: The *Rex Bob Lowenstein* ♪♪♪ EP (Zoo, 1991, prod. R.S. Field) is culled mostly from *Radartown*, but its highlight is a killer cover of Bob Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited."

influences:

◀◀ Steve Earle, Bob Dylan, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Bruce Springsteen

▶▶ Dan Bern, John Wesley Harding, Todd Snider

Steve Knopper

Alice Gerrard

See: Hazel & Alice

Gibson Brothers Band

Formed 1991, in Champlain Valley, NY.

Eric Gibson (born October 23, 1970, in Plattsburgh, NY), vocals, banjo; Leigh Gibson (born October 11, 1971, in Plattsburgh, NY), vocals, guitar; Junior Barber, dobro; Mike Barber, bass.

Eric and Leigh Gibson were raised on a dairy farm owned by their family since Civil War times and located near Ellenburg

blues guitar styles

Although it has African and European overtones, the blues is a uniquely American musical idiom. A convincing case has been made that the banjo might be the initial blues instrument, imported through the slave trade from Africa, but the blues is meant to be played on a guitar, and many of the guitar techniques that have spread into other forms of music originated among blues players. Players like Son House and Charlie Patton pioneered the technique of playing a guitar in open tunings with a glass or metal slide, developing the "bottleneck" sound that is now an integral part of rock and blues music as a method of emulating the cry of a human voice on a stringed instrument. The depths of emotional expression that early blues players could wring out of their instruments were also accomplished by other means. String bending was another method by which early players, most prominently Lonnie Johnson, produced intermediate "blue notes," and it has become the principal method of expression in rock and country playing as well. Blind Blake was the first, and one of the best, of the ragtime guitarists, who developed an elaborate finger-picking style that was able to emulate the sound of stride piano with only six strings. In later years, blues playing became diversified by geographical region, with distinctive styles emerging from Mississippi, Chicago, Texas, Memphis, and the eastern Piedmont.

Michael Parrish

Depot in the Adirondacks, just south of the border—the Canadian border, that is. Eric recalls that at an early age he and his brother fell in love with a landmark bluegrass album recorded many years ago by Lester Flatt and Mac Wiseman, and soon found themselves immersed not only in the great classic bluegrass sounds of Flatt and Scruggs, Jim and Jesse, and other pioneers of the music begun by Bill Monroe, but also the country sounds of artists like Buck Owens, whose performances with the late guitarist Don Rich had special impact on the young brothers. With support and encouragement from their parents, they began playing banjo and guitar together at an early age, and by their teenage years had begun to develop the "brother duet" vocal sound that has drawn frequent favorable comparisons to the classic brother acts of bluegrass and country music. In particular, their knack for trading lead and harmony back and forth, sometimes within the same song, brings recollections of the Louvins clearly into focus. Both still in their mid-20s (born just less than a year apart), Eric and Leigh Gibson have also shown themselves to be among the best young songwriters on the scene today, both individually and as a team, producing a body of work that should gain them a lot of attention and covers well beyond the borders of bluegrass. In forming their band in 1991, they made sure it stayed a family-oriented band by bringing aboard dobroist Junior Barber and his bass-playing son Mike. After releasing a self-produced album in 1994 (now out of print), they signed on with Virginia-based Hay Holler Records, one of the leading bluegrass specialty labels, for which they have recorded three well-received and critically praised albums. As the list of their concert and festival appearances grows, so does their reputation as one of the best young bluegrass bands on the scene today. Like another band of sibling New York natives, the Fox Family, the Gibson Brothers Band is proving that you can find great bluegrass far north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

what to buy: It may be putting undue pressure on the Gibson Brothers and their band to give them a top-of-the-scale rating this early in their careers, but *Spread Your Wings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1995, prod. Kerry Hay) is not only an album that every bluegrass fanatic should own, but also is an album that may end up drawing a great many new fans to the music—this is music that speaks not only to those older country fans who like the fresh interpretations of classic songs and artists, but also to today's alternative music fans who worry less about labels and categories than about whether the music is honest and well crafted. If you're looking for one single album as an introduction to the future of bluegrass, *Spread Your Wings* is at or near the top of a very short list. Five of the album's 14 cuts were written or co-written by Eric or Leigh Gibson, with "Picture in the Moonlight" and "Sam Smith" standing out not only as good songs, but as examples of the brothers' talent for writing different kinds of material. Peter Rowan's "I'm Gonna Love You (Like There's No Tomorrow)" is also done in fine style here as well. The remainder of the album will bring pleasant reminders from the past of country greats like Hank Williams, Webb Pierce, Marty Robbins, and Dolly Parton. And fans of contemporary folk music will want to check out the Gibsons' rendition of Greg

Brown's "Early." With only one guest musician—fiddler and mandolinist Aubrey Haynie—to bolster the band, *Spread Your Wings* is not a studio creation—this is pretty much what the Gibson Brothers Band sounds like when you see it on stage. Which is exactly what you'll want to do after hearing this record.

what to buy next: *Long Forgotten Dream* ♪♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Kerry Hay) is the group's debut on Hay Holler, and a mighty impressive one at that. The 15 tracks include eight originals by the brothers, along with renditions of material from the Louvins, Buck Owens, and Jimmie Davis. Picking favorites is tough, but pay special attention to "Looking for a Smile in a Heartache," "Good as Gold," and the album's title track, written by Seth Sawyer. Guesting on this record is the wonderful Canadian fiddler and mandolin player Ray Legere.

worth searching for: You may have to comb the record-concession bins at Northeastern bluegrass festivals like Delaware Valley or Winterhawk to find *Underneath a Harvest Moon* ♪♪♪½ (1994, self-produced), but snap it up if you do, as it will likely be a collector's item someday. Just don't let it sit around collecting value (or dust); play it. Now out of print, it shows the brothers still developing their talents, but their distinctive vocal sound is impressive even in this first release.

solo outings:
Junior Barber:
Stone Bottom Boogie ♪♪♪½ (Hay Holler, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Louvin Brothers, Lester Flatt, Mac Wiseman, Buck Owens, Don Rich, Jim & Jesse, Emmylou Harris, Ricky Skaggs

▶▶ Rarely Herd, Fox Family, Traditional Grass

John Lupton

Bob Gibson

Born November 16, 1931, in New York, NY. Died September 27, 1996, in Portland, OR.

A major player during the late '50s and early '60s folk-music scene, Bob Gibson helped bring the folk movement from the purists to a much wider audience, pre-dating the eventual commercial acceptance by the likes of the Kingston Trio. At first a banjo performer, Gibson eventually made the transition to 12-string guitar (and helped launch the early '60s popularity of that instrument), and his flawless playing would be a huge influence on soon-to-be-rockers Roger McGuinn and Steve Stills. Among the most successful of Gibson's ventures was his pairing with Bob Camp; their on-again-off-again relationship became among the most revered of all folk acts of the early '60s. Despite serving as a role model for '60s folk rockers (Stills's band Buffalo Springfield "thanks" Gibson on the sleeve of its second album), Gibson stayed a pure folk artist until the end, frequently collaborating with writer Shel Silverstein through the years and even trying his hand at playwriting, including his 1984 musical *The Courtship of Carl Sandburg.*

what to buy: *Joy Joy! The Young and Wonderful Bob Gibson: The Riverside Folklore Series Vol. I* ♪♪♪♪ (Riverside, 1996, prod. Orrin Keepnews, Kenneth S. Goldstein) is a well-stocked overview of Gibson's early career, spanning the years 1956–59 (and culling tracks from original Riverside albums *I Come to Sing, Offbeat Folk Songs, Hootenanny at Carnegie* and *There's a Meetin' Here Tonight* and including Gibson staples "There's a Meeting Here Tonight" plus oldies like "Lost Jimmie Whalen" and "John Riley."

worth searching for: On the heels of a major commercial folk boom, Gibson and Camp were caught live at Chicago's Gate of Horn nightclub for the revelatory *Bob Gibson and Bob Camp at the Gate of Horn* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1961, prod. Bob Gibson, Bob Camp). In top form, the duo plow through the hard-rocking "Betty and Dupree," lampoon the computer in "The Thinking Man," and issue wry observations on Mayor Daley's law enforcement crew in "Chicago Cops." Dylan, McGuinn, Stills, and Young had to be listening. (The duo would haul out this same set 25 years later for 1986's *Gibson and Camp–The Gate of Horn: Revisited!*)

the rest:
Makin' a Mess: Gibson Sings Shel Silverstein ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Shel Silverstein, Pete Seeger

▶▶ Erik Darling, Tommy Smothers, Neil Young, Stephen Stills, Roger McGuinn

David Simons

Ronnie Gilbert

Born 1926, in New York, NY.

Classical and pop music formed the musical soundtrack of New York–born singer Ronnie Gilbert's childhood. But, her love of folk songs and vocal harmonies made her one of the most influential female vocalists of the twentieth century. Through her concerts and recordings as a soloist and with folk-singing group the Weavers, and singer-songwriter-activist Holly Near, Gilbert has inspired nearly every woman who has sung a folk

song in the past 50 years. Gilbert first sang folk songs in a Washington, D.C.-based band called the Priority Ramblers. Her greatest success, however, came after she joined Pete Seeger and Lee Hays, formerly with the Almanac Singers, and Fred Hellerman, a guitarist she had met at a summer camp, to form the Weavers in 1958. The group's debut performance at the Village Vanguard in New York's Greenwich Village was so successful that it was extended from a one-stand gig to a six-month engagement. Signing a record contract with Decca Records in 1959, the Weavers' first single, "Goodnight Irene," written by Leadbelly, spent an unprecedented 14 weeks at the top of the *Billboard* Hit Parade charts and made the group an overnight sensation. However, the Weavers' prosperity was short lived. With the spread of McCarthyism and Communist red-baiting, the quartet's involvement with labor unions and the campaign to elect radical politician Henry Wallace for president led to them becoming among the earliest victims. Radio stations refused to play their records while club and concert promoters canceled their contracts. With no place to perform, the Weavers went their separate ways. Gilbert married and moved to California, not returning to the East Coast until the band's manager Harold Leventhal booked Carnegie Hall for a reunion show in 1955. The reunited Weavers remained together, with Seeger being replaced by banjo players Bernie Krauss and Frank Hamilton. They disbanded again during the early 1960s.

By 1963 Gilbert was recently divorced and beginning a solo career. Meeting Joseph Chaikin, actor/director of the experimental Open Theater, she became absorbed with acting. During the 1970s, she returned to school and earned a master's degree in clinical psychology. She continues to maintain a practice as a therapist. The influence of Gilbert and the Weavers has continued to grow. When a documentary producer assembled the group together to film an informal reunion in 1980, talk of a serious comeback was raised. Over the next two years the Weavers performed several shows. Portions of their Carnegie Hall concert were added to the original footage and produced as a video and album, *Wasn't That a Mighty Time*. A segment of the documentary enabled Gilbert to meet and sing with Near, who had grown up on her music. The results were so successful that Gilbert and Near embarked on several tours and collaborated on three albums, *Lifeline*, *Singing with You*, and *The Train Still Runs*. Since 1985 Gilbert has recorded two solo albums—*The Spirit Is Free* and *Love Will Find a Way*. Together with Near, Seeger, and Arlo Guthrie, she recorded a quartet album, *H.A.R.P.* Gilbert's most recent project was a one-woman show based on the life of union activist Mother Jones.

what to buy: Gilbert's third collaboration with singer-songwriter-activist Holly Near, *This Train Still Runs* ♪♪♪½ (Abbe Alice Music, 1996, prod. Donna Korones) is the product of two mutually admiring vocalists coming together to share music and political vision. A celebration of Gilbert's 70th birthday, the album includes rousing, harmonious interpretations of songs by Phil Ochs, Woody Guthrie, Sally Fingerett, and Janis Ian.

what to buy next: On *Love Will Find a Way* ♪♪♪ (Abbe Alice Music, 1989, prod. Donna Korones), Gilbert and piano and synthesizer player John Bucchino present an emotional musical look at romance and the affairs of the heart.

the rest:
Alone with Ronnie Gilbert ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1964)
(With Holly Near) *Lifeline* ♪♪♪ (Redwood, 1983)
(With Holly Near) *Singin' with You* ♪♪♪ (Redwood, 1985)
(With Holly Near, Arlo Guthrie, and Pete Seeger) *H.A.R.P.* ♪♪♪ (Redwood, 1985)
The Spirit Is Free ♪♪♪½ (Redwood, 1985)

worth searching for: Gilbert made important contributions to the soundtracks of video documentaries, *Woody Guthrie: A Hard Travelin'* and Ken Burns's *The Civil War.*

influences:
◀◀ Carter Family, Almanac Singers, Paul Robeson
▶▶ Holly Near, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins

see also: *Weavers, Holly Near*

Craig Harris

Vance Gilbert

Born in Philadelphia, PA.

Vance Gilbert was born in Philadelphia and now lives in Boston. He cites Shawn Colvin as a major influence; he used to open for her. Gilbert has become a mainstay of the folk festival circuit because his performing skills match or outstrip his musical skills. He's got a great stage presence; small children dance at his feet, audiences laugh nervously as he upbraids innocent members of their throng. He trades on his race for laughs in a way that makes some liberals uneasy, but it helps make him memorable. (One of his most popular songs is "Country Western Rap," a hip hoedown that hits all the easy targets.) He seems to enjoy the power struggle between performer and audience, but he's always in control. A powerful guitar player, an agile-voiced singer, he slips from humor into pathos and back again. Few of his best qualities, unfortunately, come across on his albums, which are far too glossy and flat.

what to buy: *Edgewise* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994, prod. Alain Millet) is worth having only if you enjoy "Country Western Rap" enough to play it over and over. Save your money and spend it on a live Gilbert performance instead. *Fugitives* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1995, prod. John Switzer) is better executed. Highlights includes the traditional song "Spencer the Rover," the buoyant Amelia Earhart tribute "Dear Amelia," and an intriguing look at black crime, "Just the Way That It Was," recorded in Jane Siberry's living room with Siberry on piano.

the rest:
Shaking off Gravity N/A (Philo, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Cosby, Shawn Colvin, Aaron Neville
▶▶ Tom Prasada-Rao

Pamela Murray Winters

Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

Formed 1988, in VT.

Steve Gillette (born November 23, 1942, in Pensacola, FL); Cindy Mangsen (born July 21, 1950, in Niagara Falls, NY).

Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen are two of the finest folk musicians playing today. The husband-wife team from Bennington, Vermont, write from their souls and they reflect the rich traditions that make others take notice. Gillette, an accomplished fingerstyle guitarist, got his first real break in 1966, when Canadian folk duo Ian and Sylvia recorded his classic song (written with Tom Campbell) "Darcy Farrow." Since then, his songs have continued to make their mark, mostly in country music circles. He spent many years as a songwriter in Nashville, perfecting his craft and releasing several albums that featured such artists as Graham Nash and Emmylou Harris's Hot Band. Mangsen, one of the United States's finest soprano vocalists, plays guitar, piano, English concertina, banjo, and dulcimer. A former librarian, she began performing professionally in 1976, releasing her first album, the critically acclaimed *Long Time Traveling*, in 1983. Gillette and Mangsen were introduced by singer-songwriter Anne Hills at the Golden Link Folk Festival in Rochester, New York, in 1988; they married in 1989. While they have recorded a pair of stunning duet albums on their own Compass Rose Music label and have played backup for such legendary folk singers as Tom Paxton, they also have continued to release solo efforts and collaborations. Mangsen has toured with Anne Hills and Priscilla Herdman, and her passion for playing Celtic and American traditional music has brought her before audiences on public radio and television. Gillette wrote and sang theme songs for several Hollywood films, including *The Pond, The Grass Is Greener, Summer Run, Door to Door,* and *The Outfit*. In addition to performing, Gillette continues to teach songwriting, guitar playing, and record production, and has released an instructional cassette *How to Play Guitar like I Do* (Compass Rose Music, 1995), along with two books: *The Steve Gillette Songbook* (Compass Rose Music, 1990) and *Songwriting and the Creative Process* (Sing Out Publications, 1994).

what to buy: The best combo album for Gillette and Mangsen is *Live in Concert* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Compass Rose Music, 1991, prod. Steve Gillette, Cindy Mangsen), which includes a strong repertoire of their best-known songs. Digitally recorded live at the Ark in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the 60-minute disc captures the sparse arrangements, warmth, and sweet harmonies that mark their shows. It features "the lazy man's parade" of Gillette's "The River" and "Darcy Farrow," Mangsen's take on Mark Graham's comical "Their Brains Were Small and They Died," and the traditional child ballad "Annachie Gordon." Individual efforts worth checking out include Mangsen's critically acclaimed *Songlines* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass Rose, 1992, prod. Pete Sutherland) with the sea-chantey-like a cappella of Jez Lowe's "Black Diamonds" and Nancy White's "Daughters of Feminists," sung with Gillette, Anne Hills, Abby Newton, and Priscilla Herdman. Gillette's "solo" *The Ways of the World* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass Rose, 1992, prod. Jim Rooney) has lovely harmonies by Mangsen and contains his romantic ballad "Bed of Roses," and songs about destitute hobos, farmers losing their land, walking a mountain trail, never losing touch with the hometown, or coming to grips with a changing world.

what to buy next: The duo's *Light of the Day* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass Rose, 1996, prod. Steve Gillette, Cindy Mangsen) has a delightful tribute to the late folk singer Gamble Rogers and a delightful song by Mangsen about finding your way through life ("Dark of the Moon"). Also worth checking out is Mangsen's stunning collaboration with Anne Hills and Priscilla Herdman, *Voices* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Abby Newton), which has everything a harmony lover could want: tight vocals presented by three of the best singers on the planet. No small praise, but one listen is all it takes to realize that the human voice can achieve some amazing and mesmerizing effects. Also check their outstanding live seasonal release *Voices of Winter* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Gadfly Records, 1997, prod. Cindy Mangsen, Anne Hills, Priscilla Herdman).

3
1
2 jimmie dale gilmore

the rest:
On This Day Earth Shall Ring ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)

worth searching for: Gillette's second, third, and fourth albums are out of print. His albums *Alone . . . Direct* ♪♪♪ (Sierra, 1979, prod. John Delgatto) and *A Little Warmth* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1979, prod. Graham Nash) are possible finds, though *Back on the Street Again* ♪♪♪ (Outpost, 1974, prod. John Ware) is less likely to appear since it was a limited pressing of only 1,000 LPs. Likewise, two of Mangsen's early efforts are out of print. Her *Long Time Traveling* ♪♪♪½ (Hogeye, 1983, prod. Cindy Mangsen), recorded live to two-track, includes Anne Hills, Jan Burda, and Fred Campeau and was chosen as one of the top folk albums of the year by the *Chicago Reader.* The other is *Settle Down* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1987, prod. Cindy Mangsen), which has backup from Hills and Abby Newton.

solo outings:
Steve Gillette:
Steve Gillette ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)

Cindy Mangsen:
(With Anne Hills and others) *On This Day Earth Shall Ring* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)
(With Anne Hills and others) *Never Grow Old* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994)

influences:
⏮ Doc Watson, Merle Travis, Ian & Sylvia, Joan Baez, Martin Carthy, Jean Redpath

⏭ Garth Brooks, John Denver, Anne Murray, Kenny Rogers, Tammy Wynette, Don Williams, Waylon Jennings, Jennifer Warnes, Oak Ridge Boys, Tony Rice, Jerry Jeff Walker, Linda Ronstadt, Anne Hills, Priscilla Herdman, Laurie Lewis

Stephen Ide

Jimmie Dale Gilmore

Born May 6, 1945, in Amarillo, TX.

Blessed with a voice of extraordinary range and expressiveness—think Roy Orbison if he'd wanted to be Jimmie Rodgers instead of Mario Lanza—and a lyrical vision that is equal parts West Texas lonesome and the sound of one hand clapping, Jimmie Dale Gilmore is a unique presence in contemporary music. Silent for nearly two decades after his abortive debut with the supergroup-in-retrospect Flatlanders, Gilmore's solo career began in fairly conventional country territory and moved further left-of-center with each release. His interpretive skills have led him to become the definitive performer of songs by fellow Texas visionary (and former Flatlander) Butch Hancock, while Gilmore's own songs have been covered by Natalie Merchant and David Byrne.

what to buy: *After Awhile* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra Nonesuch American Explorer Series, 1991, prod. Stephen Bruton) is a stunning showcase for Gilmore's original artistry, notably the elliptical, Zen-like "Tonight I Think I'm Gonna Go Downtown" and "Treat Me like a Saturday Night." But the album's otherworldly feel is nicely undercut by the gentle humor of Gilmore's own "Go to Sleep Alone" and the not-so-gentle humor of Butch Hancock's "My Mind's Got a Mind of Its Own." To complete the package, the blazing "Midnight Blues" proves Gilmore can play with intensity. Just try keeping your jaw from dropping repeatedly while listening to this one. *Spinning around the Sun* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1993, prod. Emory Gordy Jr.) relies more heavily on covers than its predecessor, and it would rate as a superior work if Gilmore's near-definitive take on Hank Williams's "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" was its only selection. But there's also a loping cover of the Elvis B-side "I Was the One" and Butch Hancock's devastating lover's put-down, "Just a Wave." If anything proves Gilmore's mettle, it's his cover of his ex-wife Jo Carol Pierce's "Reunion," which imagines a couple sundered on earth to be joined again in the hereafter.

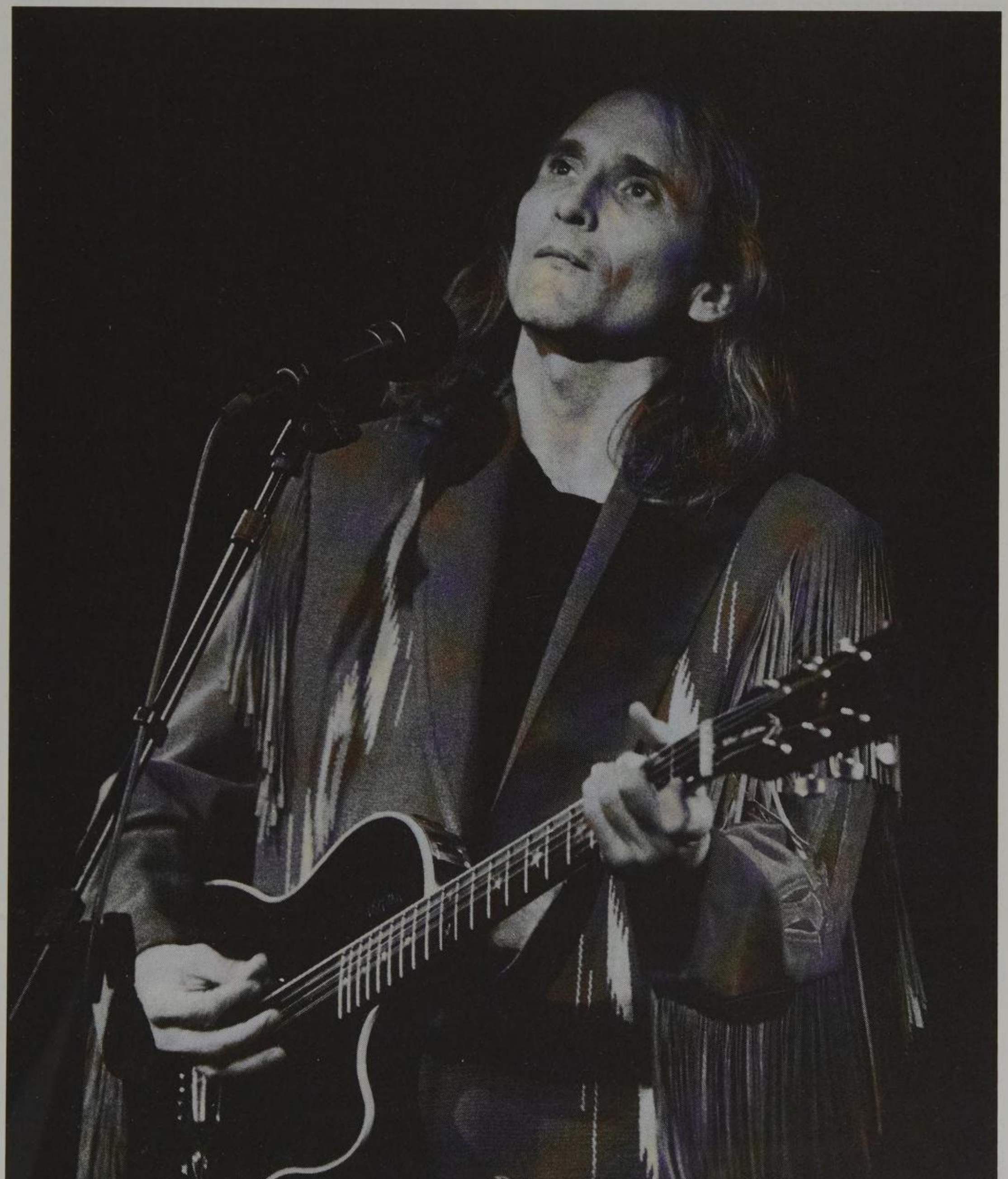
what to buy next: If *Magical Mystery Tour* had been recorded in Austin, Texas, it might sound something like *Braver Newer World* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1996, prod. T-Bone Burnett). Producer Burnette removes Gilmore almost entirely from a country context, surrounding him instead with saxophones, echo-laden drums, and stinging, sitar-like guitar leads, making explicit Gilmore's country & Eastern leanings. It's a radical experiment, but it works.

the rest:
Fair & Square ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1988)
Jimmy Dale Gilmore ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1989)

worth searching for: *Mudhoney/Jimmie Dale Gilmore* ♪♪♪ (Sub Pop EP, 1994, prod. various) is a peculiar artifact on which Gilmore and the Seattle grunge pioneers cover each others' songs and team up for the late Townes Van Zandt's "Buckskin Stallion Blues." Also, Gilmore and Hancock's *Two Roads: Live in Australia* ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin Records Australia, 1990/Caroline, 1993, prod. Keith Glass, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Butch Hancock), which

Jimmie Dale Gilmore **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

jimmie dale gilmore



finds the two performing solo and in tandem, is an immensely satisfying live album from way, way south of the border.

influences:

◀◀ Hank Williams, Roy Orbison, Buddy Holly, Jimmie Rodgers, Willie Nelson, Alan Watts

▶▶ Jim Lauderdale, Kevin Welch, Iris DeMent, Gillian Welch

see also: *Flatlanders*

Daniel Durchholz

Julie Gold

See: Four Bitchin' Babes

Golden Gate Quartet /Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Formed as the Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, early 1930s, in Norfolk, VA.

A.C. "Eddie" Griffin, tenor (early 1930s–34); Robert "Peg" Ford, bass (early 1930s–36); Willie Johnson, baritone (early 1930s–48); Henry Owens, tenor (early 1930s–50); William Langford, tenor (1934–39); Orlandus Wilson, bass (1936–90s); Clyde Riddick, tenor (1939–90s); Orville Brooks, baritone (1948–50); Alton Bradley, tenor (1950–51); Eugene Mumford, tenor (1951–54); Clyde Wright, tenor (1954–90s); Julius Caleb "J.C." Ginyard, baritone (1955–71); Paul Brembley, baritone (1971–90s).

One of the most popular gospel vocal groups in history, the Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet formed out of a Virginia high-school glee club. The lineup gelled when bass singer Orlandus Wilson joined baritone William Langford and tenors Willie Johnson and Henry Owen in 1936; the following year the quartet made its first recordings for Bluebird Records. The Gates's style drew on spirituals and hymns but also incorporated elements of jazz and other vocal groups like the Mills Brothers. Performing a cappella, the members of the group often imitated instruments with their voices. At the recommendation of John Hammond, the Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet performed at the 1938 "Spirituals into Swing" concert at New York's Carnegie Hall, along with Benny Goodman, Count Basie, and others. Their popularity soared afterwards, with regular nightclub and national radio performances. The group shortened its name to the Golden Gate Quartet in 1939 and the following year recorded a session with Leadbelly. During the early '40s, the quartet started recording for OKeh Records and also appeared in a number of feature films. The group maintained its popularity throughout the decade with strong recordings, but personnel changes and the advent of rock 'n' roll took their toll during the '50s. In 1955 the group made its first tour of Europe and made that continent its base during the following decades. The Golden Gate Quartet made its most important recordings during the '30s and '40s, but recordings made during the '60s are still available, mostly on French imports. The quartet continued to be active performers into the '90s with a lineup that had been stable for more than two decades.

what to buy: *Meet Me at the Golden Gate* ♪♪♪♪ (Magnum America, 1996, executive prod. Bob Marin) compiles the best recordings from the Gates' sessions for both Bluebird and OKeh/Columbia. It's not the easiest of the group's albums to find, but it boils down the most influential seven-year period of the group's career into a succinct 20 songs, with highlights like "Golden Gate Gospel Train," "Jezebel," the World War II novelty "Stalin Wasn't Stallin'," and "Rock My Soul," listed by the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame as one of the "500 Songs That Shaped Rock & Roll."

what to buy next: For a more in-depth collection of the group's Bluebird recordings between 1937 and 1939, try *Travelin' Shoes* ♪♪♪♪ (Bluebird, 1992, compilation prod. Billy Altman). This is likely the easiest Golden Gate album to locate, and it contains both spirituals ("Bedside of a Neighbor," "Motherless Child," "Travelin' Shoes") and contemporary pop (Louis Armstrong's "Ol' Man Mose," Irving Berlin's "My Walking Stick," and a fabulous arrangement of "Stormy Weather").

what to avoid: The performances are as captivating as the ones on their studio recordings, but the surface noise of *Radio Transcriptions: 1941–44* ♪♪½ (Document, 1997) makes it a chore to enjoy—though a spirited run-through of "Straighten Up and Fly Right" helps. *The Very Best of the Golden Gate Quartet* ♪♪ (World Pacific, 1997, prod. Pathé Marconi) covers the years 1955–69, but the recordings largely consist of spirituals and contemporary tunes (like Otis Redding's "The Dock of the Bay" and the Beatles' "Honey Pie"!) done as everything from Dixieland to doo-wop. Recorded mostly in France with session musicians, these attempts to modernize the group capture neither the quartet's best qualities nor the tenor of the times.

the rest:

Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 1 (1937–38) ♪♪♪½ (Document, 1996)

Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 2 (1938–39) ♪♪♪½ (Document, 1996)

Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 3 (1938–39) ♪♪♪½ (Document, 1996)

Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 4 (1939–43) ♪♪♪½ (Document, 1996)

worth searching for: *Swing Down, Chariot* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1991, prod. Michael Brooks) contains 20 songs from the group's OKeh years (1941–50), including "Jezebel," "Swing Down, Chariot," and the more topical "No Restricted Signs" and "Atom and Evil." A French import, *Golden Years (1949–1952)* ♪♪♪ (FD, 1993, compilation prod. Christian Bonneau) contains European sessions recording between 1939 and 1952, including the quartet's first recordings with piano accompaniment. Three tracks from the Bluebird-era Gates (including "Rock My Soul") and three more from the Southern Sons, a quartet formed in 1939 by former Gates lead singer William Langford, are included on the *I Hear Music in the Air!* ♪♪♪♪ (Bluebird, 1992, compilation prod. Billy Altman) compilation.

influences:

◀◀ Mills Brothers, Famous Bluejay Singers, barbershop vocal groups

▶▶ Dixie Hummingbirds, Soul Stirrers, Swan Silvertones, Fairfield Four, Jubalaires, Southern Sons

Brian Mansfield

Golden Ring

See: Sandy & Caroline Paton, Gordon Bok, Bok, Muir & Trickett, Ed Trickett, Sara Grey, Cathy Barton & DavePara

Good Ol' Persons

Formed 1975, in Berkeley, CA.

Kathy Kallick, guitar, vocals; Laurie Lewis, fiddle, vocals (1975–77); Dorothy Baxter, guitar, vocals (1975–77); Barbara Mendelsohn, banjo, hammered dulcimer, vocals (1975–77); Sue Shelasky, mandolin, vocals (1975); Paul Shelasky, fiddle, vocals (1975–88); Kevin Wimmer, fiddle (1988–present); Sally Van Meter, dobro, banjo, vocals (1977–present); John Reischman, mandolin, vocals (1978–present); Markie Sanders, bass, vocals (1977–80); Bethany Raine, bass, vocals (1980–90); Beth Weil, bass, vocals (1991); Todd Phillips, bass (1991–present).

A musical institution in the San Francisco Bay area for more than two decades, the Good Ol' Persons began life as an all-women band that blended bluegrass, folk, old-time country, and swing music. Although the gender line would be breached the first year, musical eclecticism has remained a hallmark of this influential group. After recording a self-titled debut for Bay in 1977, the Persons made three albums during the 1980s for Kaleidoscope, all of which have recently been reissued by Flat Rock. Though relatively inactive in recent years, the band celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1995 with a live career-retrospective album on Sugar Hill and a gala two-night concert in Berkeley that reunited many of the band's past line-ups.

what to buy: *Good n' Live* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Pieter Groenveld, Peter Thompson), which draws from live recordings spanning the years 1985–91, presents a satisfying overview of the band's career. Highlights include John Reischman's fiery playing on virtually every cut, Kathy Kallick's sassy lead vocals and such band favorites as "Part of a Story" and "I Can't Stand to Ramble." *I Can't Stand to Ramble* ♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1983/Flat Rock, 1995, prod. Tom Diamant) features the group's signature version of "You Don't Miss Your Water," a half-dozen Kallick originals, and a couple of cool Reischman-penned tunes: "Itzbin Reel" and "Get Up, Go to Work."

what to buy next: *Anywhere the Wind Blows* ♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1989/Flat Rock, 1995, prod. Tom Diamant) showcases strong Kallick lead vocals on "Waking up Alone" and the title song. Other highlights include Bethany Raines's swinging take on "Walking the Floor over You" and a pair of Reischman's original tunes.

the rest:

Part of a Story ♪♪♪ (Flat Rock, 1996)

solo outings:

Todd Phillips:

Released ♪♪♪½ (Varrick, 1995)
In the Pines ♪♪♪ (Gourd, 1996)
Time Frame ♪♪♪ (Compass, 1996)

John Reischman:

North of the Border ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993)

influences:

◀◀ Vern & Ray, High Country

▶▶ Laurie Lewis & Grant Street, All-Girl Boys

see also: *Kathy Kallick, Laurie Lewis, Sally Van Meter*

Jon Hartley Fox

Steve Goodman

Born July 25, 1948, in Chicago, IL. Died Sept. 20, 1984, in Seattle, WA.

Steve Goodman was a folk singer from Chicago and a good friend of John Prine who emerged during the early 1970s with a gift for blues guitar playing and, like Prine, compassionate and humorous songwriting. His compositions have been recorded often by Jimmy Buffett, Prine, David Allen Coe, and the Clancy

Brothers; Arlo Guthrie, John Denver, and Willie Nelson are among those who have covered Goodman's best-known song, "The City of New Orleans." After a bout with major labels, Goodman settled into a groove with his own Red Pajamas label until he died of leukemia at age 36.

what to buy: *No Big Surprise* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1994, prod. various), a worthy anthology with a disc each of Goodman in the studio and onstage, offers more than a taste of him at his best. *Santa Ana Winds* ♪♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1980, prod. Steve Goodman) showcases his strongest song collection—produced the way it ought to be.

what to buy next: *Affordable Art* ♪♪♪½ (Red Pajamas, 1983, prod. Steve Goodman, Dan Einstein) includes "Talk Backwards," "Watching Joey Glow," and "A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request," one of the most poignant of all baseball songs. *Tribute to Steve Goodman* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red Pajamas, 1985, prod. Al Bunetta) features lots of special guests—including John Prine, Arlo Guthrie, John Hartford, Bonnie Raitt, and David Bromberg—doing some of Goodman's best tunes.

the rest:
Artistic Hair ♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1983)
Unfinished Business ♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1987)
The Best of the Asylum Years, Volume 1 ♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1988)
The Best of the Asylum Years, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Red Pajamas, 1989)

worth searching for: *Somebody Else's Troubles* ♪♪♪♪½ (Buddah, 1972, prod. Arif Mardin) is an early collection that includes "The Dutchman," "The Loving of the Game," and the powerful "The Ballad of Penny Evans."

influences:
◀◀ Bob Gibson, Josh White, Woody Guthrie, Bob Wills, Hank Williams, Big Bill Broonzy, Jethro Burns, Bob Dylan

▶▶ James McMurtry, Michael Penn, Steve Forbert

Leland Rucker

John Gorka

Born July 27, 1958, in Edison, NJ.

Championed by the new folk movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s, John Gorka is hardly a straight folk or country artist. But his dark, emotionally honest songs fit in perfectly with classic country paradigms. Gorka's characters typically feel out of place or out of step with the world around them. In his songs, this can make for some harrowing or sometimes just plain funny stories. That his music sometimes blurs the lines between the two is further evidenced by his collaborations and tours with country stars Mary Chapin Carpenter and Kathy Mattea, not to mention work with Nanci Griffith, another singer-songwriter with feet planted firmly in both traditions. With a voice as deep as his hair is dark, the New Jersey–born, Pennsylvania-based Gorka has quietly carved out a niche for himself as a writer and vocalist who sings about the process of living. Gorka was a mainstay at the club Godfrey Daniels in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, before winning the 1984 New Folk Award at Texas's Kerrville Folk Festival, recognition that helped him sign with independent Red House Records three years later. His fame spread after Will Ackerman signed him to his Windham Hill label and released *Land of the Bottom Line* in 1990. While his earliest albums were stark, unadorned affairs, Gorka began recording with a full band with 1994's *Out of the Valley*. Gorka now records for Windham Hill's High Street imprint.

what to buy: Nowhere is Gorka's mordant wit more apparent than on *Land of the Bottom Line* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1990, prod. Bill Kollar), an evocative indictment of society—and relationships—run amok.

what to buy next: *Jack's Crows* ♪♪♪ (High Street, 1991, prod. Dawn Atkinson, William Ackerman) is the most critically acclaimed of Gorka's six albums and one of his most intimate. The video for "Houses in the Fields" was a moderate hit on CMT.

the rest:
I Know ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1987)
Temporary Road ♪♪♪ (High Street, 1992)
Out of the Valley ♪♪♪ (High Street, 1994)
Between Five and Seven ♪♪♪ (High Street, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Stan Rogers, Woody Guthrie, Nanci Griffith

▶▶ Shawn Colvin, Dar Williams, Bill Morrissey, Lucy Kaplansky

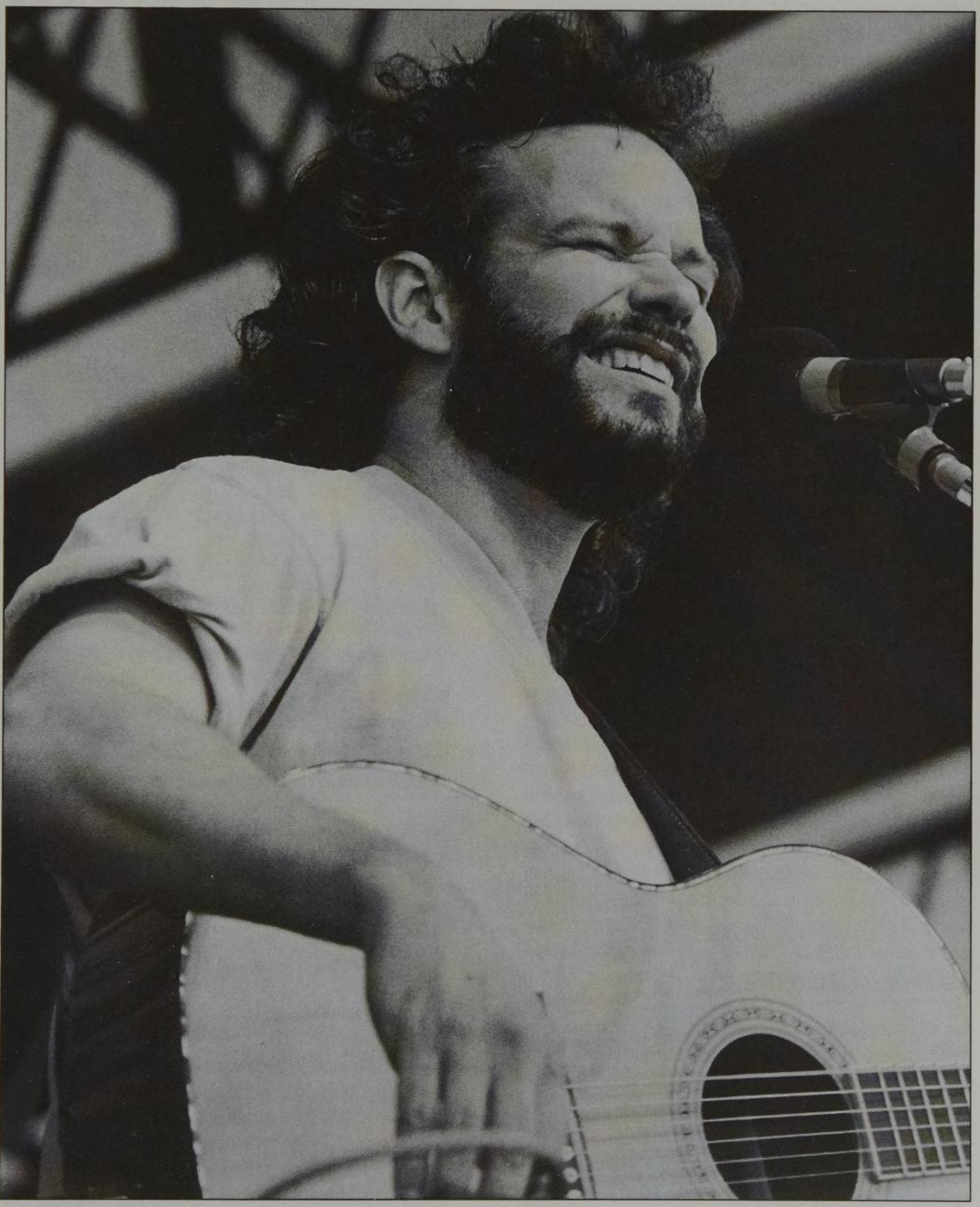
Doug Pullen

Skip Gorman

Born May 18, 1949, in Providence, RI.

Skip Gorman is an accomplished bluegrass mandolinist, traditional fiddle player, and a onetime member of the old-timey group the Desert String Band, as well as being one half of the traditional duo Rabbit in a Log. He also recorded two albums of

John Gorka (© 1994, Stephen A. Ide)



traditional cowboy songs for Folk-Legacy in the 1970s, and has performed Western songs for a quarter century. Lately, Gorman has toured and recorded as a solo artist, performing traditional cowboy songs exclusively.

what's available: *Greener Prairie* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Skip Gorman) features Gorman's fine instrumentals and melodic vocals on a repertoire of mostly traditional western fare. *Lonesome Prairie Love* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Skip Gorman) is just as good as the first, and just as true to the traditions from whence the songs are drawn.

influences:

◀◀ Carl Sprague, Eck Robertson

▶▶ Don Edwards

Randy Pitts

Vern Gosdin

Born August 5, 1934, in Woodland, AL.

Dubbed "The Voice" because of the devastating power of his dramatic vocals, Vern Gosdin grew up singing in church and in a family gospel quartet. Early on, he moved to Chicago and worked as a machinist while singing nights in smoky clubs. During the mid-1960s Gosdin moved to Los Angeles and joined the Golden State Boys, a bluegrass band that would also include brother Rex and Chris Hillman. Gosdin first hit the charts with "Hangin' On" (on the Bakersfield Sound label) and performed with Rex as a member of the Gosdin Brothers in 1967. The brothers would sing harmony on the Byrds' classic country-rock album, *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*. After failing to take their own recording career to the next level, the Gosdins parted ways in 1972 and Vern moved to Atlanta with his wife and two sons and started a glass business. Despite the success of that endeavor, music drew him to Nashville in 1976; Gosdin asked Emmylou Harris to sing with him on his first Music City session. She agreed and he was offered a deal with Elektra. He had his first Top 10 hit in 1977, at the age of 42, and for the next decade recorded for a variety of labels, finally scoring a #1 in 1984 with "I Can Tell by the Way You Dance (You're Gonna Love Me Tonight)" on Compleat. After signing with Columbia in 1986 Gosdin's reputation as a master of heartache and harmony was cemented by brilliant ballads, including "Do You Believe Me Now" and "Chiseled in Stone," the Country Music Association Song of the Year in 1989.

what to buy: *Chiseled in Stone* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987, prod. Bob Montgomery) is a masterwork of vocal balladry and songwriting artistry, with Gosdin collaborating with songwriting aces Max D. Barnes and Hank Cochran to craft the heart-stretching immortal country of the title track, "Do You Believe Me Now," "Set 'Em up Joe" (an Ernest Tubb tribute), "Is It Raining at Your House," and "Who You Gonna Blame It on This Time," all Top 10 hits.

what to buy next: *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)* ♪♪♪♪½ (American Harvest, 1996, prod. Gary S. Paxton, Vern Gosdin, Ron Oates, Blake Mevis, Robert John Jones) is a stellar 19-track collection containing key tracks and re-recordings of material from his stints at Elektra, Compleat, and Columbia as well as a new single—"The Number"—and the non-ballad "Dream of Me," a 1981 Top 10 hit originally recorded for Ovation. *The Gospel Album* ♪♪♪♪½ (American Harvest, 1995, prod. Vern Gosdin, Robert John Jones) is the reissue of the Compleat album *If Jesus Comes Tomorrow (What Then)*, a collection of gospel standards that Gosdin had sung in church and some newer Gosdin/Barnes collaborations.

the rest:

Alone ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
10 Years of Greatest Hits—Newly Recorded ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990)
Out of My Heart ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1991)
The Truly Great Hits of Vern Gosdin ♪♪♪♪ (American Harvest, 1994)
Super Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994)
If You're Gonna Do Me Wrong (Do It Right) ♪♪♪♪ (American Harvest, 1996)
24-Karat Heartache ♪♪♪½ (American Harvest, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Blue Sky Boys, Byrds

▶▶ George Jones, Vince Gill

David Sokol

Susan Gottlieb

See: Phranc

The GP's

See: Ralph McTell, Richard & Linda Thompson

Davey Graham

Born November 22, 1940, in Leicester, England.

If one were to chart a genealogy of the development of British folk guitar, one could trace it back to one man: Davey Graham, the apparent lone Prime Mover of the London folk guitar scene during the late '50s and early '60s. Many of the artists who populated the London clubs in that era—among them Bert Jansch, John Renbourn, Martin Carthy, Ralph McTell, Wizz Jones, Robin

Williamson, even Paul Simon, who spent some time soaking up the scene—credit Graham with a decisive influence on their own guitar playing. As well they might. Graham's instrumental skills were near-legendary among the cognoscenti even before the release in 1965 of the watershed album *Folk Roots New Routes* with Sussex singer Shirley Collins, a now-obscure recording that at the time created a sensation. It heralded two important things: first, a successful wedding of English traditional folk song with a new guitar style tailored to the music; folk guitarists had cut their teeth on Lonnie Donegan and skiffle music, or American blues and jazz, but no one in the English scene had attempted to play English folk this way. The second innovation was that Graham had synthesized his wide interests in folk, blues, jazz, even Middle Eastern and Indian music, into a guitaristic musical vocabulary entirely his own, a lexicon of riffs that everyone who heard him scrambled to learn. Graham is generally credited with inventing DADGAD tuning—a modal alternate tuning now used seemingly everywhere (Pierre Bensusan, for one, plays exclusively in this tuning). If Graham didn't exactly invent it, there's little question that he was the first to pass it into popular parlance. His instrumental piece "Angie" was the de facto test piece for virtually every coffeehouse guitarist in England or America, fueled greatly by Paul Simon's recorded version on Simon and Garfunkel's *Sounds of Silence* album. His modal, raga-like version of "She Moved through the Fair" was nicked by Jimmy Page in his Yardbirds days (perhaps a tune-up for his later notorious rehashing of Bert Jansch's "Blackwaterside"!) and re-titled "White Summer." Jansch reworked Graham's legendary version of Charles Mingus's "Better Git It in Your Soul" at least three times on recordings; indeed, one can hardly listen to any of his or John Renbourn's early recordings—whether solo, duets, or with their band Pentangle—without practically hearing an inventory of Graham's guitar licks. Unfortunately, while Graham is still active and playing, his glory days seem to be well in the past, a stasis generally attributed to his long struggles with drug abuse. Stefan Grossman drew him out of seclusion long enough to record two LPs on the Kicking Mule label: *The Complete Guitarist* in 1978 and *Dance for Two People* (1982), both tentative and unremarkable efforts that are long out of print. Nevertheless, a whole world of guitarists, from contemporaries like Martin Carthy to moderns like Martin Simpson, Pierre Bensusan, or thousands more who play Celtic or British fingerstyle guitar, owe a debt to this totally original, highly influential guitarist.

what to buy: If you can find it, grab *Folk Blues and All Points in Between* ♪♪♪ (See for Miles, 1985, prod. Ray Horricks), a collection issued in France. Of the many LPs and EPs recorded for British Decca through the '60s, this CD culled from those recordings is all that's left in print—but it's a good one. His signature "Angie" isn't here, but "Better Git It in Your Soul" is, as well as Bobby Timmons's "Moanin'," an astonishing version of Willie Johnson's "I Can't Keep from Crying," the North African–flavored "Maajun," and enough other goodies from Graham's heyday to demonstrate why everyone who heard him knocked themselves out trying to play that way.

the rest:

(With others) *Music of Ireland: Airs, Jigs, Reels, Hornpipes, and Marches Arranged for Fingerstyle Guitar* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1989)
(With others) *Art of Fingerstyle Guitar* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992)
Guitar Player . . . Plus ♪♪♪ (See for Miles, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Charles Mingus, Josh White, his own fertile imagination

▶▶ Martin Carthy, Bert Jansch, John Renbourn, Pierre Bensusan, Nic Jones

Chris Rietz

Grant Street

See: Laurie Lewis

Bill Grant

See: Delia Bell & Bill Grant

The Grass Is Greener

See: Richard Greene

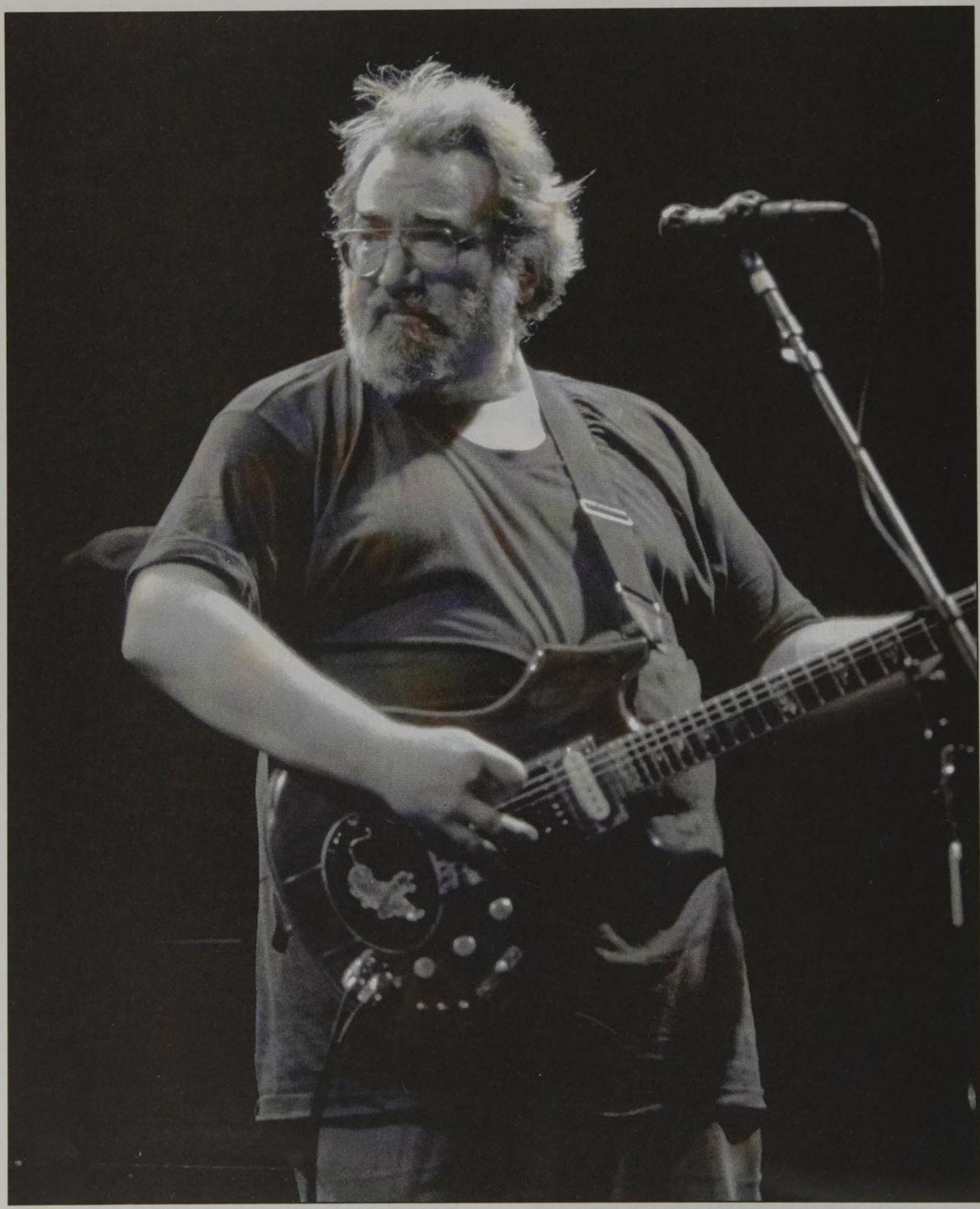
Grateful Dead

Formed 1965, in San Francisco, CA. Disbanded 1995.

Jerry Garcia (died August 9, 1995), guitar, vocals; Bob Weir, guitar, vocals; Phil Lesh, bass, vocals; Bill Kreutzmann, drums; Mickey Hart, drums (1967–69, 1974–95); Ron "Pig Pen" McKernan (died March 8, 1973), vocals, keyboards (1965–72); Keith Godchaux (died July 23, 1980), keyboards (1972–79); Donna Godchaux, vocals (1972–79); Brent Mydland (died July 26, 1990), keyboards, vocals (1979–90): Vince Welnick, keyboards, vocals (1990–95).

Under the spell of the Band's *Music from Big Pink*, the Grateful Dead returned to its own roots in bluegrass, folk, and jug-band music with the 1970 album *Workingman's Dead*. The acoustic, folky mood also flavored their subsequent album, *American Beauty*, but the Dead have always sidled up alongside country rather than wholeheartedly embraced it. The elemental music stream has trickled through the band's electric rock improvisa-

320 grateful dead



tions—such as Merle Haggard's "Mama Tried" or Marty Robbins's "Big Iron"—but it was only on Dead side projects that guitarist and figurehead Jerry Garcia got to fully indulge his passion for traditional American country music.

what to buy: *Workingman's Dead* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1970, prod. Grateful Dead) remains the crucial studio work in the band's entire oeuvre. *American Beauty* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1970, prod. Grateful Dead) also manages to convey the band's fluid lyricism, although with somewhat darker undertones. On the solo side, Garcia's collaborations with longtime associate David Grisman—one of the key figures in the modern bluegrass movement—would be the means by which the late guitarist expressed his love and affinity for old timey music. Garcia's bluegrass prowess is best heard on *Jerry Garcia/David Grisman* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1991) and *Shady Grove* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1996).

what to avoid: Despite their occasionally rootsy forays, the Dead's hackneyed attempts at commercial relevance during the late 1970s—*Terrapin Station* **woof!** (Arista, 1977, prod. Keith Olsen), *Shakedown Street* **woof!** (Arista, 1978, prod. Lowell George, Dan Healy), and *Go to Heaven* **woof!** (Arista, 1980, prod. Gary Lyons)—should be avoided at all costs.

best of the rest:

The History of the Grateful Dead, Volume 1 (Bear's Choice) ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1973)
Two from the Vault ♪♪♪♪♪ (Grateful Dead Records, 1992)
Dick's Picks, Volume 4 ♪♪♪♪ (Grateful Dead Records, 1996)

solo outings:

Jerry Garcia:

(With Vassar Clements, Richard Greene, and David Grisman) *Old & In the Way* ♪♪♪ (Grateful Dead Records, 1975)
(With Grisman) *Not for Kids Only* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1993)
(With Old & In the Way) *That High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1996)

influences:

Cannon's Jug Stompers, Jimmy Reed, Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones

Allman Brothers Band, Los Lobos, Spin Doctors, Phish, Blues Traveler

Joel Selvin and Gary Graff

Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead **(© Ken Settle)**

Josh Graves

See: Flatt & Scruggs, Kenny Baker

The Greenbriar Boys

Formed 1958, in Madison, WI.

John Herald, guitar, vocals; Bob Yellin, banjo, vocals; Eric Weissberg, banjo, vocals (1958–59); Ralph Rinzler, mandolin, vocals (1959–64); Frank Wakefield, mandolin, vocals (1964–67); Jim Buchanan, fiddle (1964–67).

This band of young urban bluegrass enthusiasts played a small but important role in the folk revival of the 1960s, and must particularly be cited for bringing bluegrass music to urban audiences that may not otherwise have heard it. They won the band contest at the famed Union Grove Fiddler's Convention in 1960, a fair indication of the seriousness with which they approached the music. Guitarist John Herald was a product of the Washington Square folk jams in New York's Greenwich Village; he, Eric Weissberg, and Bob Yellin formed the first version of the band while students in Wisconsin. Mandolinist Ralph Rinzler joined in 1969, when Weissberg left. The band played a frenetic, skittery bluegrass blend; their repertoire was marked by the inclusion of traditional music from many traditions, from "Stewball" to "Amelia Earhart's Last Flight." In addition to their own recordings, they backed Joan Baez on some bluegrass selections and also recorded with West Coast singer Di'an James on a bluegrass and traditional country record. After Rinzler left the band in 1964, ace pickers Frank Wakefield (mandolin), and Jim Buchanan (fiddle) joined the group for a time.

what's available: One reissue compilation is currently available, titled *The Best of the Greenbriar Boys* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992).

worth searching for: *Di'an & the Greenbriar Boy* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1963, prod. Jim Dickson) is a quirky, long out-of-print album on which both the band and vocalist James are shown to best advantage on an adventurous repertoire of bluegrass, traditional country, and folk material.

influences:

Red River Dave McEnery, Ramblin' Jack Elliott

David Grisman, Jody Stecher

Randy Pitts

bruce greene

slack key guitar

Slack key is an indigenous Hawaiian style of finger-picking solo acoustic guitar, the name of which refers to the guitar's open tunings (in the native Hawaiian tongue, slack key is called "ki ho'alu," literally, "loosen the key"). The tunings—which vary from player to player and may be kept secret—usually contain major chords of major chords with a 6th or 7th. Slack key developed from the Hawaiian cowboy tradition after cowboys (or "vaqueros") from Mexico, California, Spain, Portugal, and many South American countries introduced the guitar—and the Western concept of melody—to the islands during the 1830s. The guitar as a solo instrument gained attention in Hawaii during the 1940s and '50s with the recordings of such artists as Gabby Pahinui and Sonny Chillingworth and came to prominence during the '70s as those guitarists influenced a new generation of players. The selection of slack key albums available on the mainland is still limited, with the easiest to find coming from pianist George Winston's Dancing Cat label, which began recording some of the best contemporary players, including Keola Beamer and George Kuo, in 1994.

Brian Mansfield

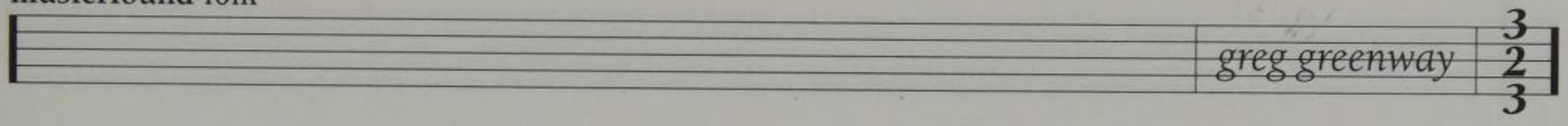
Bruce Greene

Born January 10, 1951, in NJ.

Bruce Greene is originally from an urban background. He went to Kentucky to study folklore at Western Kentucky University and stayed in the state for many years after, hunting down and learning from the older fiddlers who were the source of this beautiful, archaic music. One of his many accomplishments was the documentation and preservation of the music of John Salyer of Magoffin county, with the help of Grover Salyer, John's son. These unique recordings now reside in the archives of the Appalachian Center at Berea College. Presently living in Burnsville, North Carolina, Greene continues the tradition by passing on his knowledge at music camps around the country.

what to buy: Most recordings of old-time fiddlers include some sort of accompaniment, usually banjo and/or guitar. Greene dispenses with that custom for *Five Miles of Ellum Wood* ♪♪♪♪♪ (BG Records, 1996, prod. Bruce Greene), and for good reason. These tunes are not the well-known standards of fiddle music; they're unusual, slower paced, crooked, and wildly beautiful. They represent the essence of old-time fiddling, evoking a sense of the isolation and primitive nature of life in the Appalachian mountains. All were collected by Greene from older fiddlers, primarily in western Kentucky, some of whom would otherwise never have been heard outside their own communities. Many of the tunes are from the time of the Civil War or earlier. Greene's playing is distinctive and unique, particularly his bowing, and it's exactly what's required to present these tunes with all their inherent grace and dignity. He avoids the all-too-common tendency to overuse drone strings, preferring to ring a bass string occasionally with a light but sure touch. This kind of fiddle playing has been all but lost from the American traditional music genre; Greene does his part and more to preserve it. Comprehensive and interesting notes about the tunes and fiddlers are included in the liner notes, as are the fiddle tunings for each tune. This disc may be difficult to find in record stores, but can be obtained directly from the artist at Rte. 5, Box 340, Burnsville, NC 28714.

what to buy next: *Fiddler's Dozen* ♪♪♪♪½ (1994, prod. Bruce Greene, Hilary Dirlam) is similar to the above: uncommon Kentucky fiddle tunes learned from older fiddlers, played in the same distinctive style with solid backup guitar provided by Hilary Dirlam. This cassette originally came with a calendar with original drawings by Loy McWhirter; comprehensive liner notes are included. *Vintage Fiddle Tunes* ♪♪♪♪½ (Leatherwood Recordings, 1987, prod. Bruce Greene, Hilary Dirlam) features more beautiful Kentucky fiddle music with Hilary Dirlam accompanying on guitar. This was Greene's first cassette and is still available directly from him. Greene is also an excellent old-time banjo player, and you can hear some of that on *Old Time Pickin'* ♪♪♪♪ (1993, prod. Red Wilson, Bruce Greene). Here he joins Red Wilson, a fiddler from the western North Carolina/Eastern Tennessee region who is past 70 and still going strong. The tunes on this cassette are, for the most part, well-known old-time tunes. Wilson's playing is steady and rhythmic and his intonation better than many fiddlers half his age. Greene plays banjo and provides some vocals; Paul Buchanan plays guitar. It's available directly from Greene at the above address.



influences:

- John Salyer, Hiram Stamper, Darley Fulks, Gusty Wallace, other Kentucky fiddlers
- Too many aspiring old-time fiddlers to count

Dave Shombert

Richard Greene /The Grass Is Greener

Born November 9, 1942, in Hollywood, CA.

Fiddle/violin virtuoso Richard Greene started out with Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys and in 1969 formed the country-rock fusion band Seatrain with bluegrass crony Peter Rowan, also a Monroe alumnus. During the early 1970s he returned to his bluegrass roots, co-starring with David Grisman and Jerry Garcia in the legendary Old & In the Way and producing as well as accompanying Muleskinner. During the late 1980s Greene recorded two albums with a group known as the Grass Is Greener, whose lineup over the years has included Bill Keith, David Grier, Kenny Blackwell, Tim Emmons, Butch Baldassari, Tony Trischka, and Buell Neidlinger.

what to buy: *The Greene Fiddler* ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1995, prod. Richard Greene) spans Greene's musical career from 1967 through the 1990s and showcases the fiddler's mastery of styles ranging from bluegrass to Bach. Especially noteworthy are "Soldier's Joy" and his version of "Blue Rondo a la Turk." *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam* ♪♪♪♪ (Sierra, 1974/Warner Bros., 1994, prod. Richard Greene, Joe Boyd) is a landmark of the "newgrass" era that features some stellar call-and-response fiddle and guitar playing on "Muleskinner Blues."

what to buy next: *Seatrain* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1969, prod. George Martin) was produced by legendary Beatles collaborator Martin and represents his first project after the last Fab Four album. On this recording Greene unleashes a psychedelic version of "Orange Blossom Special" that has to be heard to be believed.

the rest:

(With Seatrain) *Marblehead Messenger* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1971)
The Grass Is Greener ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1995)
(With Old & In the Way) *That High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1996)
(With the Grass Is Greener) *Wolves a' Howlin'* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1996)

worth searching for: *Blue Rondo* (Sugar Hill, 1979/1992) is available on LP and cassette.

influences:

- Bill Monroe, Seatrain, Scotty Stoneman
- Peter Rowan, John McEuen, Butch Baldassari, Mark O'Connor

Douglas Fulmer

Greg Greenway

Born December 13, 1952, in Richmond, VA.

Freedom and justice are the themes that run through the songs of Virginia-born and Massachusetts-based singer-songwriter Greg Greenway. A former high school and college basketball player, Greenway used music as a release from the anger and frustration sparked by the racism he saw his teammates experiencing. Although he initially attracted attention with his humorous ode on bad driving, "Massachusetts," his greatest impact was with his songs that examine racial problems and human communication.

Greenway first visited Boston during his senior year at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Walking through Harvard Square, he was inspired by the folk singers and street musicians that he saw. Although he returned to Virginia to finish college, he moved north in 1976. Assembling a folk/rock band, he spent a year opening shows for Livingston Taylor all over the eastern United States. When the group added an electric guitarist, he became disenchanted with the changed sound and left to form another group, Trace of Red, that performed covers of material by the Who and the Police. Greenway stayed with the band for three years. In 1981 Greenway and bass player Doug Wray began playing as an acoustic duo.

what to buy: *A Road Worth Walking Down* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Front, 1992, prod. Greg Greenway, Dave Dickerson) features band arrangements of the songs that Greenway and Wray perfected during their duo performances. In addition to Greenway's hilarious satire on reckless driving, "Massachusetts," recorded during a coffeehouse concert, the album includes his rhythmic songs of freedom—"Free at Last" and the title track. David Wilcox sings harmony on the a capella tune, "Waterfall."

what to buy next: *Singing for the Landlord* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Front, 1995, prod. Greg Greenway, Dave Dickerson) picks up where Greenway's debut album left off. A deeply personal and politically conscious recording, the album spotlights Greenway's gospel-flavored songwriting.

worth searching for: Recorded at the intimate Old Vienna folk music coffeehouse in Westboro, Massachusetts, *The Old Vi-*

clive gregson

enna Tapes—Volume 2 (Fast Folk, 1993) includes a live recording of Greenway's chilling tune, "Ghost Dance."

influences:

Livingston Taylor, David Wilcox

David Wilcox, Brooks Williams

Craig Harris

Clive Gregson

Born January 4, 1955, in Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester, England.

Someone once groused, "Folk music is nothing but country with a British accent." Maybe she was right. Clive Gregson's got a Nashville label these days, and if he had a Tennessee twang he'd be a superstar. The Manchester native fronted Any Trouble, a Stiff Records band in the days when Stiff was just making its reputation as a purveyor of cool class. Stiff, however, was more interested in labelmate Elvis Costello. Any Trouble disbanded, and Gregson toured for a time with Christine Collister, both as a duo and as part of Richard Thompson's band. All the while Gregson continued to write intelligent pop songs and deliver them with a friendly voice and rapid-fire guitar. When the duo broke up, it seemed that the big-voiced Collister got custody of the audiences, but Gregson persisted. Now on Nashville's Compass label, he may or may not be looking for that big break anymore, but he's getting the right kind of support. Gregson has also produced albums for the Oysterband and Stephen Fearing, and his songs are often covered by other musicians. In the duo days, his own warm baritone was often overshadowed by Collister's powerful voice, but it's one of his secret weapons.

what to buy: *I Love This Town* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1996, prod. Garry West, Clive Gregson) is a collection of pop songs that rivals the best of Any Trouble and Gregson/Collister.

what to buy next: The more acoustically oriented *People and Places* ♪♪♪½ (Compass, 1995, prod. Clive Gregson) features some very strong Gregson compositions like "Mary's Divorce" (based loosely on the Irish traditional tune "Mairi's Wedding").

the rest:

Strange Persuasions ♪♪♪½ (Demon, 1985/Compass, 1995)

worth searching for: *Carousel of Noise* ♪♪♪♪ (Flypaper, 1994, prod. Clive Gregson) is a live CD containing many of the songs Gregson and Collister popularized (including "I Shake" and "It's All Just Talk"); it was sold through the Richard Thompson fan mailing list Flypaper (Box 391, Wainscott, NY 11975). Keep an eye out for *Welcome to the Workhouse* ♪♪♪♪ (Special Delivery, 1990, prod. Clive Gregson, John Wood), a collection of demos and rarities that contains a revealingly understated cover of Michael Jackson's "She's out of My Life."

influences:

Richard Thompson, Elvis Costello

Don Dixon, Lee Collinson

see also: *Christine Collister, Clive Gregson & Christine Collister*

Pamela Murray Winters

Clive Gregson & Christine Collister

Formed 1985, in Manchester, England; Clive Gregson born January 4, 1955, in Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester, England; Christine Collister born on the Isle of Man, U.K.

Between 1980 and 1984, Clive Gregson led an offbeat pub-rock band called Any Trouble. Clever and attractive, but neither groundbreaking nor commercial, the band eventually broke up without leaving Gregson in any position to carve out a hitmaking solo career. Sizing up his options, he happened to hear Christine Collister performing in a small bar and was immediately taken with her smoky alto voice and impassioned delivery. He agreed to produce some tracks for her, and the pair began performing in clubs. Soon, both were on tour as members of Richard Thompson's backup band, and with that extra experience behind them, they launched what would be a seven-year period of smart, poignant folk/rock. Because they were romantically linked during that time, the story of their musical career parallels that of their affair, shifting from tentative (*Mischief*, highlighted by the lovely but cutting "I Specialise"), to self-assured and powerful (1989's classic *A Change in the Weather*), to sniping and bitter (1992's *The Last Word*). Like Thompson, Gregson is a terrific guitarist, and he's not a bad singer, but his real skill lies in his ability to pen canny and insightful country/rock and pop/rock tunes. He has gone on to record several rather impressive solo albums, but he'll probably never again have as potent an instrument to write for as Collister's voice. She recently put out a live album that, sadly, shows what can happen when someone with great pipes loses their direction. The sound is there, but the feeling and intent are not.

what to buy: Varied and peppy, but often melancholy and/or dramatically moving, *A Change in the Weather* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1989, prod. Clive Gregson) features two absolutely heartstop-

ping vocal performances by Collister, plus a host of other strong numbers, particularly "This Is the Deal," a touching tale of domestic abuse. Either "A Blessing in Disguise" or "How Weak I Am" would be worth the price of admission for any disc; together, they beautifully demonstrate the magic of Gregson's songwriting and Collister's singing.

what to buy next: Darker than *Weather*, *The Last Word* ♪♪♪♪ (RNA/Rhino, 1992, prod. Clive Gregson) was the album Gregson and Collister made after their relationship had come to an end. You may want to sit down for this one.

what to avoid: An album of cover tunes by Jackson Browne, Bruce Springsteen, Aztec Camera, Merle Haggard, and others, *Love Is a Strange Hotel* ♪♪ (RNA, 1990, prod. Clive Gregson, Christine Collister) should have been brilliant. But both Gregson's arrangements and Collister's vocals are too tame, too reverent, and other than Browne's "For a Dancer," the album floats along without making much of an impression.

the rest:
Home and Away ♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1987/Flying Fish, 1992)
Mischief ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1988)

influences:
◀◀ Richard & Linda Thompson, Hank Williams, Sandy Denny, Nick Drake
▶▶ John Wesley Harding, Eleanor McEvoy, Matt Keating

see also: *Clive Gregson, Christine Collister*

Bob Remstein

Adie Grey

Born in Los Angeles, CA.

Adie Grey, granddaughter to film composer Bill Lava, and her husband/partner/co-writer Dave MacKenzie, a first-rate, Chicago-bred acoustic blues guitarist, rank among Nashville's most versatile couples. Their day job takes them around the world as players with the surviving member of Sam and Dave. In their spare time they write and produce their own music. Much like Gillian Welch and David Rawlings, or even Buddy and Julie Miller, Adie Grey's name on the CD spine speaks only to who's singing and whose smile adorns the cover. MacKenzie writes or co-writes most of the songs, and his guitar work anchors Grey's vocals (Grey also plays dulcimer). Their collaboration has about it the same sturdy care that marks the best of the 1960s folk boom: an emphasis on songs and the variety of ways they might be presented, with gentle tints of gospel and blues.

what's available: Grey's second outing, *Grandpa's Advice* ♪♪♪½ (Hey Baby! Music, 1997, prod. Adie Grey, Dave MacKenzie), reveals somewhat more stylistic versatility than does her debut, *Brand New Old Time Music* ♪♪♪½ (Hey Baby! Music, 1994, prod. Adie Grey, Dave MacKenzie). That said, they're both pleasing, graceful discs that have about them the soothing kindness that makes Victoria Williams so captivating. *Grandpa's Advice* runs from the touching "My Old Man" to the catchy "Daddy Put Your Beer Down" (the next line is "Mama wants to dance," and Jo-El Sonnier is on accordion) to the lilting Irish drinking wisdom of "The Grape and the Grain." *Brand New Old Time Music* is a simpler disc, though guest appearances by Wynonna Judd, John Hartford, Ranger Doug, and Tammy Rogers will remind the listener that it is not without ambition. On both discs Grey stays with her strength: a sweet, limber voice that exudes happiness, even on the most bittersweet of songs.

influences:
◀◀ Peggy Seeger, Christine Collister
▶▶ Maria Sangiolo, Debi Smith

Grant Alden

Sara Grey

Born in Boston, MA.

Sara Grey is a fine singer of traditional ballads with a sweet and powerful voice. Born in Boston, she lived in Greensboro, North Carolina, until she was nine years old, which fueled a lifelong love for traditional mountain music and the five-string banjo. She later attended Boston University and then Oberlin College in Ohio. She earned a master's degree in theatre arts at Montana State University while spending summers in repertory theatre at the University of Washington. In Montana she met and was influenced by folk singers Bob and Evelyn Beers and later became a neighbor of the great Appalachian singer Jean Ritchie in Port Washington, New York. After moving to Philadelphia in 1967, Grey began learning to play the banjo and studied folklore at the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in the study of Amish recreational pastimes. She subsequently spent a number of years living in England, Scotland, and Wales, with occasional forays back to the states to tour and record. Her repertoire mixes traditional music from all of these sources.

what to buy: *Sara* ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1994, prod. Gordon Jones, Bob Thomas) is a nice—and very generous at 57 min-

grianan

utes—collection of ballads from several traditions and is typical of the type of material Grey performs in concert. Selections range from child ballads such as "The Lady Gay" to Appalachian fiddle tunes like "Betsy Liken." Grey does a particularly nice version of "Across the Bridge," which she describes as "an old Carolina hymn." Actually, it was written by Van Morrison, but why quibble . . . it's still good.

what to buy next: *Promises to Keep* ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1990) is available on cassette only and is another fine collection of traditional material that features Grey's vocals and banjo playing with help from friends on guitar, bouzouki, fiddle, and bass.

the rest:
Sara Grey with Ed Trickett ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1970) (cassette only)
A Breath of Fresh Air ♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1981) (cassette only)
Making the Air Resound ♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1984) (cassette only)
Flash Company ♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1987) (cassette only)
You Gave Me a Song ♪♪♪½ (Greenwich Village, 1987) (cassette only)

worth searching for: It's worth noting that Grey also appears on the two recently released Golden Ring reunion CDs *Five Days Singing, Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1996, prod. Sandy and Caroline Paton). These were originally released in 1971 but still resonate with obvious good fun and equally excellent singing by a very strong company of excellent musicians.

influences:
◀◀ Bob & Evelyn Beers, Ed Trickett, Hedy West
▶▶ Ann Mayo Muir, Anne Hills

Neal Walters

Grianan

See: Kevin Crawford

David Grier

Born September 23, 1961, in Washington, DC.

The preeminent bluegrass lead guitar player of the 1990s, David Grier was exposed to the music early, through his father Lamar Grier, banjo picker for Bill Monroe during the mid-1960s. A devotee of the idiosyncratic playing of Clarence White, Grier first made himself known on a national level through recordings with the Doug Dillard Band and Country Gazette. Since launching his solo career during the late 1980s, Grier has become the highest-profile guitarist in bluegrass, thanks to tours and recordings with the Rounder Banjo Extravaganza, the Grass Is Greener, and Psychograss; a pair of well-received solo albums and an outstanding duet album with mandolinist Mike Compton; guest appearances on literally scores of bluegrass, folk, and country recordings; and three Guitar Player of the Year awards from the International Bluegrass Music Association (1992, 1993, and 1995).

what to buy: *Freewheeling* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Jim Rooney, David Grier) acknowledges Grier's debt to the late Clarence White with dazzling versions of "Alabama Jubilee" and "The New Soldier's Joy." Solo performances on "Gold Rush" and "Fog Rolling over the Glen" are especially nice, but most of the album features a first-rate band that includes Stuart Duncan and Sam Bush.

what to buy next: *Lone Soldier* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Stuart Duncan) casts Grier in a jazzier light on "Porkchops and Applesauce" and "Alphabet Soup," but the more traditional-sounding tunes, particularly his originals "Smith Chapel" and "R Somethin'," suit him better. The superb backing band includes Béla Fleck, Craig Smith, Duncan, and Bush. *Climbing the Walls* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. David Grier, Mike Compton), which pairs Grier with former Nashville Bluegrass Band mandolinist Mike Compton, is a sparkling all-instrumental romp through a set that includes original tunes, lesser-known gems from Bill Monroe ("Honky Tonk Swing" and "Going up Caney") and a killer duet on "Black Mountain Rag."

the rest:
Panorama ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Clarence White, Tony Rice
▶▶ Wyatt Rice, Chris Thile

Jon Hartley Fox

Patty Griffin

Born March 16, 1964, Old Town, ME.

Patty Griffin has a knack for writing songs you think you've heard before. While her vocals are at times too impassioned where understatement is called for, Griffin's hooky tunes are elevated by stark confessional imagery, and most are grabbers. The youngest of seven children, Griffin took up the guitar when she was 16. She began performing regularly after moving to Boston in her mid-20s. Married at 24, she was encouraged to overcome her innate shyness and take to the stage by her new husband. The relationship dissolved four years later, but Griffin

Patty Griffin **(© Ken Settle)**

3
2
8 *grace griffith*

continued to write and perform. Her A&M debut was delayed when the inhibited New Englander didn't respond well when working in a studio with a producer. As a fall-back option, she was freed to take a more informal approach, recording almost everything solo in houses in Boston and Nashville.

what's available: *Living with Ghosts* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1996, prod. Steve Barry), is less a folk album than a rock recording without the rhythmic clutter, a la Springsteen's contemporaneous *The Ghost of Tom Joad*. Think Melissa Etheridge without the rote arrangements and with much better songs.

worth searching for: *Let Him Fly* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1997, prod. Steve Barry, others), a three-track promotional CD, features radio-oriented re-mixes of "Let Him Fly" and "Every Little Bit" from *Living with Ghosts*.

influences:

◀◀ Bruce Springsteen, Melissa Etheridge, Tracy Chapman

▶▶ Burns Sisters

Steven Stolder

Grace Griffith

Born October 30, 1956, in Washington, DC.

Grace Griffith is an eloquent and passionate singer who is true to her name—graceful. In her native Washington, D.C., area, she was named Washington Area Music Association's "Best Female Vocalist" in both the Celtic and traditional folk categories for four consecutive years.

what's available: *GRACE* ♪♪♪½ (Blix Street, 1996, prod. Grace Griffith, Blix Street) is a re-release of sorts. It contains eight tracks from Griffith's debut album, *Every Hue and Shade*, along with "Sailing/Ships Are Sailing" from *Siren Song* by Connemara, a group that features Griffith as the lead singer, and Griffith's version of "Turning Away," Dougie MacLean's anthem to his Scottish ancestors that was recorded especially for *GRACE* and is not on *Every Hue and Shade*. When asked why they chose to create a new album rather than simply re-releasing *Every Hue and Shade*, Blix Street noted that, "It isn't often that you have the opportunity to begin again with an album that is already a near classic. The people who bought *Every Hue and Shade* already know. We are asking them to join us in turning on the world to Grace's music, while offering those early believers an opportunity to obtain *GRACE* at our cost." So why not? Alternatively, I suppose you can just buy *Every Hue and Shade* ♪♪♪ (Grace Griffith, 1993, prod. Grace Griffith). Either way you get Betsy Rose's spellbinding "Water, Fire, and Smoke," a spiritual tribute to Mother Earth, and "Beautiful Fool," Don Henry's portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. as seen through the eyes of those who were children when he lived and died. Griffith sings with strength and compassion and an obvious sense of inner peace. She observes: "Music is the closest I come to a feeling of bridging the division between the material and the intangible."

solo outings:

Connemara:

Beyond the Horizon ♪♪♪ (Connemara, 1993)

Siren Song ♪♪♪½ (Connemara, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Dolores Keane, Mary Black

▶▶ Lisa Moscatiello, Susan Graham-White

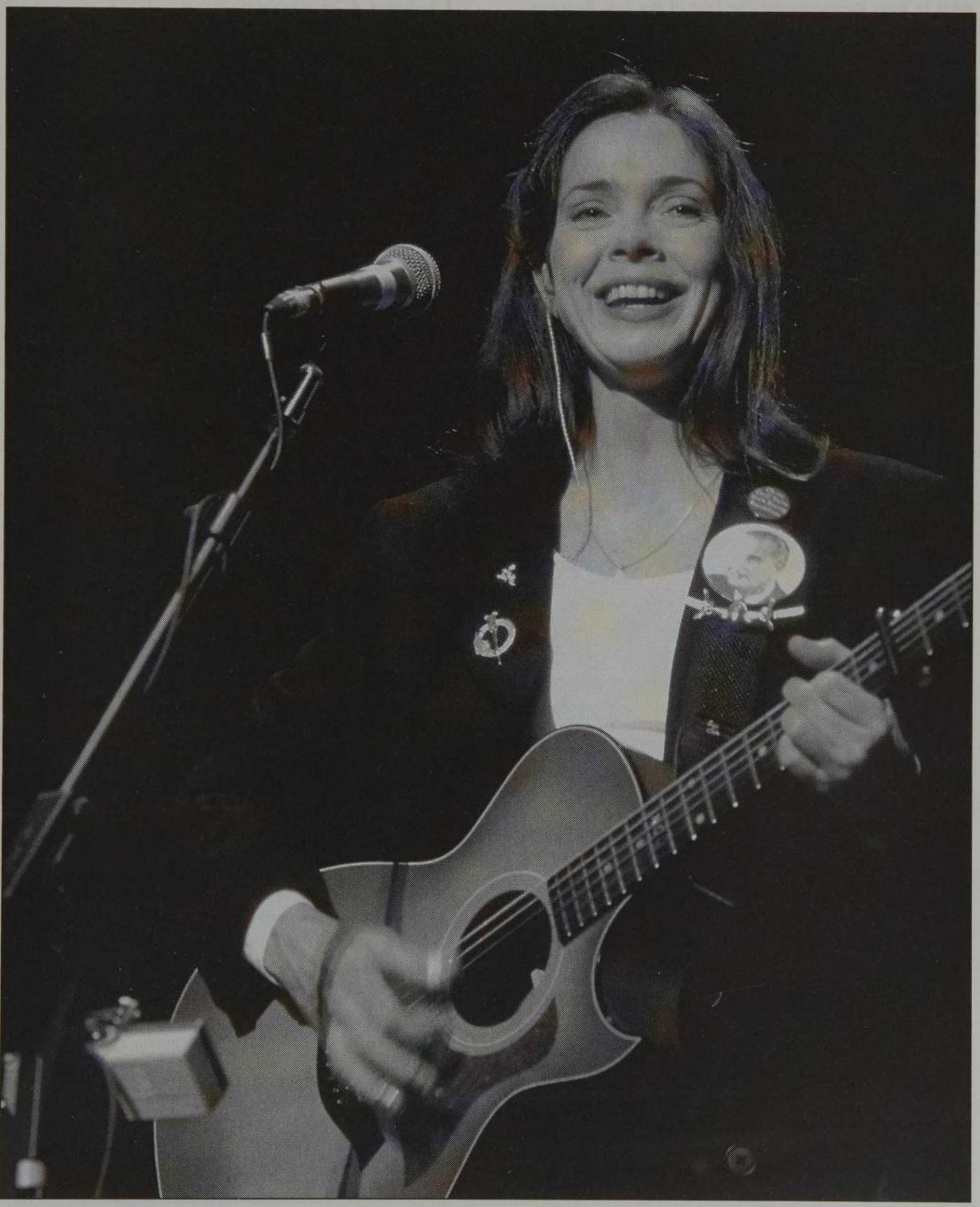
Neal Walters

Nanci Griffith

Born July 16, 1954, in Seguin, TX.

Nanci Griffith has spent a career bridging the uneasy gap between country and folk, earning critical praise, devoted fans, and minimal mass market success. Emerging from the Austin, Texas, folk scene during the mid-1970s, she recorded two albums for tiny labels and crisscrossed the country, performing at festivals. By the time she cut her first Nashville album in 1984, she had a reputation as a writer of tight, insightful songs. Griffith released her first work for MCA in 1987, but big-label backing did not translate into chart success for her idiosyncratic style (in the U.S., anyway; Griffith has consistently topped charts in Ireland and Britain). Her songs, meanwhile, became Top 10 country hits for other singers like Kathy Mattea and Suzy Bogguss. Along with fellow Texan Lyle Lovett, Griffith just couldn't seem to carve out a niche in Nashville, even as her music was perceived in other quarters as too countrified to be rock. Fortunately, a move to MCA's pop division in 1989 pointed Griffith toward a grown-up pop emphasis that better suited both her distinctive voice and the burgeoning adult-contemporary format. Griffith held this course while changing labels to Elektra and remains in demand as a collaborator for everyone from the Chieftains to R.E.M. Still, she's best known as a musical storyteller whose slice-of-life vignettes like "Trouble in the Fields," "Love at the Five and Dime," and "It's a Hard Life" only gain impact with repeated handlings by other singers.

Nanci Griffith **(© Ken Settle)**



david grisman

what to buy: Merely mentioning *Last of the True Believers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder/Philo, 1986, prod. Jim Rooney, Nanci Griffith) reduces many Griffith fans to mindless babbling. It is a beauty, with a supporting cast of musicians' musicians (Béla Fleck, Roy Huskey Jr., Maura O'Connell, Lyle Lovett) and a fistful of classic Griffith songs ("Love at the Five and Dime," "More than a Whisper," "Lookin' for the Time"). Another fine introduction to the Griffith songbook is the live *One Fair Summer Evening* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1988, prod. Nanci Griffith, Tony Brown), with moving versions of much of her best material and an understated reading of Julie Gold's "From a Distance" that eclipses Bette Midler's mawkish rendition.

what to buy next: *Other Voices, Other Rooms* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1993, prod. Jim Rooney), a Nanci Griffith record devoid of Nanci Griffith material, is a study of her interpretative abilities, featuring 17 songs by everyone from Woody Guthrie to John Prine to (yep) Janis Ian. On *Late Night Grande Hotel* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Peter Van-Hooke, Rod Argent), the most successful-to-date of Griffith's VH1-style albums, Phil Everly duets on the nervous, driving "It's Just Another Morning Here," and Griffith continues her tradition of incisive political commentary with "One Blade Shy of a Sharp Edge."

what to avoid: The problem with *Lone Star State of Mind* ♪♪ (MCA, 1987, prod. Tony Brown, Nanci Griffith) isn't material; nor is it collaborators (Fleck, Huskey et al.). It's MCA's production, which attempts to jam Griffith's music into a pair of pink sequined cowboy boots. Bad move. Griffith is many things, but a good ole girl ain't one of 'em.

the rest:
Poet in my Window ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1982)
Once in a Very Blue Moon ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder 1984)
Little Love Affairs ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1988)
Storms ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989)
The MCA Years: A Retrospective ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1993)
Flyer ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1995)
Blue Roses from the Moon ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1997)

worth searching for: *There's a Light beyond These Woods* ♪♪♪ (MCA UK, 1982) is a re-release of Griffith's first album from 1978, recorded live in an Austin studio.

influences:
◀◀ Carolyn Hester, Bill Staines, Weavers, Judy Collins, Tom Paxton
▶▶ Lucinda Williams, Iris DeMent

Elizabeth Lynch

David Grisman

Born March 23, 1945, in Hackensack, NJ.

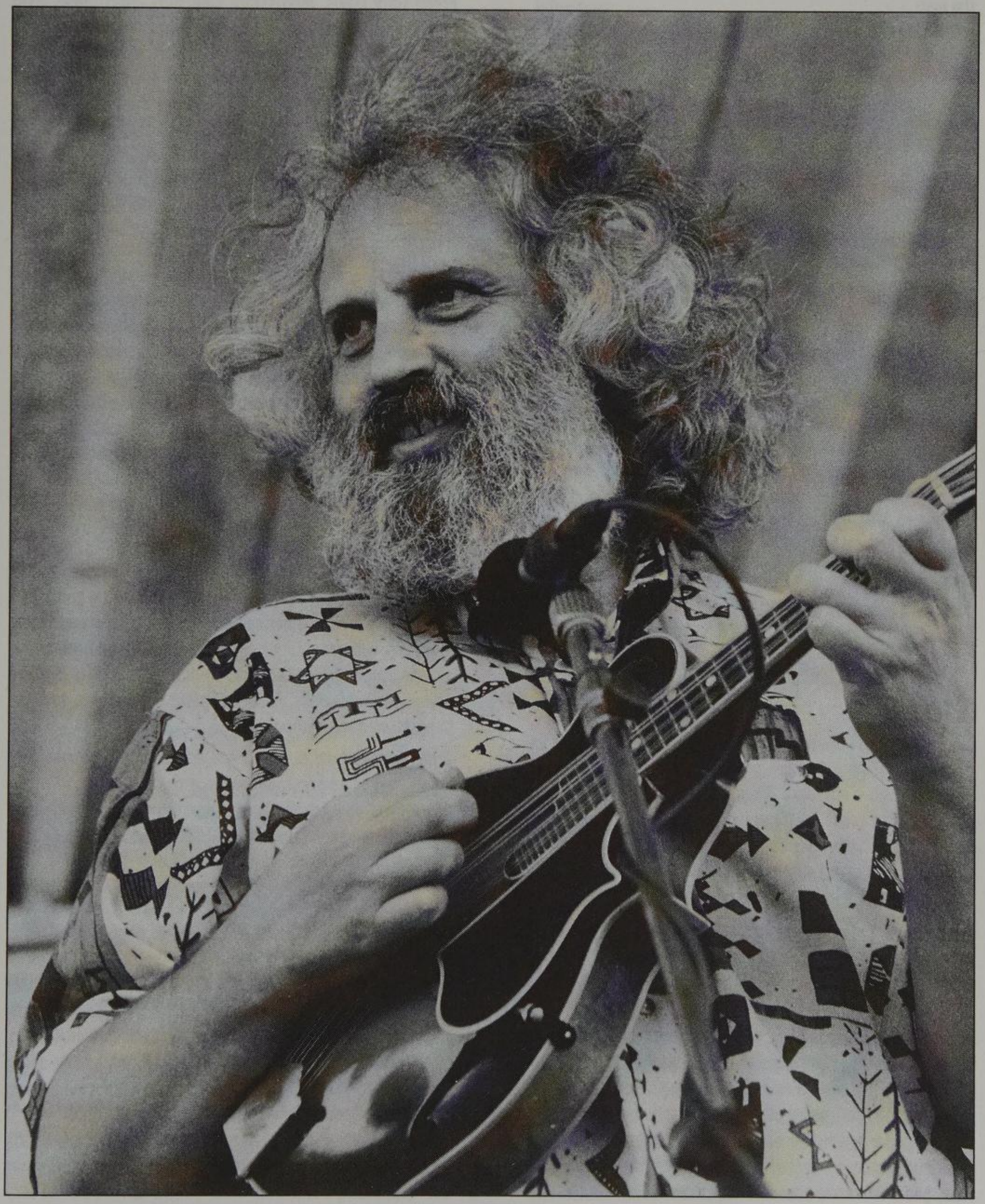
Dubbed "The Paganini of the Mandolin" by *The New York Times*, David Grisman is also a well-known champion of the "new acoustic music" movement, which draws heavily from traditional bluegrass, blues, ethnic music, and jazz. Grisman discovered the mandolin as a teenager and soaked up the stylings of bluegrass pioneers Bill Monroe and Frank Wakefield. His recording career began during the mid-1960s with the Even Dozen Jug Band, and during the late 1960s he hooked up with Bill Monroe–alumnus Peter Rowan to form the rock group Earth Opera, which was based in Boston. During the early 1970s, as a member of Old & In the Way and Muleskinner, Grisman wowed critics and fans at bluegrass festivals and college campuses with his fast-as-lightning picking style and mastery of jazz and classical music as well as bluegrass. In 1977 the floodgates opened when Kaleidoscope Records released the *David Grisman Quintet*. The record brilliantly captured the breadth and depth of Grisman's playing, helped no doubt by the top-notch accompaniment of guitarist Tony Rice and fiddler Darrol Anger. Jerry Garcia gave Grisman the nickname "Dawg," which has since been adopted by the manic mandolinist to describe his unique brand of music.

what to buy: *DGQ-20* ♪♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1996, prod. David Grisman) is a three-disc, 20-year David Grisman Quintet retrospective. What's unique is that it's made up entirely of previously unreleased tracks from both live and studio performances. Among the outstanding DGQ alumni featured on the collection—and who established impressive careers of their own—are Darrol Anger, Mike Marshall, Mark O'Connor, and Tony Rice. The set also contains memorable collaborations with Jethro Burns, Vassar Clements, Jerry Garcia, Stephane Grappelli, Svend Asmussen, and the Kronos Quartet.

what to buy next: *David Grisman Quintet* ♪♪♪½ (Kaleidoscope, 1977, prod. David Grisman) is the one that started it all and subsequently set the stage for new-agey "Dawg" music. The interplay between Grisman and guitarist Tony Rice is awesome. *Doc & Dawg* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1997, prod. David Grisman) teams Grisman with legendary flatpicker Doc Watson for an acoustic journey through an array of musical styles, including a sparkling "Soldier's Joy," a lilting Bill Monroe blues, "Bluegrass Stomp," and an easy-rolling version of George Gershwin's "Summertime."

David Grisman **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

david grisman



stefan grossman

the rest:
(With Old & In the Way) *Old & In the Way* ♪♪♪♪ (Grateful Dead Records, 1975)
The David Grisman Rounder Compact Disc ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976)
Hot Dawg ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1979/1987)
Early Dawg ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1980)
David Grisman Quintet 1980 ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1980)
(With Vince Gill, Herb Pedersen, Jim Buchanan, and Emory Gordy Jr.) *Here Today* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1982/1992)
Acoustic Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1983)
Mondo Mando ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros./Zebra Acoustic, 1983)
(With Andy Statman) *Mandolin Abstractions* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983)
Home Is Where the Heart Is ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
Dawg '90 ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1990)
(With Red Allen, Herb Pedersen, Jim Buchanan, James Kerwin, and Jerry Garcia) *Bluegrass Reunion* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1992)
Dawgwood ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1993)
(With Jerry Garcia) *Not for Kids Only* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1993)
(With Daniel Kobialka) *Common Chord* ♪♪♪½ (Cymekob, 1993)
(With Tony Rice) *Tone Poems: The Sounds of the Great Vintage Guitars and Mandolins* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1994)
(With Martin Taylor) *Tone Poems II* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1995)
Dawganova ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1995)
(With Andy Statman) *Songs of our Fathers* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1995)
(With Old & In the Way) *That High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1996)
(With Old & In the Way) *Breakdown* ♪♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Frank Wakefield
▶▶ Béla Fleck, Jerry Douglas, Darrol Anger, Mike Marshall, Tony Rice

see also: *Muleskinner*

Rick Petreycik

Stefan Grossman

Born April 16, 1945, in New York, NY.

The lessons taught by pre–World War II acoustic bluesmen have been learned by fingerstyle guitarist, folklorist, and instructor Stefan Grossman. In addition to writing many instructional books published by Mel Bay Publications and producing videos for his own company, Vestapol, Grossman has recorded numerous albums of his transcriptions of pre-1930 blues tunes. Inspired by the early '60s folk scene in Greenwich Village, Grossman first attracted attention as a member of the Even Dozen Jug Band, which also featured John Sebastian and Maria Muldaur, and he performed occasionally with the Fugs. In the late 1960s, Grossman apprenticed with such bluesmen as Reverend Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Son House, Skip James, Fred McDowell, and Mance Lipscomb, traveling and learning what he could from the originators. Moving to England in 1967, he recorded his first album, *Aunt Molly's Murray Farm*, a year later. His U.S. debut came with his third album, *Yazoo Basin Boogie*. Although he recorded several albums in the 1970s that featured his singing and songwriting, he's focused on guitar instrumentals since. In 1972 he formed his own label, Kicking Mule Records. In addition to his solo albums, Grossman has recorded several albums and toured with British guitarist John Renbourn.

what to buy: When originally released in the late 1960s, *How to Play Blues Guitar* ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1968/Shanachie, 1990) helped to spark interest in acoustic blues. In addition to showcasing Grossman's solo guitar wizardry, the album is strengthened by guest appearances by Son House, Mickey Baker, Jo Ann Kelly (Rory Block), Sam Mitchell, and John Renbourn. Faithful interpretations of such tunes as "Police Dog Blues," "Corrina, Corrina," "Pallet on Your Floor," "Hard Time Killin' Floor," and "Oh Babe It Ain't No Lie" pay homage to the early roots of the blues.

what to buy next: *Black Melodies on A Clear Afternoon* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Stefan Grossman) is a solo guitar survey of early African American music recorded between 1972 and 1975, with most tunes originally released on Grossman's albums, *Fingerpicking Guitar Techniques*, *How to Play Ragtime Guitar*, *My Creole Belle*, *Famous Ragtime Guitar Solos*, and *Bottleneck Serenade*, in the 1970s.

the rest:
Love, Devil, and the Blues ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1989)
Guitar Landscapes ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1990)
Yazoo Basin Boogie: A Collection of Rags ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1991)
Shining Shadows ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1992)
(With Duck Baker) *Northern Skies, Southern Blues* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

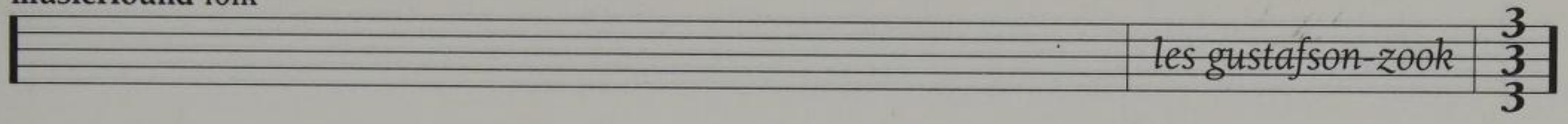
influences:
◀◀ Reverend Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Son House, Skip James, Fred McDowell, Mance Lipscomb
▶▶ Paul Geremia, John Hammond, Rory Block, Bonnie Raitt

see also: *John Renbourn*

Craig Harris

Ida Guillory

See: Queen Ida



Kristi Guillory

Born December 26, 1978, in Lafayette, LA.

By the time she reached 18, Kristi Guillory was an accomplished accordionist and singer with two CDs under her belt. She picked up on the accordion at age 11 after trying to play one at a crawfish boil. Cajun women musicians are still pretty rare, so her interest and skill drew her extra attention. She was soon playing regularly and made her first record as a junior with a group of musicians who were all less than 20 years old. Although she admires traditionalists like Horace Trahan, Guillory is interested in the continuing evolution of Cajun music and writes her own originals that step further out of the tradition. Her singing has a little bit of country in it, but her playing and her band are pure Cajun dance music. Her lyrics reflect her continuing interest in the French language, an interest that has led her to take a sabbatical from music to study at the University of Southwest Louisiana's Francophone Studies program. Her plans include eventually teaching French and hopefully returning to music.

what to buy: At the time *La Dance des Ancetres* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1996, prod. Terry Huval) was recorded, Guillory was 17 years old. This record is a solid, stripped-down Cajun band with her brother Craig on bass and Jude Veillon on drums providing a very solid danceable bottom. Jamey Bearb, who got second billing to Bill Grass on her first record, is the only fiddler on this one and the sound benefits from his subtle playing. Kristi's accordion playing is in the style of modern Cajun dance bands, shuffling the rhythm on the two steps, slurring the blues, and being squeezed for every last ounce of emotion on the waltzes. Her work on "Oil Rig Blues" stands out as the strongest example of her accordion work, while her strongest songwriting is probably "Personne dans mes bras," which takes the perspective of the broken-hearted bandleader singing to a full dance floor. It's a fairly typical topic for a Cajun song but rarely heard from a woman's perspective.

what to buy next: *Reveille: The New Cajun Generation* ♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1994, prod. Terry Huval) is listed under Guillory and Bill Grass, but the record really features Guillory and Horace Trahan. At 14, Kristi's accordion playing is fully formed and, if not original, still extremely expressive. Her deep, unaffected voice recalls Ann Savoy, and when she and Trahan sing together it is reminiscent of Ann's duets with her husband Marc. There is a little more modern country influence in her singing than in Ann's and you can hear that when Guillory sings Annette Huval's compositions "La Valse de la Grand Mere," "Allons au Fais Do-Do," and her own "Une Affaire à Pu Finir."

influences:

- Paul Daigle, Cleoma Falcon, Savoy Doucet Cajun Band, Sheryl Cormier
- Balfa Toujours

see also: *Horace Trahan*

Jared Snyder

Les Gustafson-Zook

Born May 21, 1957, in Mt. Pleasant, PA.

Les Gustafson-Zook is a skillful autoharp recording artist who recently relocated from Portland, Oregon, to Goshen, Indiana. In 1989 he won the National Autoharp Championship and has placed second and third numerous times in international competitions. His repertoire varies from fiddle tunes to folk melodies to hymns, and his clear melody playing is evident in all styles. He clearly loves hymns, a reflection of his career with the Mennonite Church, and he presents them in inspiring, uplifting renditions. Gustafson-Zook often performs with his wife Gwen, presenting school programs on the songs of the Oregon Trail. He has also teamed up with Jon ten Broek, an Oregon songwriter and guitar player, and together they have collaborated on two recordings.

what's available: *Gather at the River* ♪♪♪♪ (Raindrop Records, 1994, prod. Jon ten Broek) is an instrumental recording of well-loved hymns, including "In the Garden," "Be Still My Soul," and "It Is Well with My Soul." The 14 selections are infused with life as Gustafson-Zook gives them a unique treatment with his clean, delicate autoharp picking, underscored by ten Broek's talented guitar and Mark Bielman's bass. The hymns are splendidly arranged and offered in a variety of styles so you will not be the least bit tired of listening to one chestnut after another. *Cascade Noel* ♪♪♪½ (Raindrop Records, 1994, prod. Jon ten Broek) is an offering of 19 instrumental Christmas songs, most traditional melodies, played in a similar fashion to *Gather at the River*. These tasteful arrangements would be a nice complement to anyone's Christmas collection of CDs; all recordings are available from Raindrop Records, P.O. Box 1797, Corvallis, OR 97339.

worth searching for: *Great Hymns* ♪♪♪ (Les Gustafson-Zook, 1991, prod. Bill Landow, Precision Audio, Inc.) is the first recording effort of the artist and is solo autoharp. *Long Time Traveling* ♪♪♪½ (Les Gustafson-Zook, 1993, prod. Les and Gwen Gustafson-Zook) is a recording of the husband-and-wife duo and includes great vocals, guitar, mandolin, jawharp, and bass.

3/4 *arlo guthrie*

banjo styles

The most common banjo style in old-time music is clawhammer, sometimes called frailing. The right hand is loosely curled and the four long strings are struck with the nail of the index finger in a downward motion, followed by plucking the shorter 5th string with the thumb. The 5th string is almost never "noted," i.e., held down at a fret, so it really acts as a drone and provides a syncopating effect. This is a very rhythmic style, traditionally used to accompany a fiddle, and many old-time musicians consider that combination the DNA of their music. Less popular but every bit as legitimate is fingerstyle playing, in which the strings are plucked with the bare fingers in an upward motion. Old-time players seldom play above the ninth fret, and use many different tunings to simplify the work of the left hand. With some exceptions, most old-time banjo players tend to think that "less is more" and avoid flashy runs and complex chords. In bluegrass music, players wear metal picks and pluck the strings in a fashion similar to the old-time fingerstyle, only faster. Bluegrass players frequently play at the higher frets and make more use of chords.

David Shombert

These two recordings are available on cassette tape from the artist at 212 East Douglas, Goshen, IN 46526.

influences:
⏪ Bryan Bowers
⏩ Alan Mager, Mike Fenton

Heidi Cerrigione

Arlo Guthrie

Born July 10, 1947, in Coney Island, NY.

Much like Hank Williams Jr., Arlo Guthrie grew up in the shadow of a giant. Also like "Bocephus," Guthrie has honored the legacy while creating a distinct musical tradition. Still best known for his Vietnam-era satire/commentary "Alice's Restaurant" (which inspired the like-titled 1969 movie that he starred in), Guthrie has created a body of work over the last three decades that melds American roots/folk/country music into a rich contemporary setting. As early as his live 1968 second album, *Arlo*, he was dipping into classic country (in this case, Ernest Tubb's "Try Me One More Time"), and he was the first to bring Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans" to a wide audience. He appeared with Bob Dylan's "Rolling Thunder Revue" during the mid-1970s and, after a long career of releasing intelligent and heartfelt neo-folk albums for Warner Bros., continues to record for his own Massachusetts-based Rising Son label.

what to buy: *Outlasting the Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979/Rising Son, 1986, prod. John Pilla) gives Shenandoah (no, not the chart-topping country band), his band at the time, co-billing, but the songs (except for one by Pete Seeger and one by Hoyt Axton) are Arlo all the way. Coming at a time of religious reawakening for Guthrie, *Outlasting the Blues* is a spirited set pondering life, compassion, and mortality with rootsy melodicism and a touch of his trademark humor.

what to buy next: *Amigo* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1976/Rising Son, 1986, prod. John Pilla) is a gorgeously cohesive and warm collection spanning folk and rock and featuring collaborations with Linda Ronstadt and Leah Kunkel as well as a smokin' version of the Rolling Stones' "Connection."

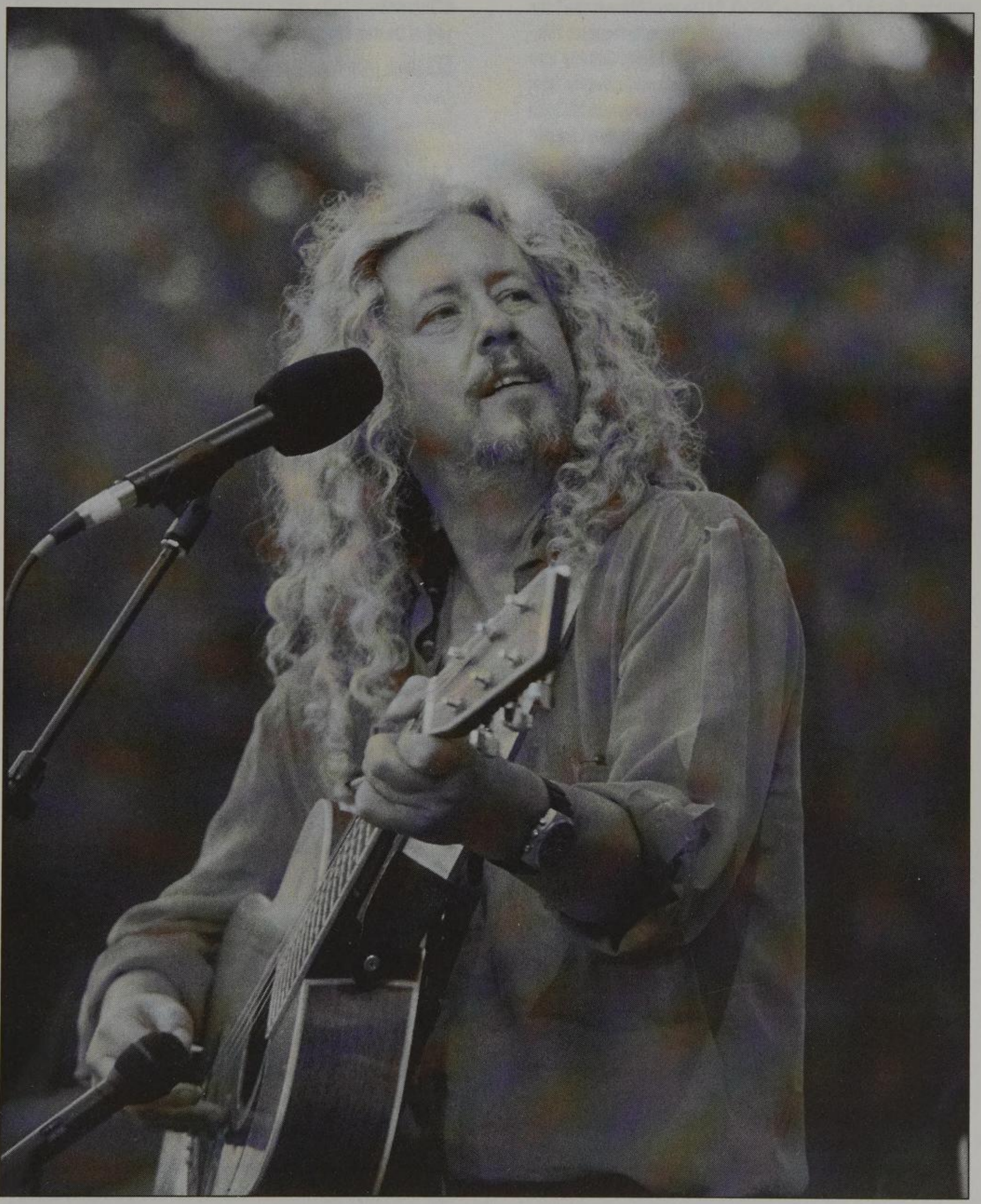
what to avoid: *Together in Concert* ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1975, prod. John Pilla), a live collaboration with Pete Seeger, lacks the spirit and energy that such a prodigious pairing promises.

the rest:
Alice's Restaurant ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1967/Rising Son, 1988)
Arlo ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1968/ Koch International, 1997)
Running down the Road ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1969/Koch International, 1997)
Washington County ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1970/Koch International, 1997)
Hobo's Lullaby ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1972/Koch International, 1997)
Last of the Brooklyn Cowboys ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1973/Koch International, 1997)
Arlo Guthrie ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1974/Rising Son, 1988)
One Night ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1978/Rising Son, 1988)
Power of Love ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1981/Rising Son, 1986)
Someday ♪♪♪ (Rising Son, 1986)
Son of the Wind ♪♪♪ (Rising Son, 1992)
Mystic Journey ♪♪♪½ (Rising Son, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Best of Arlo Guthrie* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1977, prod. various) is an early career overview that as-

Arlo Guthrie **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

arlo guthrie



sembles the 18 1/2-minute "Alice's Restaurant Massacree," the hit single "City of New Orleans," the slightly left-of-center "Motorcycle (Significance of the Pickle) Song," and "Coming into Los Angeles" in one place. For that it's worthwhile, but far from cohesive. *All over the World* ♪♪♪♪ (Rising Son, 1991, prod. John Pilla, Lenny Waronker) reprises some of Guthrie's most memorable material, here thematically connected by geography and titles like "Massachusetts," "Miss the Mississippi and You," "City of New Orleans," and Richard Thompson's "When I Get to the Border."

solo outings:

Woody & Arlo Guthrie:

This Land Is Your Land ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)

The Guthrie Family:

Woody's 20 Grow Big Songs ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1992)

Arlo Guthrie & Pete Seeger:

Precious Friend ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1982)

More Together Again in Concert ♪♪♪½ (Rising Son, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger

▶▶ John Prine, Bob Dylan

David Sokol

Jack Guthrie

Born November 13, 1915, in Olive, OK. Died January 15, 1948, in Livermore, CA.

Jack Guthrie was the cousin and sometime performing partner of the legendary Woody Guthrie, with whom he shares composer credit for the oft-covered "Oklahoma Hills," the song with which he is most closely identified. The song was a big hit for Jack in 1945, when, ironically, he was serving in the army on Iwo Jima. Guthrie's music was an infectious blend of cowboy music, Western swing, country boogie, and the newly emerging honky tonk. The records he made for Capitol between 1945 and 1948 are among the finest examples of the post-Depression country music recording scene in Southern California. Guthrie died of tuberculosis at the age of 33.

what's available: *Oklahoma Hills* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1991, prod. Lee Gillette) contains everything Guthrie cut for Capitol, including his biggest hits, "Oklahoma Hills" and "Oakie Boogie," plus eight previously unreleased titles. Also contains a thoroughly annotated 32-page booklet with discography: the definitive Jack Guthrie reissue.

influences:

◀◀ Al Dexter, Ernest Tubb

▶▶ Hank Thompson, Arlo Guthrie

Randy Pitts

Woody Guthrie

Born Woodrow Wilson Guthrie, July 14, 1912, in Okemah, OK. Died October 3, 1967, in Queens, NY.

Woody Guthrie is unquestionably the most important North American folk singer of the twentieth century. Born into poverty in dust-bowl Oklahoma, Guthrie left home as a teenager and roamed far and wide, riding the rails, hitchhiking, and walking all over the United States. While on his travels he developed an unusually deep appreciation for the nation's natural beauty, perhaps best expressed in the anthem "This Land Is Your Land." And yet Guthrie was also a peerless chronicler of human struggle and the resiliency of the human spirit. Always siding with the underdog, his paeans to migrant workers, hobos, and dust bowl refugees convey America's restless, expansive heart no less than the writings of Walt Whitman and Mark Twain. Guthrie's greatest gift was his ability to invest everything from protest songs to outlaw ballads with unfailing humor, compassion, and insight. Drawing on the vast repository of blues, ballads, and breakdowns he learned in his youth, Guthrie wrote over 1,000 songs before he became hospitalized for Huntington's chorea in 1954. He also wrote four books of prose, sketches, and poetry, most notably his 1943 autobiography, *Bound for Glory*. As a performer, Guthrie collaborated with fellow songwriter-activists Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, and Millard Lampell as a member of the Almanac Singers, as well as with folk-blues singers Sonny Terry, Cisco Houston, and Leadbelly. Guthrie's own recordings date from 1940, when Alan Lomax captured him on tape for the Library of Congress. Guthrie's influence on subsequent generations of politically minded singers, and especially on the songwriting of Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, and Bruce Springsteen, is immeasurable. His children's albums are second-to-none.

what to buy: *Dust Bowl Ballads* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Victor, 1940/Rounder, 1988, prod. Frank Driggs) represents the earliest flowering of Guthrie's social conscience and narrative sweep. His song paintings are as vivid and gut-wrenching as the prose of James Agee and the photographs of Walker Evans.

what to buy next: *Library of Congress Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Alan Lomax) contains three volumes of

conversation, songs, and humanity that offer the most complete portrait of America's greatest folksinger.

what to avoid: *Worried Man Blues* ♪♪ (Collectables, 1990), *The Immortal Woody Guthrie* ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1990), and *Woody Guthrie & Cisco Houston: Volumes 1 & 2, the Stinson Collectors Series* ♪♪ (Collectables) all present classic Guthrie material with inferior sound quality and packaging.

the rest:
Songs to Grow On ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1951)
Songs to Grow On, Volume 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1958)
Songs to Grow On, Volume 3 ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1961)
Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1962/1989)
Woody Guthrie Sings Folk Songs, Volume 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1964)
Bound for Glory ♪♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1967)
Poor Boy ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1968)
Struggle ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1976/1990)
Columbia River Collection ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1987)
The Greatest Songs of Woody Guthrie ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1988)
The Early Years ♪♪♪½ (Tradition, 1991)
Songs to Grow on for Mother and Child ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991)
(With Pete Seeger and Leadbelly) *Folkways: A Vision Revisited* ♪♪♪♪ (Legacy)
Nursery Days (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1992)
Long Ways to Travel ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1994)
Ballads of Sacco & Vanzetti ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1996)
This Land Is Your Land ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1997)
Muleskinner Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1997)

worth searching for: *Tribute to Woody Guthrie* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1989) is an uneven compilation of Guthrie's tunes recorded by other artists, but it's occasionally interesting.

solo outings:
Woody and Arlo Guthrie:
Woody's 20 Grow Big Songs ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1992)
This Land Is Your Land ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Elizabeth Cotten, Carter Family
▶▶ Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Phil Ochs

Bill Friskics-Warren

Buddy Guy

Born George Guy, July 30, 1936, in Lettsworth, LA.

With a gigantic grin and inventive electric guitar riffs played so fast you can barely focus on one at a time, Buddy Guy has come to symbolize traditional Chicago blues. Until 1991 he was, amazingly, still an undiscovered talent by most of the world; he ran his downtown Chicago nightclub, Buddy Guy's Legends, and showed off his immense charisma and talent on the national blues circuit. But despite opening gigs for the Rolling Stones and other blues-rock performers in the early 1970s, few outside Chicago and the national blues community had really heard of him. Then came a marketing break: His comeback album, *Damn Right, I've Got the Blues*—with a new version of the old standard "Mustang Sally" and guest cameos by Mark Knopfler and Eric Clapton—worked like a charm. It sold well, earned a Grammy, established Guy as a blues celebrity along with B.B. King and John Lee Hooker, and eventually opened the doors for a lucrative Reebok television commercial with White Sox slugger Frank Thomas.

Guy's career beginnings paralleled those of many other bluesmen, from mentors Muddy Waters and King to contemporaries Otis Rush and Junior Wells. Born to a sharecropping family, Guy picked cotton until blues songs on the radio inspired him to pick up a guitar. After playing local roadhouses, he moved to Chicago's thriving, blues-friendly South Side and, despite his young age, gained renown in "head-cutting" competitions against Rush and Magic Sam. Following Howlin' Wolf, Little Walter, Waters, and so many others to the legendary Chess Records, Guy recorded his trademark songs, including 1960 versions of Eurreal Montgomery's "First Time I Met the Blues" and Willie Dixon's "Let Me Love You Baby." In the 1960s he was one of the few nationally recognized bluesmen who wasn't old enough to be a rock 'n' roller's father so he started to cross over into the rock audience. The blues revival died down in the 1970s, and despite a creatively rich partnership with harpist Junior Wells, Guy had trouble translating the energy of his long, heavy-jamming songs to record. He eked out a living in Chicago as owner of the Checkerboard Lounge before opening Legends, befriending the hero-worshipping Stevie Ray Vaughan (he played at the guitarist's final show before his death), and recording. He continues to tour, play festivals, sell out 20 or 30 consecutive Legends appearances every January, and serve as Chicago's reigning blues hero.

what to buy: True to its reputation, *Damn Right, I've Got the Blues* ♪♪♪ (Silvertone, 1991, prod. John Porter) pretty much captures Guy's fiery performances, although you miss things like watching him walk from the stage to the bathroom while continuing to play the guitar. Despite an overwillingness to please non-blues fans—"Mustang Sally" is included just for familiarity, not because it adds anything to the original, and the

guest stars sometimes crowd the singer—Guy's voice is at top soul power. His best album is *Stone Crazy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1981, prod. Didier Tricard), with a hot Chicago four-piece rhythm section and Guy's soaring-and-smashing electric riffs. Before that, the closest Guy came to matching his live power was his debut, *A Man and the Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968/1987, prod. Samuel Charters), with killer versions of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" and "Money (That's What I Want)." To complete the set, you'll need one of several Chess compilations, such as *Buddy's Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Chess/MCA, 1997), and at least one Junior Wells collaboration, most notably *Alone and Acoustic* ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1991, prod. Didier Tricard), a spontaneous 1981 Paris session including Hooker's "I'm in the Mood," Guy's "Sweet Black Girl," and the rock classic "High Heel Sneakers."

what to buy next: An early linking with Clapton, who once called Guy the world's greatest living guitar player, produced the nice but not-so-explosive *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play the Blues* ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972/Rhino, 1992, prod. Eric Clapton, Ahmet Ertegun, Tom Dowd, Michael Cuscuna). While Chess/MCA has mined Guy's early hits on many indistinguishable compilations, it's always worth tracking down the original LP of Chess singles, *I Was Walkin' through the Woods* ♪♪♪½ (Chess, 1970). *Feels like Rain* ♪♪♪ (Silvertone, 1993, prod. John Porter), the slower follow-up to *Damn Right*, is especially worth buying for Guy's soulful vocals, but not for the Travis Tritt and Paul Rodgers cameos.

what to avoid: Chess Records has driven a long way on the strength of its classic 1950s and 1960s singles; if you buy the newer *Buddy's Blues*, you won't need the more thorough but redundant *The Complete Chess Studio Recordings* ♪♪♪ (Chess/MCA, 1992). *Live! The Real Deal* ♪♪½ (Silvertone, 1996, prod. Buddy Guy, Eddie Kramer), with the pompous pony-tailed guitarist G.E. Smith and his *Saturday Night Live* band, captures a lackluster performance, with typically good Guy solos but very little else.

best of the rest:

I Left My Blues in San Francisco ♪♪½ (Chess, 1967/MCA, 1987)
This Is Buddy Guy ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968)
(With Junior Wells and Junior Mance) *Buddy and the Juniors* ♪♪½ (MCA, 1970)
Hold That Plane! ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1972)
(With Junior Wells) *Live in Montreux* ♪♪♪ (Evidence, 1977/1992)
(With Junior Wells) *Drinkin' TNT and Smokin' Dynamite* ♪♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1982)
Buddy Guy ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1987)
(With Junior Wells) *Original Blues Brothers* ♪♪♪½ (Blue Moon, 1991)
Original Blues Brothers Live ♪♪½ (Quicksilver, 1992)
The Best of Buddy Guy ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1992)
My Time after Awhile ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992)
Slippin' In ♪♪½ (Silvertone, 1994)
Southern Blues 1957–63 ♪♪½ (Paula, 1994)

worth searching for: The import-only JSP series captures Guy smoking, with his great 1970s band, including brother Phil on rhythm guitar; best of the hard-to-find CDs are *D.J. Play My Blues* ♪♪♪ (JSP, 1994), *Breaking Out* ♪♪♪½ (JSP, 1993), and *Live at the Checkerboard Lounge* ♪♪♪ (JSP, 1979/1995).

influences:

- Muddy Waters, Magic Sam, Otis Rush, Junior Wells, T-Bone Walker, Guitar Slim, B.B. King, Albert King
- Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Son Seals, Jonny Lang, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Tinsley Ellis, Luther Allison, Rolling Stones, Jeff Beck

Steve Knopper

Hackberry Ramblers

Formed 1933, in Hackberry, LA.

Luderin Darbone, fiddle; Lennis Sonnier, vocals, guitar; Glen Croker, vocals, guitar; Johnnie Parket, bass; Edward Duhon, accordion; Ben Sandmel, drums. Past members include: Lonnie Rainwater, vocals, guitar; Floyd Shreve, vocals, guitar; Joe Werner, vocals, guitar.

In the 1930s, as oil brought some economic prosperity and the radio offered Western swing and hillbilly music, the accordion lost some of its hold on Cajun music. The Hackberry Ramblers epitomize this change in taste. They were easily one of the most popular bands of the 1930s to play exclusively string-band style Cajun. The band was based around its leader, fiddler Luderin Darbone, who had spent much of his early life in Texas, outside the realm of Cajun culture. In fact, as the recording career of the band progressed, they formed a separate identity as the Riverside Ramblers, under which name they played non-French songs. The most popular of these was "Wondering," sung by Joe Werner. In active duty during World War II, members of the band re-formed after the war, but began to move

away from the string-band sound and instead, with the addition of guitarist Glen Croker, play a wider variety of rocking and swinging sound that spans the spectrum of Louisiana roots music. In recent times, the Ramblers' longevity has begun to work in their favor as a selling point; they've regained popularity once again on the festival circuit.

what to buy: *Early Recordings: 1935–1948* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Old Timey, 1988, prod. Chris Strachwitz) brings together all the classic sounds of the Hackberry Ramblers. Those thinking of smooth-sounding Harry Choates will be shocked by the drive and pure chank that this string band produced. The more "Texas" sounding songs are here, but this was still recorded for a Cajun crowd that had to dance. Any fan of old-time fiddling will have to check out the slippery bow of Luderin Darbone.

what to buy next: There is an atmosphere to *Jolie Blonde* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) of musicians who know themselves and each other so well and are just purely enjoying the act of making music together. This is the Ramblers demonstrating that they still had it in themselves back in 1963 to play with anybody.

the rest:
Cajun Boogie ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Louisiana Cajun Music (Arhoolie, 1994)

worth searching for: *Deep Water* ♪♪♪♪½ (Hot Biscuits, 1997, prod. Ben Sandmel) gives the generations a chance to play together. On three cuts Ben Sandmel brings Michael Doucet in to play with Darbone and the results are some truly charming music. Other guest vocalists include Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Rodney Crowell, and Marcia Ball. This record works like *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* with a group of guests performing with, and in honor of, the Hackberry Ramblers.

influences:
◀◀ Dennis McGee, Harry Choates, Leo Soileau
▶▶ Wallace "Cheese" Read, Michael Doucet, Steve Riley, Dewey Balfa

Jared Snyder

Ed Haley

Born 1883, in Hart's Creek, Logan County, WV. Died 1951.

When Ed Haley was three years old he was blinded from a bout with the measles. Beginning the fiddle at a young age, he held the instrument against his arm, instead of under his chin, and was known to occasionally slide it back and forth underneath a stationary bow to draw the sound out of the instrument. These differences, among others, caused him to create a unique and identifiable style of playing the old tunes. Haley was also not what you would call a conservative fiddler as far as tune choice and style goes. He played what he fancied, whether it was a tune from his native county or something he heard on the radio, and was known to play in more than one regional style.

what's available: For fear of someone taking advantage of him because of his blindness, Haley never wanted to perform on radio or be recorded by the record companies. In 1946, however, Ed's oldest son, Ralph Haley, got permission to record many of his father's tunes, some of which have been released on a two-CD set, produced by John Hartford and Bob Carlin, called *Forked Deer—Volume 1* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. John Hartford). Due to the circumstances under which they were recorded and the age of the recordings, many of these tunes are buried in surface noise. For that reason, and for that reason only, this would be recommended to the more hardcore fans who really want to hear the fiddle styles of a master player and will take whatever they can get.

influences:
◀◀ Clayton McMichen
▶▶ Clark Kessinger, Bruce Molsky, Snake Chapman, John Hartford

Steve Gardner

Kristen Hall

Kristen Hall is blessed with a smoky voice and a penchant for confessional-but-catchy songwriting. She emerged from the same Atlanta singer/songwriter scene that spawned the Indigo Girls and Michelle Malone, developing a following at Atlanta clubs such as the Point, Trackside Tavern, and, later, Eddie's Attic. She recorded for the local Daemon label before signing with High Street Records, a member of the Windham Hill/BMG group. No longer affiliated with either label, Hall recently relocated to Los Angeles.

what to buy: *Fact & Fiction* ♪♪♪½ (Daemon, 1991, prod. Don McCollister, Kristen Hall) succeeds at first listen and improves with repeated plays. Its lyricism and simplicity are its principal virtues; another is subtle support on two cuts from Emily Saliers.

what to buy next: *Be Careful What You Wish For . . .* ♪♪½ (High Street, 1994, prod. Jerry Marotta) is so relentlessly dark and

heavy as to risk drowning under its own weight, despite guest spots from Saliers, John Sebastian, Jules Shear, Kristian Bush, Larry Gowan, and Matthew Sweet. It's fuel enough for those who want to commiserate over a failed relationship ("I was kind enough to love you, you were cruel enough to leave," etc.), but tough going otherwise.

worth searching for: *Real Life Stuff* ♪♪♪ (Daemon, 1994, prod. Kristen Hall, Kay Busbey), now out of print, shares *Fact & Fiction*'s clean, straightforward production. Hall may also have self-produced material available at live shows.

influences:
◀◀ Indigo Girls

Bryan Powell

Tom T. Hall

Born May 25, 1936, in Tick Ridge, KY.

It's a testament to Tom T. Hall's songwriting capabilities that his efforts have reached the Number One spot on the charts nearly 30 years apart. Known as "The Storyteller," Hall recounts the escapades of some folks he knew from his youth in Olive Hill, Kentucky in the 1968 smash, "Harper Valley, P.T.A.," a dark saga that Jeannie C. Riley would take to the top of both the country and pop charts. The tune inspired a film and TV series as well. About that time, Hall's own solo career grew on the strength of such hits as "Ballad of 40 Dollars" (1968), "Homecoming," and "A Week in a County Jail" (both 1969). His reputation as a performing songwriter was quickly established due to the consistency of his albums. In the strange days of the late 1960s and most of the 1970s, Hall unabashedly wrote with a liberal outlook, especially in such brilliant cuts as "I Washed My Face in the Morning Dew," "Mama Bake a Pie," and "The Monkey That Became President." His works are so concise that they have barely aged. Hall has also written novels and short-story collections. In 1996 Alan Jackson topped the charts with Hall's recent "Little Bitty."

what to buy: For the most comprehensive collection, *Storyteller, Poet, Philosopher* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1995, compilation prod. Robert K. Oermann) is unbeatable. The biggest hits are here ("Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine," "I Like Beer"), as are dozens of lesser-known wonders, such as "Strawberry Farms" and "I'm 40 Now." An excellent essay by compiler Oermann accompanies the affordable, two-CD, 50-song set.

what to buy next: Unlike *Songs from Sopchoppy*, Hall's laconic 1996 return to recording, *Home Grown* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1997, prod. Tom T. Hall) sounds like more than a throwaway. Working with acoustic musicians, the album features Hall's best songs in years, like "Bill Monroe for Breakfast." Should the *Storyteller* box prove too pricey, two other compilations, taken together, also form a solid presentation of Hall's work. *Greatest Hits, Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1983) is now available on one disc. *Loves Lost and Found* ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1995, compilation prod. Robert K. Oermann), with 13 cuts, never overlaps with *Storyteller* and is notable for "I Love" and "Your Man Loves You Honey."

the rest:
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1972)
Greatest Hits, Volume II ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1975)
The Essential Tom T. Hall ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1988)
Country Songs for Kids ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1988)
Songs from Sopchoppy ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1996)
The Hits ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1997)
Soldier of Fortune ♪♪♪ (KOCH, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Floyd Carter, Roger Miller
▶▶ John Denver, John Gorka

Craig Shelburne and Brian Mansfield

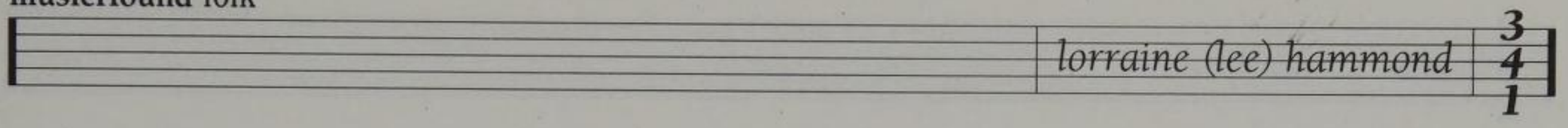
Hamilton Pool

See: Iain Matthews

John Hammond Jr.

Born John Paul Hammond, November 13, 1942, in New York, NY.

Armed with only his guitar, a harmonica, and a rich singing voice that forages through historic explorations of country blues, John Hammond Jr. has created his own niche as a solo blues performer. Emerging out of the American folk movement of the 1960s, Hammond first brought his rich sense of blues history and adept musicianship to the coffeehouse circuit in California and later to the burgeoning Greenwich Village scene in New York. The son of a noted Columbia Records executive, Hammond was raised by his mother. After a short stint at Antioch College in Ohio, Hammond hitched his way to Los Angeles. There, at the age of 20, he inked his first record deal and began an impressive recording career that spans 25 years and more than 30 albums. Hammond is not a songwriter but has dedicated his life to re-interpreting blues classics and, in doing so, has resurrected tunes that might otherwise have disappeared. And while he continues to tour as a solo act, Hammond's recording career has featured a wider range of material, including magical full-band sessions.



what to buy: Released when Hammond was only 24, *Big City Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964/1995) was his second album and one of the first electric blues recordings by a white artist. Hammond gives a fresh, electric guitar twist to older classics, including several Chess hits. The only full-length live set Hammond has released in the United States, *John Hammond Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983/1992, prod. John Nagy) captures the immense power and depth of emotion he can extract from guitar, harmonica, plaintive vocals, and a stomping foot onstage. Recorded at McCabe's in Los Angeles, it is the highlight of his Rounder stint. In between labels, Hammond financed *Nobody but You* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988/Pointblank, 1996, prod. Ken Whiteley). He is joined by a tight, five-piece band that provides restrained backing fill behind Hammond's emotive singing, nimble guitar picking, and some of his best harmonica work on songs by John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, and Little Walter. *Trouble No More* ♪♪♪♪½ (Pointblank, 1994, prod. J.J. Cale, Mike Kappus) finds Hammond switching between solo Delta blues standards and raucous full-band workouts featuring Little Charlie and the Nightcats. Hammond also pulls in other guests for jaunts into Western swing jazz fare, but the spunky, electric jams are the real treats.

what to buy next: *I Can Tell* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1967) is one of Hammond's hottest collaborations, a loose session teamed with the Rolling Stones' Bill Wyman on bass, Robbie Robertson on lead guitar, Charles Otis on drums, and Artie Butler on piano. *The Best of John Hammond* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1970/1989, prod. Maynard Solomon) is a strong collection of Hammond's most alluring early work. On *Found True Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Pointblank, 1996, prod. John Hammond, Duke Robillard), the power of Hammond's vocals really comes to the front in duets with singer Soozie Tyrell and on several Howlin' Wolf tunes. Other highlights include the punch/counterpunch of Hammond's acoustic playing jousting with Robillard's piercing electric guitar.

the rest:

John Hammond ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1962/1992)
Country Blues ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964/1995)
So Many Roads ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965/1993)
Mirrors ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
Sooner or Later ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1968)
Encore ♪♪♪ (Spivey, 1969)
Southern Fried ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1969)
Source Point ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1970)
I'm Satisfied ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1972)
Triumvirate ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1973)
Can't Beat the Kid ♪♪½ (Capricorn, 1975/1997)
John Hammond Solo ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1976/1992)
Footwork ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1978)
Hot Tracks ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1979)
Mileage ♪♪ (Rounder, 1980/1995)
Frogs for Snakes ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982/1994)
John Hammond Live in Greece ♪♪♪ (Lyra, 1984)
John Hammond ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
Got Love If You Want It ♪♪♪½ (Pointblank/Charisma, 1992)
I Can Tell ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1992)
You Can't Judge a Book by Its Cover ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1993)

worth searching for: Hammond composed and performed all of the music for the movie soundtrack *Little Big Man* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1971). Spivey issued an impressive compilation, *Kings & the Queen* ♪♪♪½ (Spivey, 1970) that includes a Hammond duet with Roosevelt Sykes and harmonica accompaniment on a couple of tracks from a very young Bob Dylan.

influences:

◀◀ Robert Johnson, Jimmy Reed, Lightnin' Hopkins

▶▶ Corey Harris, Rory Block

Matt Pensinger

Lorraine (Lee) Hammond /Lorraine & Bennett Hammond /Solomon's Seal /Rick & Lorraine Lee

Born 1944, in West Cornwall, CT.

The traditional songs and ballads of northern New England are reflected through the music of dulcimer-, harp-, and banjo-player/vocalist Lorraine Hammond. Her performances and recordings with her ex-husband, Rick Lee, and with her current husband, Bennett Hammond, have brought a fresh vision to the songs of the past. Traditional music has infused Hammond's creativity since childhood. As a youngster, she was inspired by the singing of noted folklorist and neighbor, Oscar Degrenia, and by folklorist Helen Flanders. Another neighbor, Ed Canby, introduced her to the music of Jean Ritchie and to the sounds of the mountain dulcimer. As a student at Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont, Hammond convinced her roommate to order a dulcimer. When it arrived, she taught herself to play. Later, while working with the Peace Action Center in Washington, D.C., she became engrossed in bluegrass and traditional folk music. In 1962 Hammond produced the Yelping Hills Folk Festival and met Boston-area musicians, including Rick Lee. In addition to pooling their musical resources, the two musicians fell in love and were married within a year. Lorraine began to

perform music for children while working at a day care center in 1969. Although she re-enrolled at Goddard College's Continuing Education program to study early childhood, her adviser suggested that she turn her attention to music. She took the advice to heart, persuading music faculty professor Dennis Murphy to sponsor an apprenticeship and designing and building her own dulcimer. Rick and Lorraine Lee were encouraged to record their first album, *Living in the Trees*, in 1975 by Sandy and Caroline Paton of Folk-Legacy Records. Over the next decade, they released five additional albums. Lorraine also penned two books—*The Elizabethan Songbook* and *The Magic Dulcimer*—as well as a six-cassette set music instruction for Homespun Tapes. Together with whistle-player Sarah Bauhan and fiddler Jane Orzechowski, Rick and Lorraine formed the band Solomon's Seal during the early 1980s, and recorded two albums—*Green Gate* and *The Old Road*.

When their marriage began to dissolve, the Lees attempted unsuccessfully to maintain their professional relationship. As pressures mounted, Lorraine increasingly collaborated with acoustic guitar virtuoso Bennett Hammond. Inspired by the old-timey folk music of Etta Baker and the country blues of Lightnin' Hopkins, Hammond had performed as a solo guitarist until joining forces with Lorraine in 1986. Shortly after Lorraine's marriage to Rick Lee ended in divorce, she and Bennett were married. In addition to recording and performing with her second husband, Lorraine has remained active on her own, recording an album of West Virginia tunes with fiddler Gerry Milnes and narrating and composing an original score for "The Little House" by Virginia Lee Burton.

what to buy: With the release of *Love Has a Life of Its Own* ♪♪♪ (Wizmak, 1997), Lorraine Hammond, accompanied by the fingerstyle melodies of husband Bennett on guitar, recaptures the spotlight with her earthy vocals and tradition-rooted mountain dulcimer, harp, and banjo playing. Although the album remains grounded in Appalachian and New England folk traditions, the Hammonds show their mastery of the traditional form with eight original songs by Lorraine and a melodic instrumental, "Grapevine," by Bennett.

what to buy next: On *Peace on Earth* ♪♪½ (SoundWorks, Inc., 1994, prod. Lorraine & Bennett Hammond) the Hammonds join together to musically celebrate Christmas and the winter season.

the rest:
Beloved Awake ♪♪ (Front Hall Records, 1991)
Jonah's Dream ♪♪½ (SoundWorks, Inc., 1995)
Cape and Island Ways ♪♪½ (Site Productions, 1997)

worth searching for: Lorraine Hammond's albums with her first husband, Rick Lee, are out of print and difficult to find, but *The Old Road* ♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1984, prod. Solomon's Seal), recorded with their folk ensemble Solomon's Seal and featuring whistle player Sarah Bauhan and fiddler Jane Orzechowski, is worth seeking out. In addition to faithful renditions of traditional tunes like "Vinion's Hornpipe" and "Captain Kidd," the album includes Lorraine's original tunes "Winter Waltz and Dancing Anna" and the title track, and Rick's Native American tribute, "Natick."

solo outings:
Rick Lee:
Natick ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1995)

influences:
Jean Ritchie, Oscar Degrenia, Helen Flanders
Sally Rogers, Priscilla Herdman, Claudia Schmidt

Craig Harris

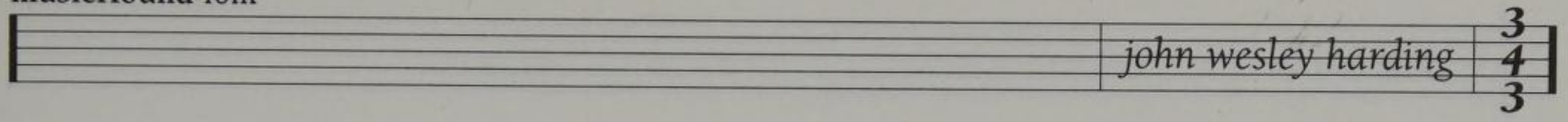
Thomas Hampson

See: Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Butch Hancock

Born July 12, 1945, in Lubbock, TX.

When the Flatlanders broke up, it was kind of like the Beatles—if they'd released only one album. The founding members, all Texas country outlaws who knew how to play the rock 'n' roll, went on to prolific solo careers with varying degrees of commercial success. Butch Hancock, the weary folkie Flatlander—as opposed to Joe Ely's strident, rocking Flatlander or Jimmie Dale Gilmore's dignified, friendly Flatlander—took longest to grow his name in the music world. At first he focused on his architecture career, helping to design an amphitheater in Clarendon, Texas. During the late 1970s Hancock formed his own underground record label, Rainlight, and put out eight albums full of old-fashioned country songs about boxcars, junkyards, and dust bowls. In 1991 he did something extraordinary, even by the standards of fellow prolific artists like Prince or They Might Be Giants. He did a six-night stand, "No Two Alike," at an Austin cafe during which he performed (and recorded) more than 200 songs; then he released 140 of them on 14 one-hour Rainlight cassettes. A switch to the more established Sugar Hill Records, if anything, re-energized Hancock, who had squeezed in a couple of tepid albums among the gems at Rainlight. His most recent, *Eats Away the Night*, sounds like Bob Dylan died just after *Nashville Skyline* and was reincarnated into Hancock's body.



what to buy: The best of Hancock's Rainlight albums are the live party tape *Firewater Seeks Its Own Level* ♪♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1981, prod. Butch Hancock, Joe Gracey), the relentlessly catchy *Diamond Hill* ♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1981, prod. Butch Hancock, Joe Gracey), and the dry, twangy solo debut *West Texas Waltzes & Dust Blown Tractor Tunes* ♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1978, prod. Butch Hancock, Joe Gracey). *Eats Away the Night* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Gurf Morlix) is the best of Hancock's Sugar Hill career, full of unashamed Americana imagery, including "Moanin' of the Midnight Train" and "Junkyard in the Sun." Finally, the Hancock-Gilmore (along with the original Flatlanders producer) reunion *Two Roads: Live in Australia* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1990, prod. Royce Clark) is more consistent than almost any Merle Haggard–Willie Nelson collaboration.

what to buy next: *Own and Own* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. various) has moments of brilliance, but it's uneven.

what to avoid: Maybe he was too busy designing new buildings, but Hancock clearly phoned in a few of his Rainlight albums, including the tepid *Yella Rose* ♪ (Rainlight, 1985, prod. Butch Hancock, Royce Gracey) and *Cause of the Cactus* ♪♪ (Rainlight, 1987, prod. Butch Hancock, Wayne Gracey).

the rest:
The Wind's Dominion ♪♪ (Rainlight, 1979)
1981: A Spare Odyssey ♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1981)
Split and Slide II ♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1986)

worth searching for: Why search? Call (512) 478-1688, and ask the nice people at Lubbock or Leave It for all 14 volumes of the amazing *No Two Alike Tape of the Month Club* ♪♪♪♪ (Rainlight, 1990s, prod. Butch Hancock); but be sure not to ask about the weather in Lubbock, because the company is located in Austin.

influences:
◀◀ Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Dylan, Merle Haggard, Patsy Cline, Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Guy Clark, Lyle Lovett, Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, Rosanne Cash, Townes Van Zandt

Steve Knopper

Tim Hardin

Born December 23, 1941, in Eugene, OR. Died December 29, 1980, in Los Angeles, CA.

Tim Hardin was a dark-hued and often mournful singer-songwriter whose place in the late '60s folksinger movement was ensured not so much by his own commercial success but by later versions of his songs covered by other artists. Hardin's originals were marked by spare performances—nearly outlines, really—and brief running times (most clock in at under two minutes). But the undeniable strength inherent in his sketchy yet potent style earned the singer substantial critical acclaim, if relatively little else. By the early 1970s, Hardin's career had been effectively wiped out from a nasty drug addiction, which eventually killed him at age 39.

what to buy: *Hang on to a Dream: The Verve Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1994, prod. Erik Jacobsen) is a far-reaching and comprehensive document, collecting every Verve recording plus 17 unreleased tracks of pure melancholy. His most notable tracks, including "Reason to Believe," "Misty Roses," "If I Were a Carpenter," and "Black Sheep Boy," are all included.

the rest:
Tim Hardin Live in Concert ♪♪ (PolyGram Special Products, 1968/1995)
Reason to Believe (Best of) ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1987)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs
▶▶ Paul Siebel, Neil Young

Allan Orski

John Wesley Harding

Born 1965, in Hastings, England.

Although he started his stateside career as a pop songsmith with Brian Wilson dreams and Elvis Costello pretensions, John Wesley Harding has reverted to his politically charged folk roots since parting ways with Sire Records in 1992. This isn't a shock to most fans; the brash singer-songwriter—who took his name from the classic Bob Dylan album—has always laced his shows with biting commentaries in the form of rambling monologues as well as such tersely but cleverly worded numbers as "Scared of Guns," "Hitler's Tears," "The Triumph of Trash," and "July 13th 1985" (about how Live Aid was really more about bloated egos than starving children). Over the years, the Costello comparisons have passed and Wes's upbeat, often frantic stage show has developed into a more thoughtful, though equally pointed platform that even caught the attention of Bruce Springsteen: the Boss, who rarely hires opening acts, invited Harding to join him on two 1995 West Coast dates during his solo acoustic tour.

what to buy: *Here Comes the Groom* ♪♪♪♪ (Sire, 1989, prod. Andy Paley) bubbles with the youthful fervor and manic word-

play of Costello's "My Aim Is True" (no surprise since the backing band includes Pete Thomas and Bruce Thomas of the Attractions) and the heel-clicking splendor of the Lovin' Spoonful. *John Wesley Harding's New Deal* ♪♪♪♪ (Forward/Rhino, 1996, prod. John Wesley Harding, Chris von Sneidern), his self-proclaimed antidote to Newt Gingrich's Contract with America, is clearly more Phil Ochs than Phil Spector. It's also his most relaxed record, with fiddles, mandolins, cellos, acoustic guitars, and Hammond organs backing his delicate delivery on "Kiss Me, Miss Liberty," "Other People's Failure" and "The King Is Dead Boring."

what to buy next: Harding's straight-faced acoustic cover of Madonna's "Like a Prayer" is one of three non-LP oddities on *God Made Me Do It: The Christmas EP* ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1989, prod. John Wesley Harding). *Pett Levels: The Summer EP* ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1992, prod. Andy Paley, Steve Berlin, Scott Matthews) boasts five previously unreleased tracks highlighted by the glorious "Summer Single," his final flirtation with wall-of-sound pop, and the hard-nosed live favorite "One Shot."

what to avoid: *It Happened One Night* ♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, prod. Wes Stace), a live solo acoustic album originally released in England in 1988, is driven more by adrenaline than vision.

the rest:
The Name above the Title ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1991)
Why We Fight ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1992)

worth searching for: *Dynablob* ♪♪♪ (Mod Lang, 1996, prod. John Wesley Harding) is a collection of studio outtakes and radio performances sold via his fan club and Mod Lang Records (P.O. Box 10111, Berkeley, CA 94709). It includes the original country version of "The Devil in Me" and his much-requested "Talking Return of the Great Folk Scare Blues."

influences:
◀◀ Phil Ochs, Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello
▶▶ Dan Bern

David Okamoto

Jack Hardy

Born November 23, 1947, in South Bend, IN.

The spearhead and spiritual leader of Greenwich Village's singer-songwriter scene since the mid-1970s, Indiana-born Jack Hardy was instrumental in the founding of the Songwriters' Exchange, the Speakeasy Musicians' Co-op and the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. The craftsmanship of his Americanized Irish songs has been a major influence on songwriters ranging from Suzanne Vega and Christine Lavin to John Gorka, David Massengill, and Cliff Eberhardt. Influenced by American songwriters like Bob Dylan and British songwriters such as Nick Drake and Davey Graham, Hardy wrote his first songs at the age of 14. His lyrical approach was enhanced at the University of Hartford, where he served as editor of the school newspaper and graduated with a degree in literature in 1970. After traveling around the United States and Europe for five years, he settled in New York's Greenwich Village in 1974.

what to buy: *The Collected Works: 1965–1995* ♪♪♪♪ (1-800-Prime-CD, 1997, prod. Mark Dann, Jack Hardy) assembles tracks from Hardy's first nine albums, originally released on his own Great Divide label in the United States and Brambus in Europe, and marks the first time that all of his recordings have been available at the same time. With urban-minded lyrics set to tradition-rooted melodies, Hardy's songs are the reflections of a modern-day visionary. His interests in mythology give his balladry a gothic sensibility, while the precision of his wordplay makes his compositions well-conceived masterpieces.

what to buy next: Hardy's American-style approach to Celtic balladry reached its pinnacle with *The Cauldron* ♪♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1984, prod. Mark Dann, Jack Hardy). Accompanying his soft-spoken vocals on acoustic guitar, mandolin, and tin whistle and joined by Mark Dann (harmony vocals, acoustic and electric lead guitar, synthesizer), John Caulfield (fiddle), the late Howie Wyeth (drums), and his brother Jeff (harmony vocals, acoustic bass), Hardy combines poetic lyricism with syncopated rhythms to create a distinctly personal recording. Songs range from the delicate poetry of "The Wren" and "The Bells of San Blas" to the mythological balladry of "The Cauldron" and "Ottomanelli."

the rest:
Mirror of My Madness ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1976)
Landmark ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1980)
White Shoes ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1982)
The Hunter ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1986)
Civil Wars ♪♪♪ (Great Divide, 1994)

worth searching for: The founder and editor of the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, Hardy recorded numerous songs for the audio publication. While many of these songs were later re-recorded and featured on his own albums, live versions make them worth seeking out. *Songs of Jack Hardy, Volume 1: Of the*

Goddess ♪♪♪ (BCN, 1994) celebrates the strength of Hardy's songwriting with his songs interpreted by Diane Taraz, Pendragon, Jem Moore & Ariane Lydon, the Roches, and Lucy Kaplansky.

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, Paul Siebel, Paul Simon, Nick Drake, Davey Graham

▶▶ Suzanne Vega, Shawn Colvin, Christine Lavin, John Gorka, David Massengill, Richard Meyer, Richard Shindell, Rod MacDonald, Lucy Kaplansky, Cliff Eberhardt

Craig Harris

Bill Harley

Born William Harley, July 1, 1954, in Greenville, OH.

One of the premier singer-songwriters and storytellers in the United States, Bill Harley has a magic pull with children and adults. The award-winning performer and author has a way of presenting stories and messages that are not only easy for kids to grasp, but make them want to hear his stories and songs again and again while making them laugh and think. As an eight-year-old listener said: "He's a grownup but he sounds like a kid." Indeed, Harley knows what it's like to be the odd kid out, how to be just plain silly, how cruel and kind kids can be, how tough it is growing up, and basically about how kids relate to the world. Though it may be cliché, Harley is one of the few artists who truly can make you laugh one moment and cry the next. Many of his stories are inspired by traditional tales, others by his own kids, still others by what he recalls from his own childhood.

Harley grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana, the second of three boys. His father was a publisher and a lawyer; his mother a children's writer and editor. He moved to Connecticut at age 16. After graduating from Hamilton College with a degree in religion, Harley went on to direct a program working with inner city and rural schools in combating violence, inspired by leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Singing for children seemed natural for Harley, and he began doing so while running a day camp.

In addition to performing, Harley has worked as a co-director for a community-based learning program in Providence, Rhode Island, and was the co-founder of the Stone Soup coffeehouse in Providence. He works with an alliance trying to save waterways near his home in Seekonk, Massachusetts. Harley has worked with the Massachusetts Arts Collaborative and was an artist-in-residence with the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. He is popular at many regional festivals as well as the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee. Though much of Harley's material is for children—he performs some 125 shows a year—he also has been a popular commentator on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. In recent years, while not abandoning music, he has turned toward writing books, and has worked on a stage show with his band, the Troublemakers (Stephen Snyder, Kenneth Carpenter, Kathy Burkly), designed to play at smaller theaters.

what to buy: Though *Wacka Wacka Woo & Other Stuff* ♪♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1995, prod. Bill Harley) has a silly title, it's enjoyably reflective of its songs and stories. The title song is nonsensical, with a kid-friendly, shoutable chorus (did someone say "Wacka Wacka Woo?"). Other songs, like "Is Not, Is Too," which needs little explanation to parents, become instant kid favorites. Harley is a master storyteller as well. He remembers what it was like to be a kid. He hooks kids with tales about a boy going to the store to buy soap, a tricky pet hamster who meets dreaded Aunt Edith, and a girl who tries some magic to cheer up her sad dad. Another fave is *Lunchroom Tales: A Natural History of the Cafetorium* ♪♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1996, prod. Bob Jaffe). Its delightful songs and stories recall life in elementary school, from morning announcements to memorable bus drivers. Harley adds a touching story about a child dealing with a sick friend. The tale, which seems all too real, touches on feelings of joy and guilt, and will likely bring a tear to an adult's eye. The song "A Little Bit Different" revels in our uniqueness, expressing joy in a mix of races, cultures, and even the way people dress and eat.

what to buy next: From world beat to rock to Cajun, Harley enjoys his music, and his energy carries over to kids and families in *Big Big World* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1993, prod. Bill Harley). Harley sings of pretending to be a pirate who doesn't take baths or naps, about cleaning up a mess, and throwing pizza slices in the blender. When he's not being outright silly, he sings of creating friendships, having respect for others, and keeping our world clean. In Bill Harley's world, kids know that grownups are slow and make kids rush, and that kids need to understand why their parents sometimes divorce. Plenty of musicians add to this thoroughly enjoyable album. It will keep kids hopping.

the rest:

Monsters in the Bathroom ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1985)
50 Ways to Fool Your Mother ♪♪♪ (Round River, 1986)
Dinosaurs Never Say Please and Other Stories ♪♪♪♪ (A&M/Round River, 1987)
Cool in School—Tales from the Sixth Grade ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1987)

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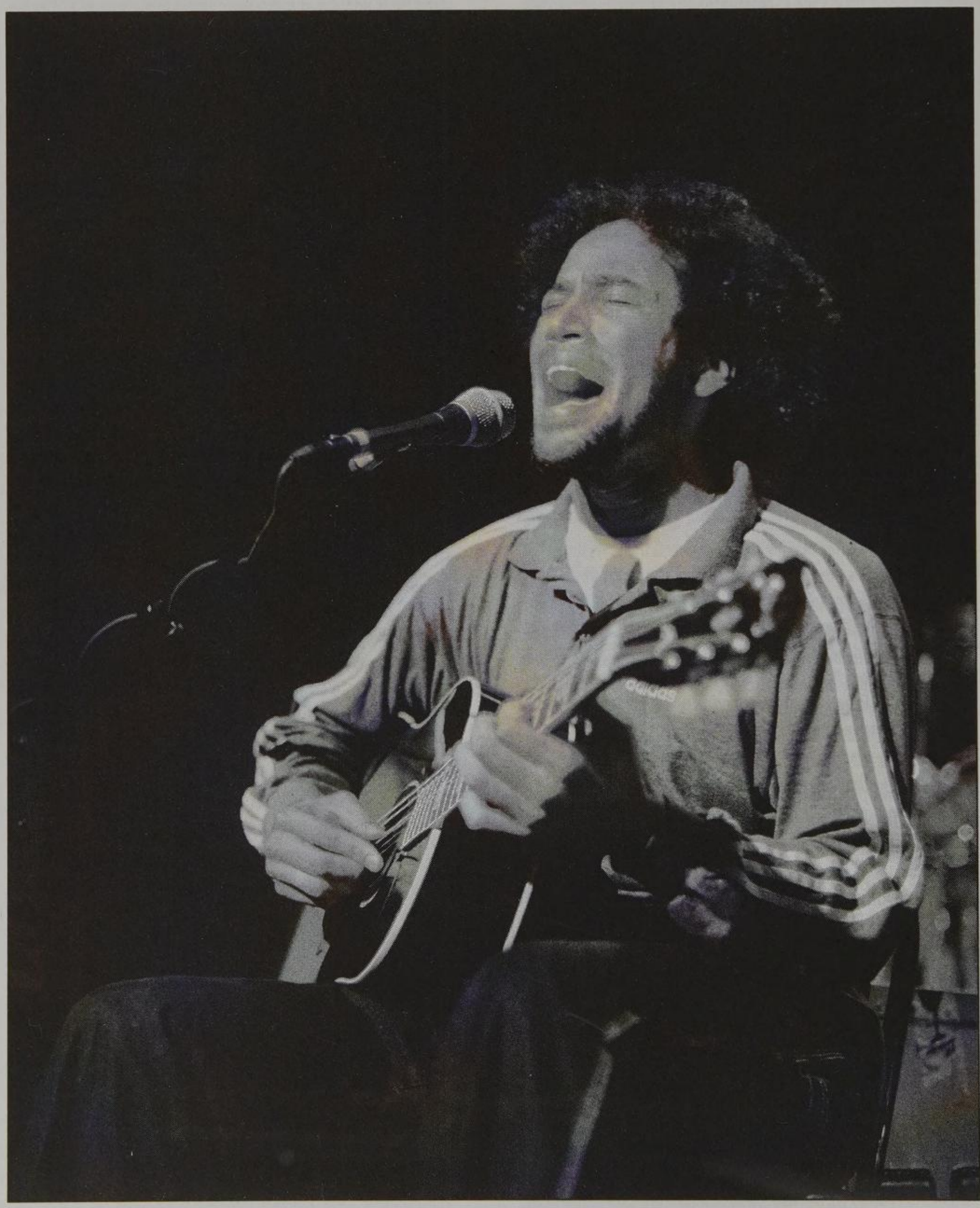
6 *bill harley*



Coyote ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1987)
You're in Trouble ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1988)
In the Hospital ♪♪♪♪½ (Moose School Records, 1988)
(With Peter Alsop) *In the Hospital* ♪♪♪♪ (1988)
Grownups Are Strange ♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1990)
Come on out and Play ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1990)
Already Someplace Warm ♪♪♪ (Round River, 1994)
Sitting on My Hands ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1995)
From the Back of the Bus ♪♪♪♪ (Round River, 1995)
There's a Pea on My Plate ♪♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1997)

worth searching for: *I'm Gonna Let It Shine—A Gathering of Voices for Freedom* ♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1990, prod. Bill Harley, Jon Solins) is a Harley-led a cappella benefit album to help organizations working for racial justice and civil rights. Singers include Debbie Block, Howie Bursen, Guy Carawan, Kim & Reggie Harris, Lashunda Johnson, and many others. Other projects include *Who Made This Mess* (A&M, 1992), a video, and a number of books: the out-of-print *Carna and the Boots of Seven Strides, Nothing Happened, Sarah's Story,* and *Sitting down to Eat.*

influences:
◀◀ Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer
▶▶ David Holt

Stephen Ide

Ben Harper

Born October 28, 1969, in Pamona, CA.

Given the political bent of some of Ben Harper's lyrics, it would be easy to tag him as a male version of Tracy Chapman, but his voice is less distinctive. Of course, Harper puts his own spin on things, keeping the instrumental arrangements simple but cleverly nuanced, and often adding choir-like backing vocals.

what to buy: Harper made a critical splash with his debut album, *Welcome to the Cruel World* ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1994, prod. Ben Harper, J.P. Plunier), partly because it's still unusual these days for a young black man to sing reflective, bluesy acoustic folk-rock. Highlights range from the funny, reggae-ish "Mama's Got a Girlfriend Now" to the surprisingly upbeat "How Many Miles Must We March?" to the dreamy "I'll Rise." His follow-up, *Fight for Your Mind* ♪♪♪½ (Virgin, 1995, prod. Ben Harper, J.P. Plunier), gets more electric on a few numbers, but mostly it sticks to the same Bob Marley– and Neil Young–influenced folk-rock. Occasionally, he gets too ambitious for his own good, adding a string quartet to the already dark "Power of the Gospel" and winding up with something tedious instead of stirring. Still, "Ground on Down" is powerful, damning stuff, and there's certainly going to be more where that came from.

the rest:
The Will to Live ♪♪♪½ (Virgin, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Richie Havens, Taj Mahal, Curtis Mayfield, Bob Marley, Neil Young
▶▶ Tracy Chapman, Chic Street Man

Bob Remstein

Bill Harrell

See: Don Reno & Red Smiley

Dick Harrington & Victoria Young

Formed 1991 in VA.

Dick Harrington (born March 8, 1942, in Rapid City, SD), fiddle; Victoria Young (born February 27, 1945, in Fredericksburg, VA), dulcimer.

Individually, Dick Harrington and Victoria Young have been playing and singing southern folk music since the 1950s, but they only began singing together in 1991. This Virginia-based (and now husband-and-wife) duo love the old-style country duets, harmonizing beautifully together, trading lead and harmonies easily. Their voices blend and move together as one, with tasteful accompaniment by autoharp and guitar in a Carter Family style. In addition, their excellent instrumental abilities are apparent in their repertoire of old-time fiddle tunes as Harrington plays the fiddle and Young plays lap dulcimer.

what's available: *Lover's Return* ♪♪♪♪ (Fiddletop Productions, 1996, prod. Dick Harrington, Victoria Young) is a superb mix of vocal duets and fiddle tunes. Starting with the title cut, the outstanding vocals make this recording exceptional. Many of the songs are such old traditional selections as "Little Birdie" and "Pretty Saro," with a great blues number, "St. Louis Blues," sung by Victoria, and "T for Texas," complete with yodels. The addition of such fiddle tunes as "Rye Straw," "Dry and Dusty," and "Eighth of January" add considerable up-tempo energy to the recording. Musicians contributing to this effort include Mark Beall (bass), Judy Chaudet (banjo), and Gary Hawk (harmonica). *Lover's Return* is available from Fiddletop Productions, 1779 Mountain Road, Afton, VA 22920-9334.

Ben Harper **(© Ken Settle)**

dick harrington & victoria young

worth searching for: *Long Journey* ♪♪♪ (Fiddletop Productions, 1993, prod. Dick Harrington, Victoria Young) is the duo's first recording and includes 15 songs (no instrumentals) with wonderful harmonies (some overdub of themselves) accompanied by guitar. This recording is available on cassette tape from Fiddletop Productions.

influences:

- Carter Family, Woody Guthrie, Stanley Brothers, Blue Sky Boys
- Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss

Heidi Cerrigione

Emmylou Harris

Born April 2, 1947, in Birmingham, AL.

While her musical trademark is a pure, aching soprano, Emmylou Harris's defining musical characteristic is curiosity. It has led her to traditional country, and from there to new songwriters and maverick producers. Practically every hotshot on the country scene today, from Garth Brooks on down, claims Harris as an inspiration, but few can match her creative daring. Harris began as a 1960s-style folkie, working clubs around Washington, D.C. Through ex-Byrd Chris Hillman, she met Gram Parsons. Their duets on Parsons's *Grievous Angel* are pioneering moments in country-rock and brought Harris's voice to the big time. Parsons's death in 1973 left Harris fiercely committed to continuing his vision in her solo work. With her 1975 major-label debut, *Pieces of the Sky*, she unveiled the sound that would become an influential trademark: classic country touches like galloping rhythm guitar and heartfelt vocals were cut with a driving rock back beat. Early on, Harris demonstrated both her interest in country's past (the Louvin Brothers) and her commitment to new or unconventional material (the Beatles' "Here, There and Everywhere" or "Easy from Now On," by the young Carlene Carter). Harris's Hot Band, which toured with her through the 1980s, was an incubator of top talent; alumni include Ricky Skaggs, Vince Gill, Rodney Crowell, and Albert Lee, as well as producers Emory Gordy Jr. and Tony Brown. Opting for a bare-bones traditional sound during the 1990s, Harris formed the Nash Ramblers and released the acclaimed *At the Ryman* in 1992. Her fan base is solid enough to offset country radio's indifference, and her most recent work reflects an increasing rock flavor and a continued willingness to stretch the boundaries.

Emmylou Harris **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what to buy: For a warp-speed trip through Harris's career, start with *Profile: The Best of Emmylou Harris* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros, 1978, prod. various), the cream of her early studio work. High points: covers of Dolly Parton's "To Daddy" and the Louvins' "If I Could Only Win Your Love." Low point: a screechy "You Never Can Tell," which naturally remains the one Harris

editor's choice
13 desert island discs

If you were going to a desert island and could take only one CD, which one would it be? *MusicHound Folk* writers respond:

Pamela Murray Winters: Sandy Denny, *The North Star Grassman and the Ravens* (Island)

Jo Hughey Morrison: Bonnie Rideout, *Kindred Spirits* (Maggie's Music)

Steve Knopper: Bob Dylan, *Biograph* (Columbia)

Steve Winick: Nick Drake, *Pink Moon* (Island Records)

Neal Walters: Cliff Perry/Laurel Bliss, *Old Pal* (Telegraph)

Ken Roseman: Janis Joplin, *Pearl* (Columbia)

Bryan Powell: Dave Brubeck Quartet, *Time Further Out* (Columbia Legacy)

Ken Burke: Jerry Lee Lewis, *Live at the Star Club* (Phillips)

Grant Alden: Herbert Von Karajan (conductor) *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (DGC)

Leland Rucker: Charlie Parker, *Charlie Parker on Dial* (Spotlite)

David Sokol: Bob Dylan, *Blonde on Blonde* (Columbia)

Heidi Cerrigione: Sally Rogers, *We'll Pass Them On* (Red House Records)

Philippe Varlet: Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples, *Molloy, Brady, Peoples* (Mulligan)

song most likely to be played on country radio. Fast-forward to 1995's daring *Wrecking Ball* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1995, prod. Daniel Lanois) to hear a Harris now completely confident in her musical impulses. Within rock producer Lanois's otherworldly arrangements, she pushes her voice to a raw, urgent edge and continues to dig up great material by underappreciated writers (Lucinda Williams, Gillian Welch, etc.). Two live albums provide excellent introductions to important phases of Harris's music. *Last Date* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1982, prod. Brian Ahern), an exuberant country-rock manifesto, summarizes why Harris's Hot Band work had such impact. She finds fresh drive in classics by Carl Perkins and Hank Cochran, pays tribute to Parsons with three of his songs and points the way forward with a startling yet stone-country cover of Bruce Springsteen's "Racing in the Streets." *At the Ryman* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Allen Reynolds, Richard Bennett) offers Harris as acoustic purist, extending and refining ideas first explored in *Roses in the Snow*. With the Nash Ramblers Harris achieves an unplugged sound that is firmly traditional and astoundingly flexible, encompassing everything from Steve Earle to Stephen Foster.

what to buy next: Any would-be country traditionalist should own *Roses in the Snow* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980, prod. Brian Ahern), Harris's valentine to old-timey music (with assists from the likes of Parton, Skaggs, Linda Ronstadt, and Johnny Cash). The ambitious concept album *The Ballad of Sally Rose* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1985, prod. Emmylou Harris, Paul Kennerley) doesn't meld into a convincing dramatic whole, but features wonderful songwriting by Harris and Kennerley on such songs as "Woman Walk the Line." The spiritual, introspective *Cowgirl's Prayer* ♪♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1993, prod. Allen Reynolds, Richard Bennett) features an eerie, ethereal version of Leonard Cohen's "Ballad of a Runaway Horse." And while Harris anthologies will probably always spark arguments over what was left out, the three-disc box set *Portraits* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996, prod. various) does a respectably thorough job of collecting her Warner Bros. work.

what to avoid: *Cimarron* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1982, prod. Brian Ahern) is mostly listless Nashville-by-the-book—and Harris is infinitely better when she chucks the rule book.

the rest:
Pieces of the Sky ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1975)
Elite Hotel ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1976)
Luxury Liner ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1977)
Quarter Moon in a Ten Cent Town ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1978)
Blue Kentucky Girl ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979)
Light of the Stable ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980)
Evangeline ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1981)
White Shoes ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1983)
Profile II: The Best of Emmylou Harris ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1984)
Thirteen ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986)
Angel Band ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987)
(With Linda Ronstadt and Dolly Parton) *Trio* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987)
Bluebird ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1989)
Brand New Dance ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1990)
Duets ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1990)
Songs of the West ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1994)

worth searching for: *Gliding Bird* ♪♪½ (Jubilee, 1969), Harris's very first album, reportedly turns up from time to time in the record collections of Harris junkies; see if they'll let you tape it, though Harris herself—who sued for and won the rights to the masters after Jubilee folded—would probably prefer you don't.

influences:
Carter Family, Buck Owens, Louvin Brothers, Hazel & Alice, Tom Rush, Gram Parsons

Alison Krauss, Mavericks, Cowboy Junkies

see also: *Gram Parsons*

Elizabeth Lynch

John Hartford

Born December 30, 1937, in New York, NY.

If John Hartford were known only for his most famous song, "Gentle on My Mind," that would certainly be enough. One of the most performed and recorded songs of all time—it's been done by everyone from Glen Campbell, who used it as the opening theme of his *Goodtime Hour* TV show during the 1960s, to Aretha Franklin—it has earned Hartford sufficient royalties to play whatever music he chooses, regardless of commercial considerations, and to spend time as a riverboat pilot, his true passion. Hartford is an astonishing talent on both fiddle and banjo, but the entertainment quotient is kicked to a whole other level when he throws in the trick that has made him unique: he provides his own percussion, clog-dancing on a piece of amplified plywood he refers to as the "whomper stomper." It may not be much on record, but you should see him live. Hartford's artistic freedom led him to become Nashville's version of a hippie—respectful of his elders (so long as they can play), but stoned enough to record a twisted version of the Lord's Prayer on his best album, *Mark Twang*. Hartford has mellowed over the years, and many of his albums are interchange-

able. As a rule, he's at his best and most entertaining when he lets his eccentricities run wild.

what to buy: *Mark Twang* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1976, prod. Mike Melford) is the album on which Hartford's eccentric style came to its full fruition. Sawing the fiddle, pickin' the banjo, tapping his feet, and singing about steamboats, the Mississippi river, his bluegrass heroes, and reefer, Hartford sounds like he's singing for no one so much as himself. But it offers a glimpse at a worldview so fully formed and so compelling that you can't help forgive him his self-indulgence. Or, at the very least, tap your foot in time. *Me Oh My, How the Time Does Fly* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. various) is a generous best-of disc that covers his years on the Flying Fish label that marked the creative apex of his career.

what to buy next: *Aereo-Plane* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1971/Rounder, 1997, prod. David Bromberg) has a wonderful, old-timey feel, abetted by an amazing backup trio of Tut Taylor, Norman Blake, and Vassar Clements. This album would sound best played through an old cathedral radio. *Nobody Knows What You Do* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977, prod. Mike Melford) is one of Hartford's more eccentric efforts, but it contains the wistful "In Tall Buildings," one of his best songs, plus some low humor in "The Golden Globe Awards" and even a brief tribute to the jazz-fusion guitar hero "John McLaughlin." After many soft albums, notably those on his own label Small Dog a'Barkin', *Wild Hog in the Red Brush and a Bunch of Others You Might Not Have Heard* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. John Hartford, Bob Carlin) is a heartening return to form, featuring engaging arrangements of 19 old fiddle tunes.

what to avoid: A pair of albums, now available as a two-fer, *Glitter-Grass from the Nashwood Hollyville Strings/Permanent Wave* **woof!** (Flying Fish, 1977, 1980, 1995), with Doug & Rodney Dillard, are filled with dreadful country-pop. The bizarre song selection—"Boogie on Reggae Woman," "No Beer in Heaven"—doesn't help.

the rest:
Morning Bugle ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972/Rounder, 1995)
Annual Waltz ♪♪ (MCA, 1987)
Down on the River ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)
(With Jamie Hartford) *Hartford & Hartford* ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1991)
(With Mark Howard) *Cadillac Rag* ♪♪½ (Small Dog a'Barkin', 1992)
Goin' Back to Dixie (Small Dog a'Barkin', 1994)
The Walls We Bounce off Of ♪♪½ (Small Dog a'Barkin', 1994)
Live at College Station, PA ♪♪♪ (Small Dog a'Barkin', 1994)
(With Bob Carlin) *The Fun of Open Discussion* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)
No End of Love ♪♪½ (Small Dog a'Barkin', 1996)

worth searching for: Hartford's original version of "Gentle on My Mind" can be found on the out-of-print *Earthwords and Music* ♪♪ (RCA, 1967, prod. Felton Jarvis), a true artifact of the 1960s.

influences:
Flatt & Scruggs, Stringbean, Samuel Clemens

Mark O'Connor, Béla Fleck

Daniel Durchholz

Richie Havens

Born January 21, 1941, in Brooklyn, NY.

Though he first established himself as a folk singer on the New York coffee house circuit, Richie Havens's rich, craggy voice and prowess as an interpreter of others' material gained him national recognition during the late 1960s. His first couple of albums stiffed, but subsequent releases for MGM/Verve—notably *Mixed Bag*—encapsulated the humanistic, progressive mood of the time. Almost distinctive as his clarion vocals was Havens's powerful guitar playing, which involved hooking his thumb over the open-tuned strings and strumming furiously. His moment of greatest visibility came with his extended improvisation on the old spiritual "Motherless Child" at the Woodstock festival in 1969. He scored several hit singles during the next few years, recording memorable renditions of songs by Bob Dylan and the Beatles, as well as his own material. After a decade-long hiatus from recording, he began turning out albums again in 1987 and has appeared frequently with other '60s pop veterans at nostalgic reunion concerts. Aside from his musical endeavors, Havens has long worked as an environmental activist and done commercial voice-over work (he's best known in this regard as the singer of the Amtrak train jingle), as well as some film acting.

what to buy: *Resume: The Best of Richie Havens* ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1993, comp. Johanan Vigoda) is a generous anthology that draws from his best original songs and covers.

what to buy next: *Mixed Bag* ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1967, prod. Johanan Vigoda) is an early peak, boasting the anti-war classic "Handsome Johnny" and his versions of Dylan's "Just like a Woman" and the Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby."

what to avoid: *Mixed Bag II* ♪♪ (Verve, 1974, prod. Johanan Vigoda) is, like so many sequels, inferior to the original.

ginny hawker & kay justice

the rest:
A Richie Havens Record ♪♪♪½ (Douglas, 1965)
Electric Havens ♪♪♪½ (Douglas, 1966)
Something Else Again ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1968)
Stonehenge ♪♪♪ (Stormy Forest, 1970)
State of Mind ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1971)
Alarm Clock ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1971)
Great Blind Degree ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1971)
Richie Havens on Stage ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1972)
Portfolio ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1973)
Richie Havens ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1975)
The End of the Beginning ♪♪ (A&M, 1976)
Mirage ♪♪ (A&M, 1977)
Connections ♪♪ (Elektra, 1980)
Richard P. Havens ♪♪♪ (Verve, 1969/1983)
Common Ground ♪♪♪½ (EMI, 1984)
Simple Things ♪♪♪½ (RBI, 1987)
Collection (Rykodisc, 1987)
Now ♪♪♪ (Solar/Epic, 1991)
Live at the Cellar Door (Five Star, 1991)
Cuts to the Chase ♪♪♪ (Forward, 1994)
Classics (Rebound, 1995)

worth searching for: *Richie Havens Sings the Beatles and Bob Dylan* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rykodisc, 1986, prod. Douglas Yeager, Richie Havens) is an album full of covers from Havens's favorite songwriters.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Sam Cooke, Leadbelly, Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters
▶▶ Tracy Chapman, Ben Harper, Hootie & the Blowfish

Simon Glickman

Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice

Formed 1986, in Elkins, WV.

Ginny Hawker (born in VA); Kay Justice (born in McDowell County, WV).

Ginny Hawker and Kay Justice both grew up in the southern portion of the Appalachian mountain range, Hawker from southern Virginia and Justice from the southern portion of West Virginia. They met in the mid-'80s and immediately discovered that they had a mutual love for traditional southern music. There's something about southern traditional music when it is done well that is incredibly special, and this duo has captured it. Perhaps it's the convincing nature of good singers singing a good traditional song that makes their music more than just entertainment. This is life itself.

what to buy: *Come All You Tenderhearted* ♪♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1993, prod. Ginny Hawker, Kay Justice), their third recording as a team, gives the listener a good idea of what type of songs they might have talked about, and sang, at their first meeting; there's the Carter family's songs, the old country duets, and a great amount of gospel and sacred music. If you are a lover of southern singing, or traditional music in general, then track down this CD. If your interests run to southern gospel music, this is essential to your collection. This music is about sharing; and by the sound of Hawker and Justice's music, they want to share it with you.

the rest:
Signs and Wonders ♪♪♪♪ (June Appal) (cassette only)
Pathway to West Virginia ♪♪♪♪½ (Pathway Productions, 1988) (cassette only)

influences:
◀◀ Hazel & Alice, Blue Sky Boys, Primitive Baptist Hymnal
▶▶ Dirk Powell

see also: *Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker, Tracy Schwarz*

Steve Gardner

Ted Hawkins

Born 1936, in Lakeshore, MS. Died January 1, 1995, in Los Angeles, CA.

If Sam Cooke's voice makes you want to fall in love, Ted Hawkins's voice makes you scared to death of losing it. Blessed with a voice from the heavens but cursed with a life of homelessness and incarceration, he died months after he signed to a major label and seemed poised to become a star. The singer-songwriter was at a disadvantage from the beginning: For shoplifting and other minor crimes, he was sent to a reform school before he hit his teens. He was switched to Parchman Farm prison, where he endured pistol-beatings (and heard Sam Cooke for the first time), and later rode the rails as a hobo before landing in a California medical facility. "The uvular blends of his vocal style were similar to those of Sam Cooke and Otis Redding," Francis Davis wrote in the *Oxford American* magazine, "but his solitary presentation and vagabond life gave him more in common with Robert Johnson, Blind Lemon Jefferson or Blind Willie McTell." After hearing Hawkins sing on the Los Angeles streets, a local DJ set him up with producer Bruce Bromberg. From there, Hawkins's superb recordings gained him a loyal cult following, especially in Europe, but his life continued to run an un-

steady course. He drifted, putting out a record every now and then, but mostly trying to fill his tip jar while singing on an old milk crate propped against a wall on some beach-front street. Knowing Hawkins's background sometimes makes listening to his music a painful, or at least difficult, experience: though he consistently denied the charge, he served a final term at the California Medical Facility for allegedly molesting a 13-year-old girl. His long-deserved break came in 1994, when he signed to Geffen and started to play for ticket-buying audiences at clubs around the country before his untimely death.

what to buy: It's chilling to hear Hawkins sing the sad part in "I Got What I Wanted," from *Songs from Venice Beach* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Evidence, 1995, prod. H. Thorp Minister III), about walking on the beach alone, knowing everybody's used to seeing him with his woman. On this reissued album, culled from the hard-to-find *On the Boardwalk: The Venice Beach Tapes*, Hawkins can express loneliness as well as Roy Orbison and can even hit the same high (and low) notes.

what to buy next: Though the writing isn't as strong as his best material, Hawkins's first official recordings—*Watch Your Step* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1982/1993, prod. Bruce Bromberg, Dennis Walker) and *Happy Hour* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986/1993, prod. Bruce Bromberg, Dennis Walker, Dale Wilson) share an amazing street-bred talent with the rest of the world. Parts of *The Next Hundred Years* ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1994, prod. Tony Berg), such as the heartbreaking "The Good and the Bad" and the high notes in the soul-pop classic "There Stands the Glass," will make your hair stand up and bring tears involuntarily to your eyes, but some of the production drowns the voice.

the rest:
The Final Tour ♪♪♪♪ (Evidence, 1998)
Suffer No More: The Ted Hawkins Story ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1998)

worth searching for: *On the Boardwalk: The Venice Beach Tapes* ♪♪♪♪ (1986, prod. H. Thorp Minister III) and *Dock of the Bay: The Venice Beach Tapes* ♪♪♪♪ (1987, prod. H. Thorp Minister III) were recorded by a young fan in Nashville and made their way to Europe without a label, helping boost Hawkins's huge following abroad. If they're virtually impossible to find, try digging up his first single, "Baby"/"Whole Lotta Women," recorded for Money Records in 1966.

influences:
⏮ Sam Cooke, Otis Redding, Robert Johnson, Wilson Pickett, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Curtis Mayfield, Roy Orbison

⏭ Chris Isaak, Satan & Adam, Robert Cray

Steve Knopper

Martin Hayes

Born July 4, 1962, in Maghera, Co. Clare, Ireland.

The son of famous fiddler P.J. Hayes, who appeared with Paddy Canny on the groundbreaking 1960 LP *All-Ireland Champions: Violin* and continues to lead the Tulla Ceili Band, Martin Hayes grew up on a dairy farm in East County Clare. He started to play the fiddle at age 10, learning from his father as well as his uncle Paddy Canny, and, while absorbing the distinctive East Clare style, soon developed a highly individual approach to his music. In 1976 Hayes won his first All-Ireland title in the Under-14 category, then repeated the very next year in the Under-16, and went on to win four more titles in following years. Hayes moved to Chicago in the mid-1980s, eking out a living as a musician but experimenting with fusion rather than performing traditional music. By the early 1990s, however, he had gone through a reawakening and in the process found a record label interested in his playing. His first solo album, *Martin Hayes*, released in 1993, introduced him to American audiences as a master of the expressive brand of fiddle playing known in East Co. Clare as "the lonesome touch." This has been followed by two equally successful releases, *Under the Moon* and the appropriately titled *The Lonesome Touch*, which have made Martin Hayes a household name. The fiddle player, who now lives in Seattle, was recently reunited with his father's famous Tulla Ceili Band to celebrate its 50th anniversary with a tour and the release of a new album titled *The Tulla Ceili Band: A Celebration of 50 Years*.

what's available: When *Martin Hayes* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Helen Bommarito, Martin Hayes) was released, Irish music devotees may have been reminded of the time when Kevin Burke's albums first became available in the United States. This has none of the urgent pace of Donegal music nor the thundering din of supergroups like the Bothy Band or De Danann. Rather, it is the reflective, soulful music, simple and complex at the same time, of a fiddle player with a gentle and subtle touch. Uncommon tunes, and common ones in uncommon keys or settings, are performed at the characteristically slow East Clare pace, with perfectly matched guitar accompaniments by Randal Bays. On *Under the Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Martin Hayes), recorded in Ireland, Hayes brings in more variety by mixing solo tracks with duets with his father P.J. (fiddle), Chicago concertina and accordion player John

hazel & alice

Williams, and Randal Bays (fiddle), while Steve Cooney ably shares accompaniment duties with Bays. *The Lonesome Touch* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Martin Hayes, Dennis Cahill) is the product of Hayes's more recent collaboration with guitarist Dennis Cahill. While the fiddling may at times sound almost like a caricature of itself, slower and more dramatic than ever, the interplay between the fiddle and the guitar can be fascinating. One would expect *The Tulla Ceili Band: A Celebration of 50 Years* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Martin Hayes) to be strictly a band album, and it is for the most part. However, Hayes's fiddle playing is very prominent in the mix, and a couple of tracks are a fiddle and accordion duet performed with Andrew McNamara, who plays with the Lahawns. Hayes can be heard on a few tracks on the wonderful anthologies *My Love Is in America: The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Mícheál Ó'Súilleabháin) and *Gaelic Roots* ♪♪♪♪½ (Kells Music, 1997, prod. Séamus Connolly), both recorded live at Boston College.

worth searching for: One of Hayes's earliest appearances on record was on *An Fhidil Sraith I (The Fiddle, Volume I)* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1978, prod. Paddy Glackin), a wonderful anthology of young Irish fiddle players, unfortunately not reissued on compact disc as yet.

influences:

◀◀ P.J. Hayes, Paddy Canny, Paddy Fahy, Tulla Ceili Band

▶▶ Randal Bays, Dale Russ, Kevin Burke

Philippe Varlet

Hazel & Alice /Hazel Dickens /Alice Gerrard

Formed early 1960s, in Baltimore/Washington, DC, area.

Hazel Dickens (born June 1, 1935, Mercer County, WV), vocals; Alice Gerrard, fiddle, banjo, guitar, vocals.

Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard began playing bluegrass together informally, and soon made history in a heretofore largely male bastion of traditional music. With their songwriting skills, imaginative arrangements of traditional and original numbers, and, in particular, their impassioned and heartfelt vocal harmonies, working-class West Virginian Hazel and middle-class/West Coast–reared Alice became a highly influential and successful bluegrass and traditional country duet. Their pioneering efforts helped bring countless young women artists into bluegrass and traditional country music, and their landmark recordings have influenced the repertoires of artists as diverse as Emmylou Harris (who adopted their arrangement of the Carter Family's "Hello Stranger") and the Judds, for whom their harmonizing served as an early inspiration. Performing for the first time in 1962, the two recorded their best-known work for Rounder in 1973. Hazel and Alice's wild and fiercely emotional vocal harmonies breathed new life into the traditional material they recorded, and several of their original songs became bluegrass and traditional standards. Since 1981 they have performed together infrequently, but each has continued to perform solo and in other musical contexts. Dickens is widely regarded as among the finest traditional country songwriters in the business, penning such classics as "Won't You Come and Sing for Me," "Mama's Hands," "My Better Years," "A Few Old Memories," "These Old Pictures," and many more. She has also been involved in several movie projects, contributing music to the films *Harlan County, U.S.A.* and *Matewan*, in which she also appeared. Gerrard, a gifted fiddler, banjo player, and guitarist, has been publisher of the *Old-Time Herald*, a quarterly magazine devoted to the preservation of old-time music, since 1987.

what to buy: *Hazel & Alice* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1973/1995, prod. Hazel & Alice), the duo's classic album, was extremely popular and influential in traditional music circles when it was released, due in part to the working woman's slant given to the material, but mostly because of the fierceness and raw, heartfelt emotion conveyed in the duo's harmonies. It contains three originals by Hazel and three by Alice, each imbued with the traditional feel of songs by Utah Phillips, the Carter Family, Wilma Lee Cooper, J.B. Coates, and Trixie Smith that make up the remainder of the album's tracks.

what to buy next: *Pioneering Women of Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1965/1996, prod. Peter K. Siegel), a reissue of Hazel & Alice's first recordings—26 cuts in all—contains more numbers from the traditional bluegrass repertoire and fewer originals than their first Rounder recording, with bands that include David Grisman, Lamar Grier, Chubby Wise, and Billy Baker. One notable exception to the traditional repertoire here is Hazel's "Won't You Come and Sing for Me," which, in the years since this recording was originally released, has achieved classic status.

worth searching for: *Hazel Dickens & Alice Gerrard* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976) isn't the classic that the first Rounder album is, but is still very worthwhile. *Get Acquainted Waltz* ♪♪♪♪

Hazel Dickens (center) of Hazel and Alice **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

(Arhoolie, 1975/1997, prod. Mike Seeger, Chris Strachwitz) features Hazel & Alice along with Alice's then-husband Mike Seeger and his New Lost City Ramblers bandmate Tracy Schwarz, billed as the Strange Creek Singers.

solo outings:

Hazel Dickens:

Hard Hitting Songs for Hard Hit People ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987) (cassette only)

It's Hard to Tell the Singer from the Song ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987) (cassette only)

A Few Old Memories ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)

By the Sweat of My Brow ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989) (cassette only)

Alice Gerrard:

(With Mike Seeger) *Mike and Alice Seeger in Concert* ♪♪♪ (King (Japan), 1970)

(With Mike Seeger) *Mike Seeger and Alice Gerrard* ♪♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1980)

Pieces of My Heart ♪♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Wilma Lee Cooper, Stanley Brothers

▶▶ Iris DeMent, the Judds, Emmylou Harris, Lynn Morris, Kate Brislin

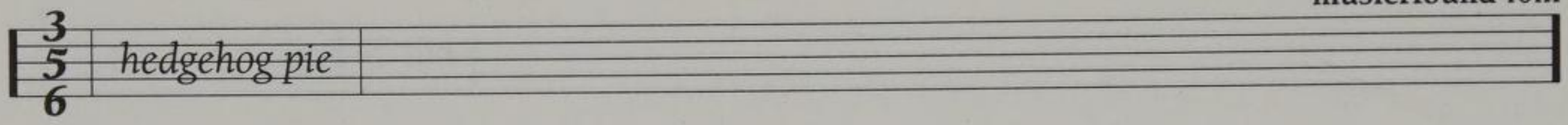
Stephen L. Betts and Randy Pitts

Bill & Bonnie Hearne

Formed 1970, in Austin, TX.

Bill Hearne (born February 11, 1949, in Dallas, TX); Bonnie Hearne (born March 5, 1946, in Corsicana, TX).

Outside of Texas, and the country songwriting community at large, this soft-spoken country-folk duo has never quite received the popularity or business breaks their 27-year career has deserved. For years, when Bill picked, Bonnie played gospel piano, and the Hearnes neatly wrapped their high-and-low vocals around each other at Texas nightclubs, young musi-



cians paid attention—first Jerry Jeff Walker, then Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, and Robert Earl Keen Jr. Bonnie (who is blind) and Bill (whose thick glasses save him from being blind) met in 1970 at an Austin club, decided to collaborate, and eventually got married; since then, they've moved to New Mexico, but remain a living historical document of folk and country music, playing traditional tunes and new songs by young hotshots Jon Ims, Chuck Pyle, and Tish Hinojosa. They've put out several self-released tapes, but weren't able to delve into the mainstream music industry until 1997, signing to the Warner Western label.

what to buy: It's tough to find the Hearnes' music, except at their shows, because so much of it came out only on cassette or is out of print. Though *Diamonds in the Rough* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1997, prod. Jim Rooney) captures them well down the career road, it has excellent cameos by Griffith and Lovett, and the Hearnes' voices sound impeccable on "Alison Lives by the Big Bend," "Muley Brown," and "Rose of Sharon."

what to buy next: *Live at Poor David's Pub* ♪♪♪½ (Poor David's Recordings, 1991, prod. David J. Card), a cassette, sets old and new songs in the same lively/weary country-folk context. Highlights are Bill Monroe's "Big Sandy River," Griffith's "Love at the Five and Dime," and Ims's "Magic on a Tennessee Night."

the rest:
Down the Road ♪♪♪ (Self-released, 1985) (cassette only)
Most Requested Plus: The Best of Bill & Bonnie Hearne ♪♪♪ (Poor David's Recordings, 1993)

worth searching for: The Hearnes' early albums, *Smilin'* ♪♪♪ (B.F. Deal, 1977, prod. Mike Williams, Bill & Bonnie Hearne, Steve Brogden) and *New Mexico Rain* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1982, prod. David Magill, Michael Hearne, Bill & Bonnie Hearne), are long out of print.

solo outings:
Bonnie Hearne:
Saturday Night Girl ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1995) (cassette only)

influences:
⏪ Johnny Cash, June Carter Cash, Marty Robbins, Bill Monroe, Dave Van Ronk, Flatlanders, Willie Nelson

⏩ Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, Robert Earl Keen Jr., Tish Hinojosa, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Guy Clark, Jerry Jeff Walker

Steve Knopper

Hedgehog Pie

See: Dave Burland

Michael Hedges

Born December 31, 1953, in Enid, OK. Died November 30, 1997, near Boonville, CA.

Michael Hedges's radical approach to the acoustic guitar effectively transforms it into a different instrument, creating sounds no one else has attempted with six strings. He changes the tunings, hammers and pulls the chords, taps the frets, tosses off lightning leads, and chooses unusual chord progressions. Hedges studied classical guitar, earned a degree in composition from the Peabody Conservatory, and then attended Stanford University's electronic music department. At first, his meditative instrumentals were tagged New Age, but he soon became too bold and quirky for that, or any, label. His own descriptions, although told in jest, are the most accurate: "violent acoustic," "heavy mental," and "wacka-wacka." Hedges's virtuoso technique led *Guitar Player* magazine to elect him to the "Gallery of the Greats," but he used the instrument as a tool for artistic expression, not just to thrill guitar fans. In recent years, he added more of his sonorous vocals, keyboards, and percussion to his performances. Hedges died tragically when his car skidded off a rain-slicked highway and down an embankment.

what to buy: *Live on the Double Planet* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1987, prod. Michael Hedges) is a safe introduction to Hedges's unorthodox guitar style and compositional talents. His covers of rock classics ("All along the Watchtower," "Come Together") show his ability to reinvent the obvious. The instrumental majesty of *Aerial Boundaries* (Windham Hill, 1984, prod. William Ackerman, Michael Hedges, Steven Miller) marks Hedges's emergence as a guitar rebel but is relatively tame and much more accessible than his later efforts.

what to buy next: *Taproot* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1990, prod. Michael Hedges) is a concept album in which Hedges's instrumental prowess explores "classic mythic archetypes" with themes centering on planting, growth, and harvesting. The concept is obscure but Hedges's guitar brilliance is not.

what to avoid: *Breakfast in the Field* ♪ (Windham Hill, 1981, prod. William Ackerman), his recording debut, *is* tepid New Age fare.

the rest:
Watching My Life Go By ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1985)
The Road to Return ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1994)
Oracle ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1996)

worth searching for: Hedges's playing is a highlight on the David Crosby solo album *Oh Yes I Can* ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1989, prod. various).

influences:

Leo Kottke, Martin Carthy, John Martyn, Edgar Varese

Chris Whitley, Ben Harper, Craig Chaquico

David Yonke

The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Roy Clark; Buck Owens; Kenny Price; Grandpa Jones.

A popular segment on the long-running *Hee Haw* TV series, the "quartet" actually came into being with seven members during a break in taping. Guest performer Tennessee Ernie Ford was gathered off camera with regulars Owens, Clark, Jones, Merle Travis, and Archie Campbell when they ran through a few traditional gospel songs. The show's production staff recognized the possible audience appeal, and the idea stuck.

what's available: *The Best of the Hee Haw Gospel Quartet* ♪♪♪ (Ranwood, 1995) and *The Best of the Hee Haw Gospel Quartet, Volume 2* (Ranwood, 1996) each boast 12 familiar gospel songs. *Volume 1* contains "Dust on the Bible," "Shall We Gather at the River," and "Amazing Grace"; *Volume 2* has "The Glory Land Way," "No Tears in Heaven," and "The Unclouded Day."

influences:

Statesmen, Blackwood Brothers

see also: *Grandpa Jones*

Randall T. Cook

Gail Heil

See: Bob Bovee & Gail Heil

Helicon

Formed as Ken Kolodner & Chris Norman, 1983, in Baltimore, MD. Became Helicon in 1986 following the addition of Robin Bullock.

Ken Kolodner, hammered dulcimer, fiddle; Chris Norman, flutes, bagpipes, whistles; Robin Bullock, guitar, cittern, bouzouki, fiddle.

A native Nova Scotian, Chris Norman started as a flute performance major, but on moving to Baltimore he became involved in the hot local Irish traditional music scene. He played often with fiddling great Brendan Mulvihill and was briefly a member of the last rendition of the Irish Tradition. Norman also currently plays with the Baltimore Consort and does concerts with Alisdair Fraser. Ken Kolodner was long active in the Baltimore folk scene. At one point he played in a band, Kid on the Mountain, with later-to-become-hammered-dulcimer-great Maggie Sansone. He now works frequently with fiddler Laura Risk. After initially self-producing a recording, *Daybreak*, as a duo, Kolodner and Norman decided to add Robin Bullock. Bullock had a bluegrass and rock 'n' roll background that broadened the band's rhythmic and dynamic base. Bullock's current musical escapades include playing for the dance company Footworks and in the John Whelan Band. Over time, Helicon (named after the mountain where the nine muses of art in Greek mythology dwelt) has developed a unique way of arranging international music. Norman is a rare cross-over flute player with the technical wizardry of the classical school and the raw spirit and drive of tradition. Although they share leads back and forth, Norman's distinctive use of the flute is the centerpiece of the band, supported by Kolodner's smooth dulcimer accompaniment and Bullock's flashy picking and strumming. The trio's high-powered instrumentals have even led them to perform at the International Cimbalom Festival in Germany. Each has produced solo albums.

what to buy: *Horizons: Traditional Music from around the World* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dorian Discovery, 1992, prod. Helicon) masterfully accomplishes this group's integration of international music in a performance context. They combine dynamics and textural layering from classical music with an American folk-roots drive and each member's individual instrumental precision to form an enticing, distinctive blend. The material covers Balkan music with its odd-metered rhythms, pentatonic Andean tunes, an epic Finnish poem and waltz, American and Irish fiddle tunes, Greek dances, plus a few original compositions thrown in. Norman kicks off the CD with heavily ornamented, rhythmically twisty Macedonian tunes on a double-barreled Hungarian whistle. Kolodner's subtle use of dampers on the dulcimer is eerily appropriate for a tune titled "Death of the Incas." Guitar players will enjoy Bullock's flying fingers on "The Dawn."

what to buy next: *The Titan* ♪♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1990/Dorian Discovery, 1993, prod. Helicon) starts with a lovely dulcimer separate-hands (a two-part arrangement played solo) setting of a Hungarian tune. The flute sweeps in and then the guitar carries it into a driving original composition of Robin's. French, Andean, Canadian, Scottish, and American tunes can be found on the CD. The "French Schottische" is so sweet it will put you in a good mood! Robin gratifies guitar lovers with a hot, flat-picked Norman Blake tune, "The Old Brown Case." The final track is a sweet Haitian Christmas carol which, via France, ends with a set of polkas, including the title cut that Chris composed.

worth searching for: *Daybreak* ♪♪♪♪ (Jeb, 1985) was Norman and Kolodner's first recording. Mostly Celtic with some classical, it shows the essence of their style and has fine arrangements.

3/5/8 *hellbenders*

uilleann pipes

The uilleann ("elbow"), or union, pipes are the Irish traditional bagpipe. Like most other types of bagpipes, including the well-known Scottish war pipes, the Irish pipes comprise a bag in which the air is stored, a chanter on which the melody is played, and drones, which sound one note continuously. There are also some important differences between the uilleann pipes and their Scottish cousin. For one, the bag is not inflated by mouth via a blowpipe, but rather with the help of bellows strapped under the piper's other (right, usually) arm. This tangle of straps and devices has made one Irish American piper refer to his instrument as "a cross between a bra and a whoopee cushion." Another notable difference is that the instrument is played in seated position, with the drones resting across the piper's lap, rather than on his/her shoulder. Furthermore, on what is known as a full set of pipes, there are three or four keyed pipes, called regulators, set in the same stock and positioned on top of the drones, so that the player can activate the keys with his right wrist and play single notes or chords to accompany the melody. This particular feature has earned the instrument the name of "Irish organ." Last but not least, the chanter of the uilleann pipes has a two-octave range and is often fitted with keys to add chromatic steps to the usual diatonic scale of the instrument.

Philippe Varlet

solo outings:

Ken Kolodner:

Walking Stones: A Celtic Sojourn ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1997)

Chris Norman:

The Man with the Wooden Flute ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1992)
Beauty of the North ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1994)
Highlands ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1997)

Robin Bullock:

Green Fields ♪♪♪ (Dorian Discovery, 1993)
Midnight Howl ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1996)
Between Earth and Sky ♪♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1998)

influences:

Irish Tradition, Metamora, Trapezoid

Skyedance, No Strings Attached

see also: *Baltimore Consort, Robin Bullock, Ken Kolodner, Chris Norman*

Karen Ashbrook

Hellbenders

See: Bruce Molsky, Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Neal Hellman

Born April 13, 1948, in New York, NY.

Neal Hellman became interested in the dulcimer while attending school in Virginia. He purchased his first instrument from Ed Presnell in North Carolina and has gone on to become one of the best-known Appalachian dulcimer players in the United States. Although his recordings have been among the most popular dulcimer-oriented releases over the years, perhaps his greatest contribution has been in the area of publishing instruction books, teaching people how to play, and generally evoking interest in the instrument, particularly on the West Coast. His publishing company, Gourd Music, which he founded in 1987 and now runs with the help of instrumentalist Joe Weed, has produced over 20 albums of related material and is among the leaders in the genre. His first album, *Appalachian Dulcimer Duets*, was nominated as Folk Album of the Year (1982) by the National Association of Independent Record Distributors (NAIRD), and *Frets* magazine credited Hellman with personally helping to "redefine the role of the mountain dulcimer in contemporary string music"; as a performer, "he has the ability to draw the audience into a cohesive body so that the evening becomes a shared experience . . . meshing rollicking American tunes and delicate O'Carolan compositions into a delightful set sprinkled liberally with his unique sense of humor and wandering storytelling style." Hellman has toured extensively in the United States and Europe and co-composed the soundtrack for the animated children's video *Princess Furball.* His books include *The Beatles Dulcimer Book, The Hal Leonard Dulcimer Method, Dulcimer Airs, Ballads and Bears, Appalachian Dulcimer Duets, The Dulcimer Chord Book, The Dulcimer Song Book, The Richard Fariña Dulcimer Book,* and *Life Is like a Mountain Dulcimer.*

what to buy: *Dream of the Manatee* ♪♪♪♪ (Gourd Music, 1989, prod. Joe Weed) is a collection of new acoustic music at its finest. It's a diverse selection of arrangements of traditional pieces from Italy and Spain, plus classic works by Mouret, Galilei, and O'Carolan. The enchanting title track is a magical tale of sailors and sea creatures in which each instrument plays a role, inspired by Peter and the Wolf. Guest artists include Gourd regulars Kim Robertson, Shelley Phillips, William Coulter, and Harris Moore and long-time musical friends Lorraine Duisit and Tom Espinola. The songs are precise and perfectly arranged, without ever seeming to wonder or drag on. It is just plain beautiful music, all lilting guitars and dulcimers, with sweet oboes and French horns floating overhead.

what to buy next: *Oktober Country* ♪♪♪♪ (Gourd Music, 1987, prod. Neal Hellman) was chosen as a selection for *The Wireless Catalog* and nominated for New Age album of the year by NAIRD. Hellman chose his favorite time of year to inspire his bittersweet and title tune. Other originals include "Durango," "Little St. Anne," "Picnic on the St. Croix," and "La Mort de Coucy." *Oktober Country* also features arrangements of French and Italian early music, including "Douce Dame," "El Tutu," and "Lauda de Maria Maddalena," and O'Carolan's "Sheebeg Sheemore." Accompanying Hellman's virtuoso mountain dulcimer are Robertson on Celtic harp, Joe Weed on mandolin, fiddle, and guitar, Phillips on recorders and English horn, Robin Petrie on hammered dulcimer, and Danny Carnahan on fiddle and guitar.

the rest:

(With others) *Pacific Film Dulcimer Project* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977)
Appalachian Dulcimer Duets ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1981)
Dulcimer Airs, Ballads, and Bears ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1983)
Pastime with Good Company ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1984)

influences:

Howie Mitchell, Michael Rugg, Albert d'Ossche, Robert Force

David Schnaufer, Lois Hornbostel

Neal Walters

Wayne Henderson

Born in Rugby, VA.

Considering that this unassuming son of Appalachian Virginia has toured the nation and the world three times as a member of the "Masters of the Steel-String" show, has an annual music festival and guitar competition bearing his name, and won the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship award from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1995, it's astonishing that his real fame lies not in his accomplishments as a musician, but as a luthier—that is, a maker of fine acoustic stringed instruments. In Wayne Henderson's case, that means guitars, and some mandolins as well. For well over two decades, Henderson has been making instruments in his workshop at home in tiny Rugby, Virginia, and selling his prized instruments and building his astonishing reputation almost entirely on word of mouth, as tales of his unparalleled craftsmanship—and the guitars themselves—pass from one elite player to another. They're instantly recognizable, highly decorated with a distinctive design sense, but really prized for their richness and tone. He currently produces about 20 instruments a year, and many wait patiently for one of his guitars; word has it that Eric Clapton's name is among the many on his long waiting list. But Henderson's no slouch as a player, either. The first thing you'd notice is his unique right-hand technique: rather than holding a flatpick, Henderson has devised an alternating thumb-and-forefinger attack (with thumb pick and fingerpicks) to play the single-note, bluegrass style, giving him an unusual advantage, combining the bluegrass guitar sensibility with a fingerstyle capability. The next thing that jumps right out is his repertoire: although you get the feeling he could play "Beaumont Rag" or any other bluegrass guitar showpiece as well as (or better than) anybody, you're just as likely to hear a Carter Family piece, "Banks of the Ohio," or many other examples of the older, deeply rooted music from his native state that predated the supercharged, commercially driven bluegrass style. But Henderson can play the old tunes with an instrumental dexterity and a musical imagination the old-timers probably couldn't have dreamed of, wedding the old music with a modern-day—but still somehow thoroughly Appalachian—sensibility.

what to buy: *Rugby Guitar* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992, prod. Arnie Solomon) was his first appearance on a label with any sort of national distribution (it appeared first on vinyl in 1990). It's still the best introduction to this unique stylist, and perhaps the most characteristic of his recordings. It's all instrumental, featuring his unusual thumb-and-forefinger style, and the tunes include a welcome array of Blue Ridge classics.

what to buy next: You won't want to miss *Not Much Work for Saturday* ♪♪♪ (Hay Holler Harvest, 1997, prod. Steve Kaufman), Henderson's duet album with Steve Kaufman. These two are old friends—Kaufman's originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, not too far down the road—and while their respective styles make for an agreeable contrast, their music springs from the same well.

what to avoid: For more than a dozen years, until the watershed *Rugby Guitar* album was issued, the only recording of Wayne Henderson anywhere was *Guitar Pickin' with Herb Key* ♪♪ (Heritage, 1977, prod. Fred Williams), a duet album with guitarist Ray Cline and bassist Key. Not that the album's bad—in fact the picking is spirited and the interplay agreeable—but considering that it's available only on tape, and Henderson's covering the same ground better 20 years later on CD, don't bother trying to find it!

the rest:
(With Ray Cline) *Guitar Pickin'* ♪♪♪ (Heritage, 1988)
W.C. Henderson and Co. ♪♪♪ (Hay Holler Harvest, 1995)

solo outings:
The Bluegrass Band:
Once Again from the Top, Volume 1 ♪♪♪ (Hay Holler Harvest, 1995)
Once Again from the Top, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Hay Holler Harvest, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Maybelle Carter, Doc Watson

▶▶ Steve Kaufman, Norman Blake

Chris Rietz

Don Henley

See: The Eagles

Margo Hennebach

Born November 25, 1958, New York, NY.

Margo Hennebach's keyboarding, guitar playing, and harmony vocals have made her an active participant in the Hoboken, New Jersey, and Greenwich Village, New York, folk music scenes. In addition to accompanying such artists as John Gorka and Shawn Colvin at several of the annual *Fast Folk Musical Magazine* revues at the Bottom Line in New York, Hennebach has performed and recorded with such singer-songwriters as Rod MacDonald and Richard Shindell and with jazz-folk saxophonist Paul Winter. Her solo performances, often with guitarist Mark Saunders, and two albums, *Margo Hennebach* and *Michaelean*, have enabled her to build a following of her own.

Classically trained on piano, Hennebach won several statewide piano performance competitions in New Jersey as a youngster. After graduating from Oberlin Conservatory with a B.A. in piano, she turned her academic focus to music therapy while studying for a master's degree from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Hennebach has performed at festivals, clubs, and coffeehouses throughout the United States. A finalist at the 1991 "New Folks" competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, she's occasionally performed, along with Adrienne Jones and Diane Chodkowski, as Madwomen in the Attic.

what to buy: On her third album, *Big Love* ♪♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1998, prod. Jim Chapdelaine, Mark Saunders, Margo Hennebach), Hennebach explores the diversity of love. In addition to several songs about romantic love, she expands the theme to include songs about unrequited love and the love of a parent for a child. While most of the tracks are intimate duo performances with Saunders, other songs are enhanced by the sensitive drumming and percussion playing of John Peckman and the melodic bass playing of Tyler Van Ostrand.

what to buy next: Hennebach's second album, *Michaelean* ♪♪♪ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1996, prod. David Seitz, Margo Hennebach), is a deeply personal, Celtic-tinged recording. Dedicated to her family, Hennebach reflects on her role as an adopted child. The title track is an emotional song about her sister, who was also adopted as an infant. Hennebach's expressive piano playing and vocals are enhanced by Denny McDermott (Steely Dan), Stephanie Winters (The Nudes), Michael Viscaglia (Suzanne Vega Band), and the other women in her trio, Madwomen in the Attic.

the rest:
Margo Hennebach ♪♪♪½ (1-800-PRIME-CD, 1994)

worth searching for: In addition to being featured in several issues of *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, Hennebach's songs have been included on two compilations—*Hoot* (Folk Next Door Volume III, 1994) and *Local Color* (Folk Next Door, Volume IV, 1995)—assembled by Hartford, Connecticut, radio station WWUH-FM.

influences:
◀◀ Kate Bush, Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez

▶▶ Rod MacDonald, Cliff Eberhardt, John Gorka, Richard Shindell

Craig Harris

Priscilla Herdman

Born February 11, 1948, in Eastchester, NY.

The beauty of Priscilla Herdman's soprano vocals has enabled her to become one of contemporary folk music's best interpreters. Covering tunes by Judy Small, David Mallett, and the late Stan Rogers, the Pine Plains, New York–based songstress has turned songs by James Taylor, Tom Waits, Lui Collins, Si Kahn, and Bill Staines into personal statements. Herdman's

debut album, *The Water Lily*, reflects her interest in the music of Australia and includes songs by Australian folk singer Eric Bogle and musical interpretations of poems by Australia's beloved poet, Henry Lawson (1867–1922). But subsequent releases have taken a more North American view. Herdman was one of the early pioneers of late singer-songwriter Stan Rogers and recorded four of his songs—"The Field behind the Plow," "Lies," "Forty-Five Years," and "Turnaround." Her 1983 album, *Seasons of Change*, was dedicated to his memory. Although she primarily performs as a soloist, Herdman has toured and recorded in a trio that includes Anne Hills and Cindy Mangsen. She has also recorded two albums of children's songs.

what to buy: Herdman reached her pinnacle with her third album, *Seasons of Change* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1983, prod. Artie Traum). While her fingerstyle acoustic guitar and vocals are enhanced by the tone coloring of John Sebastian (harmonica), Abby Newton (cello), Evan Stover (mandolin and fiddle), and Happy Traum (lead guitar), the album remains an acoustic masterpiece. While only one tune—"Rice and Beans"—is original, co-written and sung with Bruce "U. Utah" Phillips, Herdman effectively assembles songs by David Mallett, Woody Guthrie, Si Kahn, and the late Stan Rogers in a musical examination of the "ordinary" people of America.

what to buy next: The long-awaited follow-up to *Seasons of Change*, *Darkness into Light* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. Priscilla Herdman, Abby Newton) continued the tradition-rooted approach of its predecessor. Inspired by the birth of her daughter, Herdman explores the role of motherhood with songs including Henry Lawson's "When the Children Come Home" and Judy Small's "From the Lambing to the Wool." Sojourner Truth's poem, "Ain't I a Woman?," is given a musical setting, while Malvina Reynolds and Alan Greene's "Turn Around" is fused with Herdman's arrangement of a traditional Irish tune, "The Garten Mother's Lullaby." Resuming their songwriting and vocal collaboration, Herdman and Phillips deliver the heart-tugging duet, "I Remember Loving You."

the rest:
The Water Lily ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1977)
Forgotten Dreams ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1980)
Stardreamer: Nightsongs and Lullabies ♪♪♪½ (Alcazam!, 1988)
Daydreamer ♪♪♪½ (Music for Little People, 1993)
Forever & Always ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994)

worth searching for: *Circles in the Stream, Volume 1* ♪♪♪♪ (WUMB, 1993) includes a live version of Herdman's tender rendition of David Roth's "Lullabye."

solo outings:
Herdman, Hills & Mangsen:
Voices ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990)
Voices of Winter ♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Judy Collins, Joan Baez, Jean Ritchie, Stan Rogers
▶▶ Anne Hills, Cindy Mangsen

see also: *Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen*

Craig Harris

Hesperus

Formed mid-1980s, in Washington, DC.

Tina Chancey, viola da gamba, fiddle, vielle, rebec, recorders, kamenj; Scott Reiss, recorders, hammered dulcimer, flageolet, percussion; Mark Cudek, cittern, baroque guitar, viola da gamba, recorders; Bruce Hutton, banjo, mandolin, mouth bow, mountain dulcimer.

Hesperus could probably be cited as the group that jump-started the early music movement. Believing that ancient music could become living music when properly paired with living styles and authentic instruments, Scott Reiss and Tina Chancey have embarked on a journey with a vision of bringing early music alive to audiences around the world. Lilting recorders, singing melodies on violin or viol, and exciting string lines are characteristic of this group's emotional tunes. Their mastery of their instruments and ability to improvise upon early themes brought a new dimension to the term early music. They leave the listener longing for days gone by, but simultaneously glad to be in the here and now, where this music is so stunningly performed.

what to buy: *Early American Roots* ♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1997, prod. Tina Chancey, Scott Reiss) takes a variety of styles and genres of music from around the time of the American Revolution and brings them back to life. Mark Cudek from the Baltimore Consort adds his excellent cittern and guitar lines to this lively mix. From country dances and cotillions to shape note hymns, the music of the American forefathers paints a picture of an earlier way of life.

what to buy next: Scott, Tina, and Bruce team up with Appalachian music expert Mike Seeger (guitar, banjo, fiddle, vocals) to combine medieval and Appalachian music on *Crossing Over* ♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1988). The range of styles here is amazing—from a beautiful vielle and dumbek duet on "Estampie Belicha" to "Ground Hog/Ronde" with an amazing country feel to

the banjo and fiddle lines. This is a truly unusual and surprisingly successful pairing of traditions. Another recording, *Celtic Roots* (Maggie's Music, 1998), is worth hunting down.

the rest:
Unicorn ♪♪♪ (Delos, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Ensemble Galilei
▶▶ Capriol, Baltimore Consort

Jo Hughey Morrison

Carolyn Hester

Born 1937, in Waco, TX.

Carolyn Hester was one of the most influential vocalists in early 1960s folk music. Singing in a high-pitched voice that compared favorably with Joan Baez and Judy Collins, Hester set the standard for country-folk vocals and became a major influence on such singers as Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Iris DeMent, and Michelle Shocked. Best known for her interpretations of traditional folk songs, Hester was described by *The New York Times* as having "a vocal range from rooftop soprano to stunning chest tones." Her early albums were produced by top-notch producers, including John Hammond, Norman Petty (Buddy Holly's producer), and Tom Clancy of the Clancy Brothers. Influenced by the cowboy songs she heard in Texas, Hester was performing in folk music coffeehouses by the mid-1950s. With hopes of becoming a folksinger, she moved to New York in 1956. Her first break came when her mother sent a tape of her songs to Petty, who owned a recording studio in Clovis, New Mexico. Petty was so impressed that he helped Hester secure a contract with the Coral Records label. Hester made her recording debut with a collection of traditional songs, *Scarlet Ribbons*, in 1959, and spent much of the early 1960s traveling between the United States and Great Britain. In 1962 she performed on BBC-TV in England and at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland. The following year, the British government sponsored her tour of Soviet cities. Hester continued to be politically active in the United States, joining and marching for civil rights with the Freedom Riders in Mississippi in the early 1960s and singing at the Democratic National Convention in 1964. In 1961, two weeks after meeting singer-songwriter and novelist Richard Fariña, Hester married him. After she helped Fariña write a beat-inspired novel, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up to Me*, Fariña fell in love with Joan Baez's sister, Mimi, in 1963, and the couple divorced.

After Hester's self-titled album, produced by Tom Clancy, came to the attention of producer John Hammond, Hammond convinced Columbia Records to sign her to a recording contract and produced a second self-titled album, which is best remembered for the presence of Bob Dylan on harmonica. Hester later performed at the Dylan tribute at Madison Square Garden, where she and Nanci Griffith performed Dylan's "Boots of Spanish Leather." Hester and Griffith also sang a duet version of Tom Paxton's "Can't Help but Wonder Where I'm Bound" that was included on Griffith's album *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. In 1969 Hester married jazz pianist and record producer David Blume. Moving to Los Angeles in 1969, the couple opened Cafe Danssa, an international folk dance club and restaurant.

what to buy: Hester became the answer to a trivia question when she asked Greenwich Village friend Bob Dylan to play harmonica on her album *Carolyn Hester* ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1962, prod. John Hammond). One of the first of Dylan's recordings, the album remains an important historical document.

what to buy next: On *Warriors of the Rainbow* ♪♪♪ (Outpost, 1986, prod. Dave Blume, Rick Ruggieri), Hester showcased her songwriting skills and paid homage to Native Americans with songs including "Geronimo," "Chief Sarah," "Fiercest Freedom Fighter," and the title track.

the rest:
Scarlet Ribbons ♪♪ (Coral, 1961)
Carolyn Hester ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1962)
That's My Song ♪♪♪ (Dot, 1965)
At Town Hall ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1965)
Music Medicine ♪♪♪ (Outpost, 1982)

influences:
◀◀ Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline, Rose Maddox
▶▶ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Iris DeMent, Michelle Shocked

Craig Harris

Sara Hickman

Born in TX.

The irrepressible Sara Hickman is nearly impossible to categorize, with a musical style ranging from pop to jazz to folk to her own brand of quirky music. Her music is often infused with her equally quirky sense of humor. With an artistic heritage (her father is a painter and her mother a photographer) Hickman first began playing the guitar when she was seven,

and was making her own recordings at eight. She enrolled in Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and spent her weekends performing at local clubs and parties. After graduating with an art degree from North Texas State, Hickman moved to Dallas and began to play full time. In 1988, aided by Brave Combo front man and longtime friend Carl Finch, she released her first CD, *Equal Scary People*. She signed with Elektra in 1989 and the album was re-released. Her Elektra debut, *Shortstop*, featured the hit single, "I Couldn't Help Myself." Hickman's independence soon became problematic for her record company, however, and her next album was shelved by Elektra. Unable to afford the cost of buying the album back from the label, Hickman appealed to her fans and they came through with donations. This, combined with money from selling her house, allowed Hickman to buy *Necessary Angels* back from the label. Hickman labeled her supporters and contributors "Necessary Angels"; she had bracelets made for them and listed each one in the liner notes when the CD was released in 1994 by Discovery. It wasn't long before she started to have artistic differences with Discovery, and her next album, *Misfits*, was released on Shanachie. Hickman has since decided to form her own label. Her involvement in music is balanced by her commitment to various charities, including the Romanian Children's Relief Fund, Habitat for Humanity, Bryan's House in Dallas for children living with AIDS, and Austin SPCA.

what to buy: *Shortstop* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1990, prod. David Kershenbaum, Sara Hickman) is the most consistent of Hickman's albums, one of her most pop oriented, and easily the most radio friendly. This is not a bad thing. "Couldn't Help Myself" is a light, frothy song about falling in love while "Claim on My Heart" is a sweet, sentimental love song where the singer offers her heart in place of things with monetary value. "Too Fast," a blatantly up-front song about power in relationships, is frank and unblinking. The final cut, "Take It like a Man," is a funky, funny (in a droll kind of way) take on women's place in the world: "Cuz ever since the world began/It's been a constant struggle 'tween/Woman and man/Years went flyin'/Women were taught to sit up straight/To cook and clean and dust and sew/And manipulate/Men went to the office."

what to buy next: *Necessary Angels* ♪♪♪♪ (Discovery, 1994, prod. Mark Hallman, Paul Fox, Sara Hickman) contains tasteful arrangements and above-average songwriting and comes out at the top of the singer/songwriter's pack. A touching tribute to her grandmother, "Room of One's Own" gives some indication of where Hickman gets her indomitable spirit and drive: "She warned me that life would give me a try. It held no remorse at passing me by if I ignored the call." "Sister and Sam" showcases Hickman's lovely voice, often at its best with little instrumental ornamentation. Danny Levin's cello adds just the right match on this song about a pair of elderly aunts. The album includes some of the best of Austin's musical residents.

the rest:
Domestic Science Club ♪♪♪ (Independent, 1993/Discovery, 1994)
Misfits ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

worth searching for: The original Four Dots version of *Equal Scary People* ♪♪♪ (Four Dots, 1988/Elektra, 1989) includes a bonus track of "Take It like a Man" with all male musicians that's not on the Elektra release. The compilation *Legacy* (Windham Hill, 1989) includes Hickman's "Salvador." *Arachnophobia: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* (Hollywood Records, 1990) includes Hickman's "Blue Eyes Are Sensitive to the Light." *Rubiyat* (Elektra, 1990), Elektra's 40th-anniversary celebration album, includes Hickman's cover of "Hello, This Is Your Heart" with the Meters.

influences:
◀◀ Sarah Elizabeth Campbell, Dan Fogelberg, John Denver
▶▶ Syd Straw, Carrie Newcomer, Sarah McLachlan

Denise Sofranko

Dan Hicks

Born December 9, 1941, in Little Rock, AR.

Dan Hicks polished the old-timey style of the Charlatans, a little-known but influential San Francisco band in which he served as drummer, into a campy, acoustic-flavored cabaret act, Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks. The group would presage such full-blown period pieces as Bette Midler, the Pointer Sisters, and the Manhattan Transfer by several years. Hicks's sarcastic persona and well-developed sense of irony gave him a determined deadpan attitude and helped obscure the fact that his songwriting was really first-rate. With his jazzy mien and caustic air, he made a modest splash with his Blue Thumb albums of the early 1970s, which had the zippy nonchalance of an R. Crumb cartoon come to life. Hicks continues an active performing career, although his recordings have been few and far between since the heyday of the Hot Licks.

what to buy: *Where's the Money* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1971/1989, prod. Tommy LiPuma) probably best reflects the zany intransigence of Hicks & company.

the highwaymen

what to buy next: *Striking It Rich* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1972, prod. Tommy LiPuma) captures the live ambiance of the band's appearances.

the rest:
Last Train to Hicksville ♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
Shootin' Straight ♪♪♪ (On the Spot, 1994)

worth searching for: His debut album, *Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks* ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1969/1995, prod. Bob Johnston), is his best, with such signature songs as "How Can I Miss You When You Won't Go Away," "Canned Music," and "I Scare Myself" (later covered by Thomas Dolby).

influences:
◀◀ Le Hot Club de France, Andrews Sisters, Charlatans
▶▶ Pointer Sisters, Thomas Dolby

Joel Selvin

The Highwaymen

See: Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson

Highwoods String Band

See: Walt Koken, Mac Benford

Noel Hill

Born in Caherea, Lissycasey, Co. Clare, Ireland.

The County Clare in the west of Ireland is a stony, windswept portion of the Gaeltacht—the tiny section of Ireland where Irish, against all odds, is the chief language—and is celebrated around the world for its music. Among the many things about the region's unique style and repertoire is a tradition of concertina playing, and Clare-born Noel Hill is easily its most noted practitioner. Late in the nineteenth century in Britain a small handful of companies (most notably Wheatstone and Lachenal in England) began marketing small concertinas, designed to be good, durable instruments that working folks could afford. The instrument caught on in England; how widespread their use was in Ireland, with its more highly developed tradition of dance music, is not completely known. But the diatonic (i.e., a "push-pull" fingering system confined to fewer keys but better suited to rhythmic dance music) concertina evidently found a permanent home in Clare, where a technique and a special repertoire all its own emerged. If Noel Hill is the inheritor of this little-known but cherished tradition, he shares a modern sensibility with many Irish traditional musicians in the era of mass media: his playing has far expanded the boundaries of the instrument's limits. You'll hear rolls and triplets executed with the finesse of Sligo fiddle players; or he'll ornament a phrase with a style that belongs more to uilleann pipes than to this lowly squeezebox.

what to buy: *Irish Concertina* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993. prod. Noel Hill) is Hill's one musical statement, the first and last word on Clare-style Irish concertina—and on how far beyond the boundaries you can really go, which in his case is far indeed. Hill has made a point of bringing his chosen instrument up to the standards enjoyed by the other better-known Irish instruments, and this album is a showcase for not only rollicking Irish dance music but an encyclopedic display of Gaelic technical wizardry—from cranning on the low D like a piper to snapping off a bow triplet like Donegal fiddling legend Tommy Peoples.

what to buy next: A gem of an album from 1978, *Noel Hill & Tony Linnane* ♪♪♪½ (Tara, 1996, prod. Micheal O'Domhnaill) was in fact Hill's first appearance on record, with his longtime associate Tony Linnane on fiddle. Here's a chance to hear Hill in a setting where ensemble playing rather than overwhelming virtuosity is called for, and the result is one of the most appealing, colorful "session tunes" albums ever made (although Hill's solo showcase, a version of "Johnny Cope" with Micheal O'Domhnaill's haunting harmonium underneath, is a show-stopper). Fellow Olympians Alec Finn and Matt Molloy lend their unique talents here as well.

the rest:
(With Tony McMahon) *In Knocknagree* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992)
(With Tony McMahon and Iarla O'Lionaird) *Music of Dreams* ♪♪½ (Gael-Linn, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ His uncle, Paddy Hill, Fr. Charlie Coen, Willie Clancy, Miko Russell
▶▶ Mary MacNamara, Gearoid O'Hallmhurain

Chris Rietz

Chris Hillman /The Desert Rose Band

Born December 4, 1943, in Los Angeles, CA. Desert Rose Band formed 1985. Disbanded 1993.

Chris Hillman has been an integral part of country-rock's more notable groupings, with great skills as a collaborator. Already an accomplished mandolin player by the time he picked up the bass and joined the Byrds in 1964, Hillman began picking pro-

fessionally with the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers, joining Rex and Vern Gosdin in the Golden State Boys by the time he was 16 (together, these musicians would later be known as the Hillmen). His contributions to the Byrds helped push that band in a country direction, climaxing with the seminal, country-flavored *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* in 1968. He left the Byrds to found the Flying Burrito Brothers with ex-Byrds-mate Gram Parsons in 1969; the Brothers' debut, *The Gilded Palace of Sin*, is another country-rock essential. Hillman spent the rest of the 1970s partnering with Stephen Stills (Manassas; Stephen Stills Band), John David Souther, and Richie Furay (S.H.F. Band), and former Byrds Roger McGuinn and Gene Clark, along with an occasional solo record. During 1985 he formed, with Herb Pedersen and John Jorgenson, the Desert Rose Band, a more professional version of the Flying Burrito Brothers, which lasted through 1993.

what to buy: *Bakersfield Bound* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Herb Pedersen) is a stone-country record with Buck Owens overtones and excellent ensemble playing that takes Hillman and Pederson's Desert Rose Band concept a step closer. *Desert Rose* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1984, prod. Al Perkins) is prototypical of the Desert Rose Band as well as Hillman's best solo collection of country songs. *The Desert Rose Band* ♪♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1987 prod. Paul Worley) features the same kind of kinetic energy and solid writing as *The Gilded Palace of Sin*, with the added bonus of experience.

what to buy next: *Manassas* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1972/1995, prod. Stephen Stills) includes "It Doesn't Matter," written with Stills, along with some underrated instrumental contributions from Hillman, especially on the B-side's country/bluegrass pastiche. *The Hillmen* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1964/1995 prod. Jim Dickson) offers spirited bluegrass recorded during 1963 and 1964, before Hillman, the Gosdin Brothers, and Don Parmley became well known. *Morning Sky* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1982, prod. Jim Dickson) is a country/rock fusion record with a formidable selection of songs, including Hillman's take on Parsons's classic "Hickory Wind."

what to avoid: The Souther-Hillman-Furay Band, a "supergroup" blues/country concept, ultimately didn't suit any of the participants' musical personalities. For proof, take an earful of *Trouble in Paradise* ♪♪ (Elektra/Asylum, 1975, prod. Tom Dowd).

the rest:

Chris Hillman:

Clear Sailin' ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1978)

(With Roger McGuinn and Gene Clark) *McGuinn, Clark & Hillman* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1979)

Desert Rose Band:

Running ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1988)

Pages of Life ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990)

True Love ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1991)

A Dozen Roses: Greatest Hits ♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1991)

Traditional ♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1993)

worth searching for: *Slippin' Away* ♪♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1976, prod. Ron Albert, Howard Albert) is still the best collection of Hillman-penned songs with that polished, 1970s-style production.

influences:

- Pete Seeger, the Weavers, Flatt & Scruggs, Gosdin Brothers, Hank Williams
- The Eagles, Gram Parsons, Jayhawks, Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Son Volt

see also: *The Byrds, the Flying Burrito Brothers, Gram Parsons*

Leland Rucker

Anne Hills

Born October 13, 1953, in Moradabad, India.

Anne Hills was the third daughter born to educational missionaries. Raised in Michigan, she attended Interlochen Arts Academy where she was female soloist with the Big Band that turned out future performers Peter Erskine, Bob Mintzer, and Chris Brubeck. She moved to Chicago in 1976 and co-founded Hogeye Music, still a force in the Chicago music scene. Her first three recordings, 1982's *The Panic Is On* (with then-partner Jan Burda), 1984's *Don't Explain*, and the "Chicago folk" Christmas album *On This Day Earth Shall Ring*, were released on her own Hogeye Records, which also released recordings by Tom Paxton, Bob Gibson, Andrew Calhoun, and Cindy Mangsen. In late 1983, Hills began periodically working with the short-lived trio Best of Friends, featuring folk music legends Tom Paxton and Bob Gibson. As Hills's touring schedule and prominence grew, Flying Fish took over Hogeye's catalog. Shortly after the release of her second solo recording, 1987's *Woman of a Calm Heart*, Hills began the occasional musical partnership with Priscilla Herdman and Cindy Mangsen. Their debut recording, *Voices*, was met with critical acclaim. Through these years, Hills's singing has also been featured with Jim Post, Tom Paxton, Michael Smith, Livingston Taylor, Artie Traum, Priscilla Herdman, Cindy Mangsen, Ginni Clemens, Si Kahn, and Bob Gibson. She has also produced recordings for Smith, Mangsen, Gibson, Jamie O'Reilly, Al

tish hinojosa

Power, and David Roth. She followed the trio recording with *October Child* in 1993, produced by jazz drummer and former classmate Peter Erskine (Weather Report) and featuring arrangements by Vince Mendoza, with back-up by Bob Mann, Jim Cox, Carlos Vega, Jimmy Johnson, and the solo reed work of Paul McCandless. Her 1994 traditional music project, *Never Grow Old*, was nominated for and received an "honorable mention" in the Folk category of the Indie Awards (NAIRD). Recorded with Mangsen, it featured a host of guests, including John Hartford, Laurie Lewis, Tom Paxton, and Gordon Bok.

Along with her soaring soprano, Hills's songwriting has garnered critical acclaim and the attention of her peers. Her songs have been covered by both trios with whom she worked, as well as a growing number of other artists. Her writing is often inspired by news events and she is a regular performer and sometime "Songwriter's School" instructor at the Kerrville Folk Festival. She has co-written with Michael Smith, Jay Ansill, and David Roth. With Roth, Hills organized a benefit recording (including selections from Josh White Jr., Kim & Reggie Harris, Steve Gillette, and Mangsen) for the Carole Robertson Center for Learning, a west-side Chicago family support center named in honor of the four girls killed in the 1963 Birmingham church bombing. Her song "Follow That Road" was selected as the title cut of the 1994 songwriters' compilation released by Rounder Records. The autumn of 1995 saw the release of *Angle of the Light*, which features 10 of Hills's own songs, including "Follow That Road." She is also an Equity actress who began stage work at age 12; credits have included productions of *Quilters, Foxfire, The Courtship of Carl Sandburg,* and Jim Post's *The Heart of Christmas.* Most recently, audiences saw her at Philadelphia's Arden Theatre, acting and singing songs she was commissioned to write (with Jay Ansill, harpist) for Brian Friel's *Lovers.* Her most recent recording is *Voices of Winter*, reuniting her with Mangsen and Herdman. Hills currently lives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with her husband, *Sing Out!* editor Mark Moss, and daughter Tamlyn.

what to buy: *Angle of the Light* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1995, prod. Anne Hills, Scott Petito) is the first of Hills's projects to showcase her own songwriting and has been widely praised, finding its way onto many folk DJ Top 10 lists. *Never Grow Old* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994, prod. Anne Hills, Cindy Mangsen) is a duet album with long-time singing partner Mangsen. Joined by a striking array of guests, including Tom Paxton, Laurie Lewis, John Hartford, Gordon Bok, Priscilla Herdman, and others, Hills and Mangsen nail 16 traditional songs reaching back to the last century. Both of her two recordings with Mangsen and Herdman, *Voices* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Abby Newton) or *Voices of Winter* ♪♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1997, prod. Cindy Mangsen, Priscilla Herdman, Anne Hills), are exquisite in terms of their vocal harmonies, although neither is, strictly speaking, an Anne Hills album.

what to buy next: *Woman of a Calm Heart* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. Anne Hills, Stuart Rosenberg, Rich Warren) was Hills's first solo effort for Flying Fish and still ranks among her best. The highlight is perhaps her duet with Livingston Taylor on "Akasha Wind."

the rest:
Don't Panic ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992)
October Child ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993)
(With others) *Follow That Road* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1994)

worth searching for: Hills has a prominent role on *On This Day the Earth Shall Ring* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1985, prod. Anne Hills, Jan Burda), a perennial favorite.

influences:
◀◀ Sylvia Tyson, Jean Ritchie
▶▶ Priscilla Herdman, Cindy Mangsen

Neal Walters

Tish Hinojosa

Born Leticia Hinojosa, December 6, 1955, in San Antonio, TX.

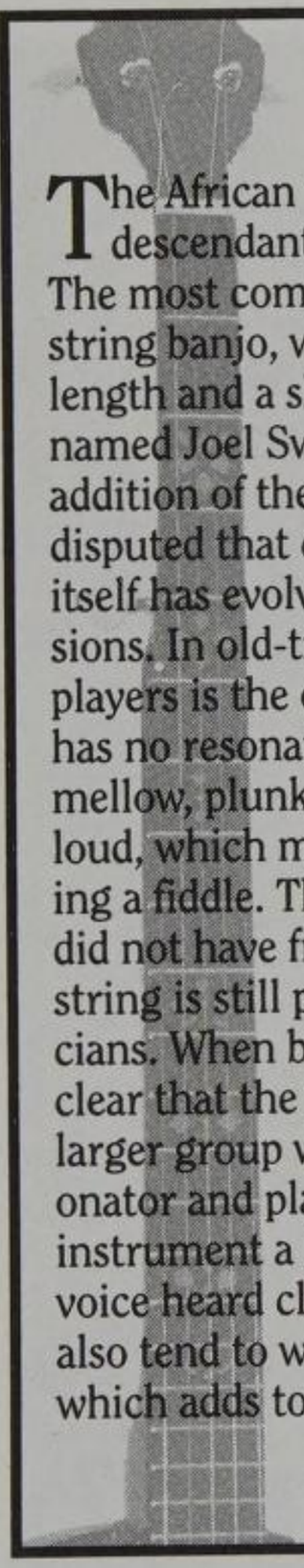
You'd think Tish Hinojosa's facility for singing in both English and Spanish would double her chances of stardom, but it's probably held her back. That, and the fact that her music may be too folkish and occasionally too political for country radio. Too bad, too, because Hinojosa's crystalline soprano voice is captivating, as are her songs—many of them autobiographical sketches of growing up as the child of Mexican immigrants. Later albums find Hinojosa trying to make a more conventional pop/country/folk hybrid, and they're fine, but they lack the elements of daring and discovery that mark her earlier efforts. An exception is *Cada Niño/Every Child*, which makes a case for bilingualism in the form of a children's album with lyrics sung in both English and Spanish.

what to buy: The album that best sums up Hinojosa's appeal is *Culture Swing* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Tish Hinojosa), which showcases her beautiful voice as she surveys Tex-Mex,

Tish Hinojosa **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

tish hinojosa

3/6/8 *robyn hitchcock*



banjo types

The African "banjar" has spawned quite a few descendants in the last hundred years or so. The most common one in folk music is the five-string banjo, which has four strings of equal length and a shorter fifth string. An American named Joel Sweeney is often credited with the addition of the fifth string, although some have disputed that claim. In any case, the five-string itself has evolved into a couple of different versions. In old-time music, the choice of most players is the open-back banjo, meaning that it has no resonator on the back of the rim. It has a mellow, plunky sound and is not particularly loud, which means it sounds great accompanying a fiddle. The original African instruments did not have frets, and a fretless open-back five-string is still preferred by some old-time musicians. When bluegrass music came along, it was clear that the banjo could not be heard in a larger group without some modification. A resonator and plastic head were added, giving the instrument a loud, crisp sound that makes its voice heard clearly in a band. Bluegrass players also tend to wear metal picks on their fingers, which adds to the volume.

David Shombert

Western swing, folk, pop, and country, addresses timeless themes of family, social issues, and ecology, and showcases her beautiful voice. An all-around winner. The earlier *Homeland* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1989, prod. Steve Berlin) is a pleasing folk/country outing but has a slightly political edge, thanks to the opening salvo, "Border Trilogy," which details the hardships faced by illegal immigrants. "Donde Voy (Where I Go)" is another heart-rending meditation on the subject. *The Best of the Sandia: Watermelon 1991–1992* ♪♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1997) offers a generous sampling of her brief stint with that label.

what to buy next: Hinojosa's debut, *Taos to Tennessee* ♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1987/Watermelon, 1992, prod. Michael Hearne, Tish Hinojosa, Craig Barker) reveals the genesis of her bilingual folk-country style. The album includes "Amanecer," her first all-Spanish composition, several English originals, plus covers of songs by Peter Rowan ("Midnight Moonlight"), James McMurtry ("Crazy Wind and Flashing Yellows"), and Irving Berlin ("Always"). The Spanish-language *Frontejas* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Tish Hinojosa) gains considerable bounce from its all-star cast, including Brave Combo, Flaco Jimenez, Santiago Jimenez Jr., Ray Benson, and Eva Ybarra.

the rest:
Memorabilia Navidena ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1991)
Aquella Noche ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1991)
Destiny's Gate ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1994)
Dreaming from the Labyrinth ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996)
Cada Niño/Every Child ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996)
Sonar Del Laberinto ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Linda Ronstadt
▶▶ Eva Ybarra

Daniel Durchholz

Robyn Hitchcock /Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians

Born 1953, in West London, England. The Egyptians formed 1985, in Cambridge, England.

Robyn Hitchcock, vocals, guitar; Andy Metcalfe, bass, vocals; Morris Windsor, drums, vocals; Roger Jackson, keyboards (1985–86).

Robyn Hitchcock's first band, the Soft Boys (1977–81) grew out of the folk boom in Cambridge, England, before dissolving in the subsequent indifference. (They prospered, or at least lingered fondly in memory.) Hitchcock painted, wrote songs for Captain Sensible, and licked his wounds for a time. Eventually the pull of songwriting and performing won out and he began to return regularly to the studio as a solo act and with the Egyptians—who, for their part, were the Soft Boys minus lead guitarist Kimberly Rew. Regardless of the setting, Hitchcock writes songs that make inescapable the connection between West Coast psychedelia and folk music. They're sweet, idiosyncratic, sometimes dada, frequently surrealistic, and often tainted with the odor of love (past, present, or future). Always a critic's favorite (and rarely any kind of commercial success), Hitchcock has bounced from label to label. Throughout, his body of work (with one notable exception) has been first-rate. In live performance, he connects his songs with a stream-of-unconsciousness patter that is almost as fascinating as his songs are beautiful.

what to buy: Where to begin? *I Often Dream of Trains* ♪♪♪♪½ (Midnight Music, 1984/Rhino 1995, prod. Robyn Hitchcock) is an exquisite album, relaxed and focused and studded with kind, wry, sad songs like "Sometimes I Wish I Was a Pretty Girl," the music hall-ish "Uncorrected Personality Traits," and the stunning title track. It is a simple, winsome record, and quite fetching. The Egyptians' college radio hit, "Balloon Man," from *Globe of Frogs* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1988, prod. Egyptians), marked the group's ascension to a major label in the States. It is as quirky, eccentric, and ebullient a record as the band would make. That *Perspex Island* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1991, prod. Paul Fox) didn't produce a break-through hit—what with the likes of "So You Think You're in Love" and "She Doesn't Exist"—is a testimonial only to the unfairness of things.

what to buy next: The first Egyptians opus, *Fegmania!* ♪♪♪½ (Midnight Music, 1985/Rhino 1995, prod. Pat Collier) includes the haunting "My Wife and My Dead Wife" and "The Man with the Lightbulb Head." *Element of Light* ♪♪♪½ (Relativity/Glass Fish, 1986/Rhino, 1995, prod. Robyn Hitchcock, Andy Metcalfe) features the most linear storytelling of the Hitchcock canon, including "Raymond Chandler Evening" and "Ted, Woody, and Junior." Not to mention the laughably misunderstood "Tell Me about Your Drugs." *Moss Elixir* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1996, prod. Robyn Hitchcock) is striking for its calm, almost adult tone, if murky pop gems like "The Devil's Radio" can ever be construed as the work of a full-fledged adult.

what to avoid: No question here. Mostly recently titled *Gravy Deco* ♪ (Rhino, 1995, prod. Matthew Seligman, Steve Hillage), the sessions for *Groovy Decay* (Albion, 1982) were so wretched Hitchcock reissued an alternate version (Midnight Music, 1985)—and retired from music for three years, again. All right, so "Grooving on an Inner Plane" and "America" are worth hearing, but this is an assortment of bad ideas in which Hitchcock was a disinterested participant. Not a pretty picture, that.

the rest:

Black Snake Diamond Role ♪♪♪½ (Armageddon, 1981/Rhino, 1995)
Gotta Let This Hen Out! ♪♪½ (Midnight Music, 1985/Rhino, 1995)
Eye ♪♪♪♪ (Twin/Tone, 1989/Rhino, 1995)
Queen Elvis ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1989)
Respect ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1993)
Invisible Hitchcock ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1995)
You & Oblivion ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1995)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1996)
Uncorrected Personality Traits ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1997)

worth searching for: Rhino produced a promotional sampler titled, well, *Catalog Sampler,* in 1995 on the occasion of its reissue of Hitchcock and/or the Egyptians' back catalog in 1995, and it's a smashing greatest-hits summation, better, indeed, than the two formal hits packages that followed. A&M produced the promo-only seven-song *Live Death* in an edition of 1,000 or something equally ridiculous; it includes some Hitchcock standards as well as Richard Thompson's "Withered and Died" and the Lennon/McCartney "A Day in the Life." A vinyl-only fully alternate edition titled *Mossy Liquor* (Warner Bros., 1996) is more fun than the formal release, including a Swedish take on "Alright, Yeah" and much other glorious mischief.

influences:

◀◀ John Lennon, Syd Barrett, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Crowded House, 16 Horsepower, Pete Droge

Grant Alden

Hobo Jim

Born Jim Varsos, c. 1947, in IN.

If the name isn't immediately familiar in the Lower 48, mention Hobo Jim anywhere in Alaska and chances are there will be someone close by who knows the popular folk singer. A former commercial fisherman, lumberjack, farmhand, and street singer, Varsos, like so many others, read Woody Guthrie's *Bound for Glory* and, as he explains, it went to his head. He arrived in Alaska in 1972 and found home. Since then he has played literally everywhere in the state—elementary schools, prison benefits, oil field taverns, the Alaska State Fair—from the Arctic Circle to the Kenai Peninsula, taking time off for hunting season (he's a licensed guide). His folk music comes straight out of the blue-collar tradition of Guthrie and Hank Williams, and his songs bear witness to the individualism and adventure of his adopted state.

what to buy: Named after his habit of damaging stages with his thundering right-foot/cowboy boot rhythm section, *Thunderfoot* ♪♪♪½ (BS, 1984/Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Russell Smith) is a solid series of Alaskan tales—of timber tramps, loggers, fishermen, and farmers—as they carve out their stakes in the last great American wilderness. Also contains "Iditarod Trail," his high-spirited musher's ode that has become the famous sled race's unofficial anthem with the irresistible chorus: "I did, I did, I did, I did the Iditarod Trail."

what to buy next: *Where Legends Are Born* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Russell Smith) is another noteworthy set of far-North adventures and folk tales, with subtle background in-

strumentation by Sam Bush, Béla Fleck, and Pat Flynn of New Grass Revival.

worth searching for: *Lost & Dyin' Breed* ♪♪♪ (BS, 1985, prod. Duncan Cameron) also includes guest appearances by New Grass Revival and Tim O'Brien.

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams, Lefty Frizzell, John Prine, Bob Wills, Bob Dylan

Leland Rucker

Robin Holcomb

Born 1954, in GA.

Country is just one ingredient in Robin Holcomb's uncategorizable sound, an element most pronounced in the singer/songwriter's rural imagery (right down to a verse about trading roadkill), quavery Appalachian vibrato voice, and general desolation of mood. Though now thought of as a denizen of the New York avant-garde scene, Holcomb once worked as a sharecropper in North Carolina. As ethereal as her music can often sound, it retains that grounded earthiness and deals with common concerns.

what to buy: The rootsy yet arty songs on *Robin Holcomb* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra Nonesuch, 1990, prod. Wayne Horvitz, Peter Holsapple) are built from the simplest, sparest materials, but with extremely imaginative production. Guitarist Bill Frisell's slippery style relates to slide and pedal steel sounds without being either, while Horvitz (Holcomb's husband) contributes a surprisingly varied palette of gray and beige tones with his keyboard work. A couple of songs are almost straightforward country-rock, though even the fiddle-adorned "Troy" stands somewhat apart from country due to a pronounced New Orleans second-line rhythm on the verses, strongly suggesting the Band instrumentally.

what to buy next: *Rockabye* ♪♪♪ (Elektra Nonesuch, 1992, prod. Wayne Horvitz) has only one outright country track, a cover of Bruce Phillips's "The Goodnight-Loving Trail," but the album begins exploring more distant strains of Americana—not only gospel and folk but also nineteenth-century balladry—and makes Holcomb's spare piano playing more of a musical focus. The latter two aspects culminate in *Little Three* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra Nonesuch, 1996, prod. Judith Sherman); a gorgeous solo piano album (Holcomb sings on only two tracks), it combines the feel of Civil War ballads, Indonesian gamelan, minimalism, the polytonality and song quotes of Charles Ives, and many beautiful melodies. The two long tracks sound like suites, with a procession of moods including a strong hoedown rhythm nine minutes into "Wherein Lies the Good." Some moments suggest a deeper, less saccharine George Winston. It's not even remotely a country album, yet very sympathetic to the feelings and impulses of country.

influences:

◀◀ Stephen Foster, Joni Mitchell, the Band, Charles Ives

▶▶ Tori Amos

Steve Holtje

Roscoe Holcomb

Born in KY.

Roscoe Holcomb was born to the Appalachian mountain culture and lived in it all his life. Eastern Kentucky was (and is) a mix of great physical beauty and harsh living conditions, both of which are reflected in the traditional music of the region. He had asthma as a child and worked hard as an adult, and consequently was not physically strong in later life when younger musicians came calling with their tape recorders. In spite of this, he remembered many mountain songs and ballads and was still able to play banjo. Thanks to the efforts of John Cohen, Mike Seeger, and others, Holcomb was able to record two and one-half albums worth of material for Folkways Recordings.

what to buy: The CD *Close to Home* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1975) is a reissue of the LP of the same name that came out in the '70s. This recording was made by John Cohen at Holcomb's home in Daisy, Kentucky. The recording quality is surprisingly good for a field recording, with very little background noise or distractions. There are 10 vocal selections, most accompanied by Holcomb's banjo or guitar, and one banjo instrumental. Roscoe sometimes played banjo in the familiar clawhammer style, but more often used his own complex version of finger-picking, perfect for accompanying his vocals. His voice was the most compelling part of his music; he sang at the upper end of his vocal range, giving a strength and clarity to the songs that is difficult to describe. Life in isolated Appalachian communities like Daisy could be harsh, demanding, and lonely; all of this is conveyed in this simple man's voice. He lived at a time when radio and recordings were popular enough to bring in some outside influences, and he was partial to the blues music that he heard, particularly Blind Lemon Jefferson. This influence is clear in his guitar playing and, to a lesser extent, in his singing. For the most part, however, Holcomb's music defies analysis. This is folk music in its most thoroughly distilled, pure form—a man's expression of

his joys and sorrows, his fears and hopes. In the liner notes, Cohen relates an incident in which Holcomb had difficulty recording "Man of Constant Sorrow"; he saw himself in the song and was uncomfortable at revealing that much of himself to a tape recorder. This is what traditional folk music is all about.

what to buy next: Also available on CD are *The High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1972) and *Roscoe Holcomb* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1962). Both of these are similar to *Close to Home*, i.e., recordings of Roscoe made by John Cohen and Eric Davidson. The latter disc features Holcomb on one side and Virginia banjo player Wade Ward on the other. It was recorded in a New York City recording studio, and the liner notes suggest that Holcomb was less comfortable than on previous recordings that had been made at his home. This is probably apparent only to someone who knew Holcomb personally; all the selections on this disc are presented with the same clarity and forcefulness that characterize the other recordings.

influences:

◀◀ Blind Lemon Jefferson

▶▶ Mike Seeger, John Cohen, Tracy Schwarz

Dave Shombert

Jerry Holland

Born February 23, 1955, in Brockton, MA.

Fiddler Jerry Holland is one of the great lights of modern Cape Breton music. For the past 25 years he has kept to the traditional heart of the music, playing and writing beautiful music in the straightforward style of his mentors Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald and Bill Lamey. He is recognized throughout Cape Breton for his fluid fiddling and for his beautiful compositions, many of which are now standards in the repertoire of both Cape Breton and Irish musicians. Holland grew up in Boston learning the music from his father, also an excellent fiddle player and the greatest early influence on his musicianship. By his teens he was sitting in with the best of the island's musicians on family vacations, and was soon playing guitar behind legendary fiddler Angus Chisolm. Holland moved permanently to Cape Breton while in his 20s and began to perform regularly in the island's fertile musical scene. He is among Cape Breton's most popular fiddlers, known both for his fine playing and for his beautiful compositions, which have been recorded by countless Cape Breton compatriots, as well as by Irish groups Altan and Dordan. Although his recordings are difficult to find and he appears only rarely in the United States, Holland is a major figure in Cape Breton music, and his recordings should be sought eagerly by fans of fine fiddle music everywhere.

what's available: *The Fiddlesticks Collection* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Jerry Holland, Paul MacDonald) draws from several of his Canadian albums and is Holland's only recording currently available in the United States. It is a solid introduction to Holland's fiddle playing, showcasing both traditional tunes and his own compositions. He is backed by several of Cape Breton's leading musicians on guitar and piano, including Hilda Chiasson, Dave MacIsaac, and John Morris Rankin. *Traditional Music from Cape Breton Island* ♪♪♪ (Nimbus, 1993, prod. Micheal O'Suilleabhain, Robin Broadbank) features performances from a festival held at University College, Cork, Ireland in 1993. Many of the finest performers from Cape Breton took part and the disc provides a good overview of contemporary Cape Breton fiddle music. Holland is featured on one cut and some of his tunes are performed by Natalie MacMaster, Brenda Stubbert, and bagpiper Paul MacNeil.

worth searching for: *Master Cape Breton Fiddler* ♪♪♪♪ (Boot Records, 1982, prod. Dave MacIsaac, Dennis Ryan) was the album that cemented Holland's status as one of Cape Breton's leading musicians. Along with accompanists Hilda Chiasson and Dave MacIsaac, Holland powers his way through sets of driving reels, jigs, and strathspeys, as well as some sweet waltzes. This was the coming-out party for this crew of young Turks and is one of the most influential Cape Breton albums of the last 20 years. It is sad that this classic is not currently available, although three tracks are included on *Fiddlesticks Collection*. For musicians, Jerry's tunebook, *The Jerry Holland Collection of Fiddle Tunes*, is a great resource, containing many of Holland's compositions, as well as standards from the Cape Breton and Irish repertoires. It was assembled by Paul Cranford, one of Cape Breton music's great advocates, and is published in the United States by Mel Bay Publications.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Lamey, Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald, Angus Chisolm

▶▶ Natalie MacMaster, Brenda Stubbert

Tony Ziselberger

Hollow Rock String Band

Formed 1966, in Durham, NC. Disbanded 1968.

Alan Jabbour, fiddle; Tommy Thompson, banjo; Bobbie Thompson, guitar; Bertram Levy, mandolin.

Led by Alan Jabbour on fiddle, the Hollow Rock String Band was

born out of jam sessions in an area of Durham, North Carolina, known as Hollow Rock. The only remnants of this lively area now is a street named Hollow Rock Road and the Hollow Rock Swim and Racquet Club (probably not much old-time music going on there). The band played tunes they learned from old timers who frequented the fiddlers' conventions in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. The bulk of the tunes they performed and recorded were from West Virginia old-time musician Henry Reed. Reed played fiddle, mandolin, harmonica, guitar, and banjo. He remembered a large number of tunes that Hollow Rock was eager to learn. One of the most popular tunes that was reborn out of this collaboration was "Over the Waterfall," which, after the band recorded it, became a standard for old-time musicians worldwide. In 1968 the band broke up and each member went his separate way. Bertram Levy and Jabbour moved to California, Tommy Thompson formed the Red Clay Ramblers, and Bobbie Thompson went on to be in the Fuzzy Mountain String Band. Bobbie's life was tragically cut short in an automobile accident just a few years later. Jabbour is now the head of the Folklife area of the Library of Congress.

what's available: In 1997 County reissued *Traditional Dance Tunes* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Kanawha, 1968/County, 1997, prod. Hollow Rock String Band). This album was originally released on the Kanawha record label a year after the death of Henry Reed, their main inspiration. It is a fabulous snapshot of the old-time scene in Durham near the end of the '60s. The tunes are energetic and the passion these musicians felt for this music—and for the old-time musicians who made it—cannot be overstated.

influences:

- Henry Reed, Vaughn Marley, Harlan Coble, Lonnie Crosbie, Ross Miller
- Fuzzy Mountain String Band, Highwoods String Band, Red Clay Ramblers

Steve Gardner

David Holt

Born October 15, 1946, in Gatesville, TX.

A Grammy award doesn't even start to tell you how singer-songwriter and storyteller David Holt wins the hearts of children and their parents alike. Holt, who lives in western North Carolina, is a historian as well as an entertainer. He plays 10 acoustic instruments, from guitar and banjo to hambone and washboard. He even clogs. To Holt, keeping traditional music alive and passing it on through the generations are as important as telling the stories that went into the making of those songs. Keeping stories and songs alive has served to make Holt one of the United States' most respected storytellers. Born in Gatesville, Texas, he lived in Garland, Texas, before his family moved to Palisades, California, when he was in junior high school. He gives his family credit for telling stories about his ancestry. "Storytelling was just a natural part of family life for me," he says. "I never thought about telling stories in public until I began to collect mountain music and came across interesting and unusual anecdotes from mountain folks. I began to use these stories in concerts and realized the power storytelling holds." He learned to play bones and spoons from his father, and learned to play harmonica from singing cowboy Carl Sprague, who also taught him old-time cowboy stories. Holt graduated magna cum laude from the University of California at Santa Barbara with a degree in biology and art. He then moved to western North Carolina, where he learned mountain tales and began playing them at concerts. Holt founded and directed the Appalachian Music Program—which involves the study of traditional music and dance—at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina, in 1975. He became a full-time musician in 1981. Wearing his trademark fedora, his attention to storytelling has earned him recognition. Songs and stories from Holt are included in the Library of Congress' permanent collection, and he has served as a musical ambassador around the world, bringing with him the sounds and stories of American folk music. He has received numerous awards, including a Grammy for his album *Stellaluna*. In the past, Holt has hosted *Fire on the Mountain, Celebration Express,* and *American Music Shop* on the Nashville Network, along with PBS's *Folkways*. Holt also hosts *Riverwalk: Classic Jazz from the Landing* for Public Radio International. In addition to recordings of stories and songs, he has released several videos on banjo techniques and books on storytelling.

what to buy: As a teller of old-time tales, it is no surprise that *Grandfather's Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1991, prod. Steven Heller) contains a delightful potpourri of old songs, including "John Henry," "Wabash Cannonball," "Cripple Creek," and "Dixie." Holt addresses the historical significance of these songs and tells how they got written. Joining him are fiddler Mark O'Connor, dobroist Jerry Douglas, and guitarist Chet Atkins. Another, *I Got a Bullfrog: Folksongs for the Fun of It* ♪♪♪♪½ (High Windy Audio, 1994, prod. Steven Heller), blends traditional folk, blues, and bluegrass with originals that will have you tapping your feet and singing along. Joining him are mandolinist-fiddler Sam Bush, Alan O'Bryant, Roy Huskey Jr.,

guitarist Russ Barenberg, and several others. Songs range from "Cindy" and "This Little Light of Mine" to animal songs about bugs, chickens, moles and, of course, a big, old bullfrog.

what to buy next: *Stellaluna* ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1996, prod. David Holt, Virginia Callaway, Steven Heller) is a retelling of the delightful bat tale by Janell Cannon, along with other interesting stories and facts about bats.

the rest:

It Just Suits Me ♪♪♪ (June Appal Recordings, 1981)
Hairyman ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1981)
Reel and Rock ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1985)
Tailybone ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1985)
Why the Dog Chases the Cat: Great Animal Stories ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1994)
Mostly Ghostly Stories ♪♪♪½ (High Windy Audio, 1995)
Spiders in the Hairdo: Modern Urban Legends ♪♪♪♪ (High Windy Audio, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Virgil Craven, Carl Sprague, many other forebears of American folk songs and stories

▶▶ Bill Harley, Cathy Fink, Sheila Adams Barnhill, Laura Boosinger

Stephen Ide

The Holy Modal Rounders

Formed 1963, in New York. Disbanded 1965. Re-formed 1968, recording periodically until 1981.

Peter Stampfel, banjo, fiddle, vocals; Steve Weber, guitar, vocals.

The Holy Modal Rounders were a loose aggregation of beat-generation holdovers organized around the inspired lunacy of co-founders Peter Stampfel and Steve Weber. The duo recorded two albums of old-timey music and blues for Folklore and Prestige between 1963 and 1964 before hooking up with fellow cultural anarchists the Fugs in 1965. Following a mid-1960s breakup that found Weber retaining the band's original name and Stampfel forming the Moray Eels, the two men—aided and abetted by playwright Sam Shepard on drums, as well as folk stalwarts Michael Hurley, Luke Faust, Robin Remaily, and others—reunited for a psychedelic side trip from which they almost didn't return (even though their recording of "Bird Song," included on the soundtrack to the movie *Easy Rider,* exposed their acid-folk to a wider audience). After reclaiming their string-band roots, Stampfel, Weber, Hurley, and company joined forces with Jeffrey Frederick for *Have Moicy!*, a bacchanalian fantasy that proved the high point of the group's 18-year career.

what's available: *Indian War Whoop* ♪♪ (ESP, 1967) makes a strong case for the argument that you had to be there, especially the indulgent, side-long "Jimmy and Crash Survey the Universe." *Have Moicy!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976, prod. John Nagy) is a lost classic, an undeniable collection of folk, country, and bluegrass that lovingly embraces—and has fun at the expense of—the hippie lifestyle and myth.

worth searching for: *The Holy Modal Rounders* ♪♪♪♪ (Folklore, 1964, prod. Peter Stampfel, Steve Weber), the duo's debut, contains left-of-center covers of blues and old-timey tunes that never push the album so far overboard that it loses its edge or appeal.

influences:

◀◀ Charlie Poole, Grandpa Jones

▶▶ Austin Lounge Lizards

Bill Friskics-Warren

Homer & Jethro

Henry D. "Homer" Haynes (born July 27, 1920, in Knoxville, TN; died August 7, 1971); Kenneth "Jethro" Burns (born March 10, 1920, in Conasuga, TN; died February 4, 1989, in Evanston, IL).

The clown princes of country music, Homer and Jethro first began performing together when they were 12 years old and had become veteran radio professionals, specializing in song parodies, by the time they enlisted in the military during World War II. It was cornball satires of pop hits—most notably the 1959 smash, "The Battle of Kookamonga"—that the pair recorded for RCA Victor and staked their reputation on during the 1950s and 1960s. They made a series of "Ooh, that's corny" television commercials for Kellogg's Corn Flakes that further enhanced that delicious image of rube punsters. But underneath all the hick shtick, Haynes and Burns were gifted instrumentalists. They also made a number of recordings with virtuoso guitarist Chet Atkins during the 1970s as the Nashville String Band. After Haynes's death, Burns pursued a jazzier direction as a mandolin player, wrote mandolin instructional manuals, and recorded for the folk-based indie label Flying Fish. Neither their classic comedic send-ups—a Nashville parallel to the kind of records Stan Freberg was making in Hollywood—nor their instrumentals have yet been made available on compact disc.

what to buy: *Playing It Straight* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1962) has long been prized by collectors as a showcase of the duo's instrumental expertise.

worth searching for: Jethro's solo outing *Swing Low, Sweet Mandolin* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1995, prod. David Grisman, Don Stiernberg) is an aptly named instrumental album of mandolin-and-guitar duets with Don Stiernberg, recorded in 1987–88. Songs include "Stella by Starlight," "Body and Soul," and "Corrina Corrina."

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon

▶▶ Minnie Pearl, Ray Stevens

Joel Selvin

John Lee Hooker

Born August 22, 1920, in Clarksdale, MS.

When the words Delta blues are whispered like holy script, there are but a few names that accurately embody the weight associated with the term. John Lee Hooker, certainly the last of the living greats, is one. His looming presence in the last half century bears a stamp over not only the blues itself, but R&B, early rock 'n' roll, and musicians ranging from Carlos Santana to Bonnie Raitt. Emerging from the tutelage of his stepfather and church gospel, Hooker began his recorded legacy at age 31 with an arrestingly unorthodox approach of feral, six-string blues singles, including "Boogie Chillun" and "I'm in the Mood." The style he came to epitomize was a bone-spare, snake-like groove (often just one chord) supplanted only by the clicking of bottle caps under his stamping feet. The booming low growl emanating from his throat was unhinged animal strength, equal parts menace, barking bravado, and morose longing. Eventually he did weld his open tunings and strange chording to a band format (after all, Mayall's Bluesbreakers and Clapton provided live back-up in the 1960s), although most U.S. audiences didn't get wind of it until his recorded union with blues disciples Canned Heat in the 1970s. Strangely quiet throughout the latter part of that decade and most of the 1980s, Hooker (at age 72) roared back in 1989 with *The Healer*, winning universal acclaim and a Grammy in the process. Since then, he's recorded at a rate of men half his age, reworking his classics alongside Van Morrison, Keith Richards, Ry Cooder, Santana, and Robert Cray, to name a few. As one of the few legends to enjoy the fruits of his work during his lifetime, Hooker has since retired from live performance but promises to keep recording until he's taken his last breath.

what to buy: The staggering number of Hooker albums available can make for a maddening selection process, but the uninitiated will be served well with *The Ultimate Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, compilation prod. James Austin), a two-disc set that provides an ample overview for further inquiries, from brutal original versions of "Crawlin' King Snake," "Boogie Chillun," and "House Rent Boogie" in all their unsophisticated raw power to his Canned Heat stew and late 1980s recordings. For a quick dive into the Delta swamps, *The Real Folk Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chess, 1966, prod. Ralph Bass) showcases Hooker manhandling a spare band while flashing uncontrollable lust ("You Know, I Know") and the oft-covered classic drinker's call to arms, "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer."

what to buy next: Time may have diminished his growl a bit, but Hooker can still summon more danger than a teenager with an unlicensed pistol, as *The Healer* ♪♪♪♪ (Chameleon, 1989, prod. Roy Rogers) demonstrates. A celebratory outing with a star-studded guest list offering inspired performances at the feet of the master, the most welcome aspect of his comeback is that the record's most powerful moments occur when Hooker is unaccompanied.

what to avoid: There are far too many compilations glutting his oeuvre, and *Boogie Chillun* ♪♪ (Charly) is one of the unnecessary stops.

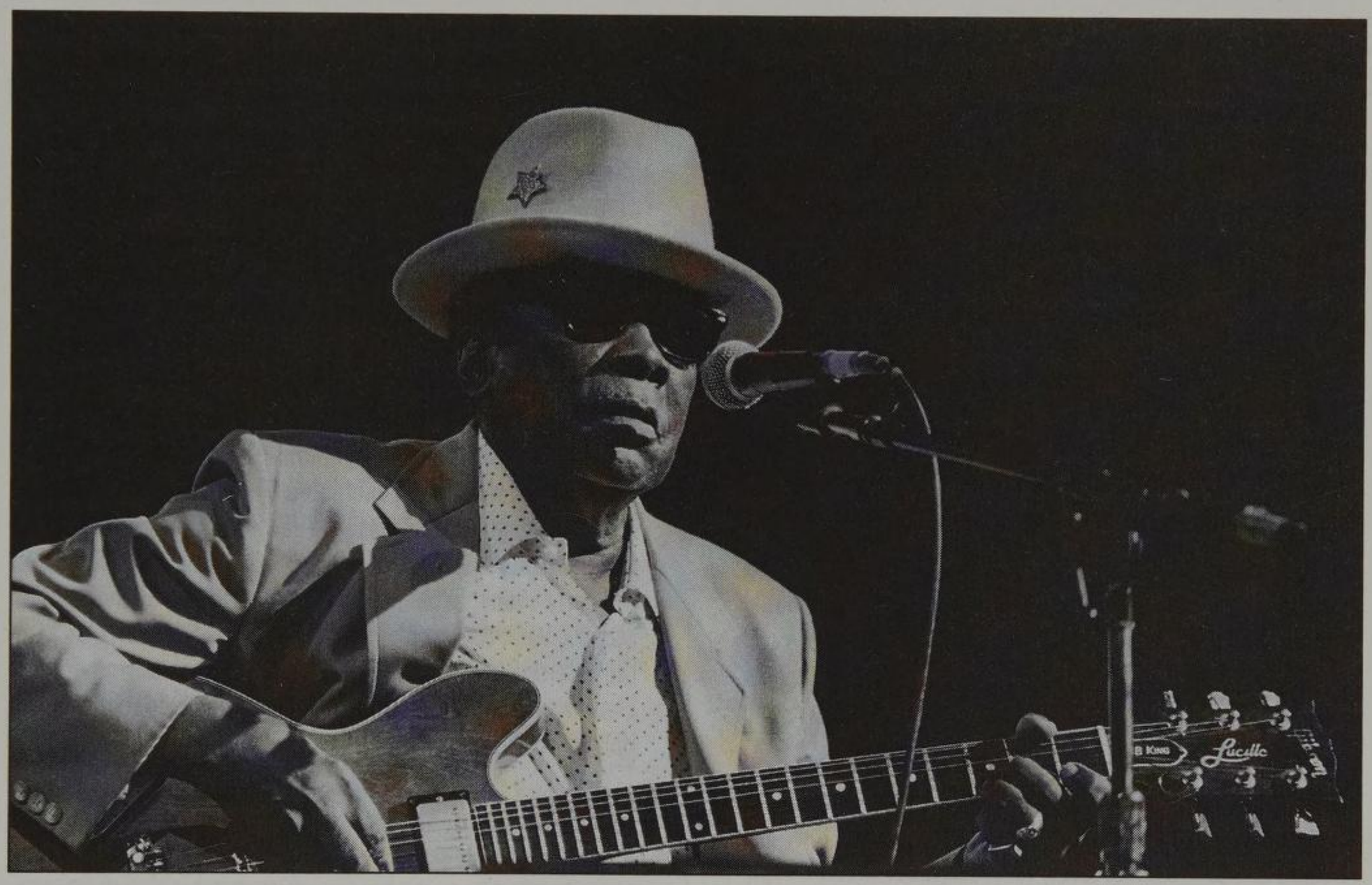
best of the rest:

Plays and Sings the Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Chess, 1961/1989)
Boogie Chillun ♪♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1962/1989)
Urban Blues ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1967/1993)
Hooker 'n' Heat ♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1970/1991)
Alone ♪♪♪♪ (Tomato, 1991)
The Cream ♪♪♪♪ (Tomato, 1991)
More Real Folk Blues: The Missing Album ♪♪♪♪½ (Chess, 1991)
The Best of John Lee Hooker (1965 to 1974) ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1992)
Chill Out ♪♪♪♪ (Point Blank, 1995)
Don't Look Back ♪♪♪♪ (Point Blank, 1997)

worth searching for: If you thought Tom Jones bellowing "Tennessee Waltz" with the Chieftains was a goofy hoot, Hooker growling lines like "I eat heavy metal/locomotive pies" alongside Pete Townshend on the former Who guitarist's *The Iron Man* ♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1989, prod. Pete Townshend) is a gas.

influences:

◀◀ Tony Hollins, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, Willie Dixon



John Lee Hooker **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Animals, Van Morrison, George Thorogood, Canned Heat, Johnny Winter, Rolling Stones, John Mayall, Eric Clapton

Allan Orski

The Hoosier Hot Shots

Formed 1932, in Fort Wayne, IN.

Paul "Hezzie" Trietsch, song whistle, alto horn, washboard, drums; Ken "Rudy" Trietsch, bass horn, banjo, guitar; Otto "Gabe" Ward, clarinet, saxophone, fife. Other members included: Frank Kettering; Gil Taylor; Nate Harrison; Keith Milheim; Skip Farrell.

Country music's answer to Spike Jones & His City Slickers, the Hot Shots began on radio in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and made their way to Chicago's *WLS National Barn Dance* in 1933. Soon they joined WLS act Uncle Ezra, who had his own radio show on the NBC network. "Are you ready, Hezzie?" became the trademark opening to most of these recordings, and the act incorporated a vast array of musical instruments including whistles, a washboard, and even a pie plate or two. ARC, which later became part of Columbia Records, was their recording home for seven years beginning in 1935, with future Country Music Hall of Famer Uncle Art Satherley overseeing the production of their broadly comical but tastefully orchestrated body of work. Following their success with ARC, the Hot Shots achieved great chart success on Decca from 1944 to 1946, with three singles all hitting the Top Three during those years. Appearing in a number of Hollywood films during the 1940s, the Hot Shots continued to perform for the next three decades, until Hezzie's death.

what's available: *Rural Rhythm 1935–1942* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1992, comp. Michael Brooks) is an uproarious collection that showcases, in equal measure, the humor and the musical proficiency of the Hot Shots. It's a non-stop riot, with such tunes as "I Like Bananas Because They Have No Bones" and "From the Indies to the Andies in His Undies."

the rest:

Are You Ready Hezzie ♪♪♪♪ (Circle, 1992)

3
7
6 *mary hopkin*

influences:

◀◀ Spike Jones & His City Slickers

▶▶ Homer & Jethro, Lonzo & Oscar

Stephen L. Betts

Mary Hopkin

Born 1950, in Pontardawe, Wales.

Paul McCartney was seeking talent for the fledgling Apple Records label in 1968 when he struck gold with waif folksinger Mary Hopkin. Blessed with a sweet country-lass voice and a face of apple-pie purity, Hopkin (under McCartney's guidance) spun out a short but hit-studded career of precious Olde Worlde ballads and lilting folk-pop.

what's available: *Post Card* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1969, prod. Paul McCartney) is a pretty album of twee but romantic confection that includes her hit "Those Were the Days," a terrific cover of Donovan's "Lord of the Reedy River," and a few odd novelty numbers ("Puppy Song," "Inchworm")—music the whole family can enjoy.

worth searching for: Hopkin shed her woman-child image for *Earth Song/Ocean Song* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1971, prod. Tony Visconti), a fine collection of lovely folk-rock tunes that are capably rendered. She subsequently married Visconti and retired from music, returning to active duty as a backup singer on David Bowie's *Low* and as a member of the short-lived trio Oasis (with Julian Lloyd Weber, brother of Andrew) in 1984.

influences:

◀◀ Bing Crosby, Shirley Temple, Fannie Brice, Patti Page, Julie Andrews, Phil Ochs, Donovan, Marianne Faithfull

▶▶ Nick Drake, Emmylou Harris, Kate Bush, Rickie Lee Jones, Suzanne Vega, Altered Images, Nanci Griffith, Tori Amos, Jewel, Anne Murray

Christopher Scapelliti

Lightnin' Hopkins

Born Sam Hopkins, March 15, 1912, in Centerville, TX. Died January 30, 1982, in Houston, TX.

Lightnin' Hopkins was one of the most prolific and frequently recorded bluesmen in history. His recordings span nearly four decades and encompass almost every imaginable style, from relaxed, down-home acoustic blues to no-holds-barred proto-rock. His sound, while drawing on older influences, was uniquely his own and had a pervasive influence on a multitude of post-war musicians. His rough-hewn vocal delivery could be both mild-mannered and urgent, while his repertoire of guitar licks was always effortlessly adapted to the ever-changing currents of popular musical tastes. Though primarily a country bluesman, Hopkins was a master of electric guitar boogie and even scored an R&B hit or two. Hopkins is often thought of as a link between country blues and the urban electric blues it spawned. He was also an inventive songwriter and a consummate folk poet with the uncanny ability to compose tunes on the spot that artfully summarized his life experiences while at the same time striking a common chord with his listeners. He tackled war, natural disasters, and the conquest of inner and outer space, often in an inimitable half-sung, half-spoken singing style tastefully punctuated by trademark bends, pull-offs, and single-string runs. His raw blues songs and storytelling talents made him the darling of the folk-blues revival of the early 1960s, while his utterly hip attitude opened doors with the West Coast rock fraternity—he headlined on bills with the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead, among others. He died two years after being inducted into the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame.

what to buy: *The Complete Aladdin Sessions* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1991, prod. Pete Welding) is a collection of his earliest recordings, made for Aladdin in the late 1940s. He is joined on the first 13 songs by "Thunder" Smith, the dynamic pianist and vocalist responsible for Hopkins's "Lightnin'" moniker, but the rest is all Hopkins at his creative zenith. Stand-outs include the classic blues numbers "Katie May" and "Short Haired Woman," and the pre-rock-and-roll rocker "Play with Your Poodle." Whenever there was up-front cash on the table, he could also be found in Houston's Gold Star studios. There he recorded landmark songs like the plaintive "Going Home Blues" and "Unsuccessful Blues," inspired by a misunderstanding over payment for a session, and "Tim Moore's Farm," an explicit commentary on the sociological conditions faced by southern blacks. His complete Gold Star output can be found on *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 1* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1990, prod. Bill Quinn, Chris Strachwitz) and *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1990, prod. Bill Quinn, Chris Strachwitz). Fifteen years after the aforementioned sessions, Hopkins was a blues-revival icon, regularly touring from coast to coast on the circuit and making television and documentary film appearances. Fortunately for blues fans, he also spent time recording some of his songs, the best of which are collected on *Texas Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz). These tunes nearly equal the power and blues presence of his earlier recordings and explain

in no uncertain terms what all of the fuss was about. Still unconvinced? Give a listen to *Swarthmore Concert* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bluesville Prestige/Fantasy, 1993, prod. Shel Kagen), an outstanding concert appearance from the same period.

what to buy next: *The Herald Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1989) and *The Herald Recordings, Volume 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1993) are two collections of small group recordings Hopkins made for the Herald label in the early 1950s, the hardest-driving, raunchiest records he ever cut. *Blues Train* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mainstream, 1991, prod. Bob Shad) is another outstanding assortment of songs recorded in the early 1950s, this time for the Sitting in With and Jax labels. "Coffee Blues" and "Hello Central" both charted, and numerous others on this set should have. *Lightnin' in New York* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Candid, 1988, prod. Nat Hentoff) was recorded in 1960, just as Hopkins was coming into prominence on the folk-blues circuit. Highlights include several magnificent slow blues numbers ("Take It Easy," "Wonder Why") and the lengthy folk-tale "Mister Charlie."

what to avoid: For a guy as prolific as Hopkins, it comes as quite a surprise to find so few stinkers in the body of his recorded work. *Free Form Patterns* ♪♪ (International Artists, 1968/Charly 1991, prod. Lelan Rogers), however, is one to steer clear of. If you are looking for a record that captures what Hopkins would sound like on the other side of a thick wall backed by a bewildered band intent on a 12-bar groove that never materializes, this one's for you!

the rest:

Houston Bound ♪♪♪♪ (Relic, 1960/1994)
Last Night Blues ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1960/Fantasy, 1992)
Smokes like Lightning ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1962/Fantasy, 1992)
Soul Blues ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1964/Fantasy, 1991)
Lightnin' Hopkins ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990)
Complete Prestige/Bluesville Records ♪♪♪♪ (Prestige/Fantasy, 1991)
Hopkins Brothers: Joel, Lightnin' & John Henry ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1991)
Sittin' in with Lightnin' Hopkins ♪♪♪♪½ (Mainstream, 1991)
Lightnin' ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993)
Mojo Hand: The Lightnin' Hopkins Anthology ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1993)
Po' Lightnin' ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995)
Barbara Dane and Lightnin' Hopkins ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1996)

worth searching for: The Houston-based Gold Star label once boasted a stable of some of the finest post-war country blues artists, which included Lil Son Jackson and L.C. Williams, among others. On *Texas Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1992, prod. Bill Quinn, Chris Strachwitz) Hopkins stretches out as an accompanist, laying down some of his finest instrumental work on record. On Williams's "Trying, Trying," he even turns out some terrific boogie-woogie piano!

influences:

◀◀ Texas Alexander, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Lonnie Johnson, Joel Hopkins

▶▶ Carolina Slim, Robert Pete Williams, Hound Dog Taylor, Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Lonnie Brooks, Bob Dylan

D. Thomas Moon

Sam Hopkins

See: Lightnin' Hopkins

Lois Hornbostel

Born February 28, 1949, in New York, NY.

Lois Hornbostel has introduced generations of mountain dulcimer players to techniques and tunes through her instruction books, recordings, and workshop presentations. Her musical tastes and influences are diverse. She began playing in 1975 and spent several years exploring her Irish roots at "sessiuns" in New York City. Hornbostel was one of the first to recognize and adapt the beauty of Celtic music on the mountain dulcimer and her book, *The Irish Dulcimer,* was groundbreaking in this respect. She also lived for a time in New Orleans, where she assimilated a basic Cajun repertoire, adapting and arranging the music for dulcimer. In 1980 she moved to North Carolina, where she became interested in Appalachian fiddle music and her career really took off. She won the dulcimer championships at both Galax and Pulaski in Virginia and also at North Carolina's Fiddler Grove festival. Mel Bay then published her *Dulcimer Fiddle Tunes* and *American Fiddle Tunes for the Dulcimer,* which were again among the first and best books in the genre. Hornbostel is an educator as well as a musician and has taught the history of the mountain dulcimer and the basic elements of playing the instrument to over 13,000 elementary school children. She has published several other books for dulcimer students of all ages. She is the director of the Appalachian State University Dulcimer-Playing Workshop in Boone, North Carolina, which attracts over 250 students each year to study with major dulcimer performers. She is also the coordinator of the Swannanoa Gathering Dulcimer Week held annually at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina. In addition to these duties, she continues to travel extensively to perform and teach at a variety of dulcimer and traditional music events. Hornbostel has contributed substantially to the rapid growth in

popularity of the dulcimer in this country. All of her releases are available from Alarka Recordings, Piney Grove, Apt. F, Big Cove Rd, Cherokee, NC 28719.

what to buy: *Dulcimer Jubilee* ♪♪♪½ (Alarka Recordings, 1997, prod. Lois Hornbostel) is a feast of traditional American fiddle music played on the mountain dulcimer. Hornbostel's aggressive style sparkles on more than 30 tunes with significant help from Jeff Furman on second dulcimer and banjo and from the ever-eclectic Ken Bloom on guitar, bowed dulcimer, banjo, concert zither, bouzouki, and bandura. This is a "good time" recording played with rhythm and drive.

what to buy next: *Dulcimer Enchantment* ♪♪♪ (Alarka Recordings, 1996, prod. Lois Hornbostel) shows Hornbostel's Celtic side and contains dulcimer-centric versions of mostly traditional Irish, Scottish, and Welsh material with a couple of fiddle tunes thrown in for good measure. The approach is much more contemplative and introspective than *Dulcimer Jubilee* but should be of considerable interest to dulcimer fans or anyone else who appreciates good music both well played and well presented.

the rest:
Vive le Dulcimer! ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule Records, 1983) (cassette only)
Canterbury Revels ♪♪½ (Dudley Laufman Music, 1985) (cassette only)

worth searching for: Hornbostel also appears on *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Susan Trump Music, 1997, prod. Susan Trump), an excellent compilation showcasing some 19 of the country's best dulcimer players.

influences:
◀◀ Neal Hellman, Bonnie Carol
▶▶ Don Pedi, Jerry Rockwell

Neal Walters

The Horseflies /The Tompkins County Horseflies

Formed 1981, in Ithaca, NY.

Jeff Claus (born October 31, 1950), vocals, guitar, processed banjo uke; Rich Stearns (born May 23, 1960), vocals, guitar, banjo; Judy Hyman (born September 25, 1951), vocals, violin; Peter Dodge (born August 1, 1953), vocals, keyboards, accordion; John Hayward (born August 15, 1948; died June 6, 1997), bass; Taki Masuko (born September 7, 1952), drums.

The Horseflies' formative years were spent as an acoustic four-piece old-time string band in Ithaca, New York. They played the traditional fiddle music of the American South, much of it learned by traveling to fiddle festivals and contests in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. Initially interested in the music not from the historical point of view but as a groove-oriented music that was at the core of a rocking great social scene and national community, they grew into their own style, which was quite different and more rock-inflected than the straight-ahead, traditional style. They also began to write their own material. In 1983, on the strength of their single "Oh Death" (a Doc Boggs song that received the typical Horseflies makeover), recorded for a local radio show, they were able to tour Europe for three and a half months. On their return, they were approached by Rounder Records while playing street music in New Orleans and recorded *Chokers and Flies*, an album unusual in that they shared it with a Boston-based fiddle band, the Chicken Chokers. This release led to a great deal of interest on the part of the folk community and a lot of travel and performance in the United States and Canada. In 1986 they recorded *Human Fly*, their second album for Rounder. By this time, though they were still playing acoustic instruments, they had begun experimenting with forms, textures, vocals—somewhere between folk, pop, world, and minimalism—and incorporating keys, sequencing, and live percussion. As a result of the interest *Human Fly* generated, they decided to expand the band to allow them to approximate live the music on the record. Taki Masuko (drums) and Peter Dodge (synthesizer and accordion) joined the Horseflies in 1987. The original foursome also began playing electric instruments in the band at that point to maintain a balance with the drums and keys. In time, as a result of the new configuration and instruments, the music became something else again—more pop, more alternative with a trad/roots underpinning. In 1990 they recorded *Gravity Dance* for MCA Records. By now the group was straddling the rock-club, folk-festival, and art-concert worlds. In 1994 they scored a film for Caledonia Pictures (*Where the Rivers Flow North*, based on a book by Howard Frank Mosher) and the sound track was released on Alcazar Records. In 1997 they scored a second film, for Whiskeyjack Pictures (*A Stranger in the Kingdom*, based on another Mosher book). The soundtrack for this film is still looking for a label. In 1996, after many years away from the folk world, they began performing as an acoustic foursome again, sometimes with a percussionist. John Hayward, the Horseflies' bass player of 17 years, died of cancer in June 1997.

what to buy: Dan Kening of the *Chicago Tribune* describes *Gravity Dance* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1991, prod. Hilton Rosenthal) as

combining "musical and lyrical quirkiness with beguiling wit and intelligence." With its mix of minimalist folk and rock and boasting the sinuous fiddle of Judy Hyman, this album challenges the brain without sacrificing the groove.

what to buy next: *Human Fly* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Bill Usher), subtitled "neoprimitive bug music," is the Horseflies' debut album on Rounder after they shared an album with Boston's Chicken Chokers. Not quite as quirky as *Gravity Dance*, the addition of ethnic percussion, sequencing, and synth to what had previously been an all-acoustic sound definitely establishes a new direction for the band.

the rest:
Chokers and Flies ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985)
Where the Rivers Run North ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Highwoods String Band, the Police
▶▶ Heartbeats

Neal Walters

Hot Rize /Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Formed 1978, in CO. Disbanded 1990.

Tim O'Brien, vocal, mandolin, fiddle; Pete Wernick, banjo; Nick Forster, bass; Charles Sawtelle, guitar. Former members include: Mike Scap, guitar, vocals.

Hot Rize and their zany alter-egos, Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers, managed to walk a fine line between folk, country, pop, jazz, and bluegrass, and surprisingly, rarely alienated anyone in the process. The group's lineup changed only once in nearly 15 years, even as they continued to diversify. Led by Tim O'Brien's folky vocals and supplemented by the skillful playing of Pete "Dr. Banjo" Wernick, Hot Rize (named for the secret ingredient in Martha White flour, long associated with bluegrass music) first recorded in 1979. Three years later they introduced their counterparts, the Trailblazers (the name comes from Martha White's brand of dog food!) with "Waldo Otto" (Wernick) on steel guitar, "Wendell Mercantile" (Forester) playing lead guitar, "Slade" (Sawtelle) on bass, and the devilishly charming "Red Knuckles" (O'Brien) on lead vocals and rhythm guitar. Veering from bluegrass to explore more honky-tonk music and to showcase their gifts for humor, the Trailblazers were as much in demand (if not, they frequently joked, as well-treated) as Hot Rize. O'Brien had a Top 10 country hit in 1990, a duet with Kathy Mattea on "Battle Hymn of Love," and earlier, in 1986, Mattea had hit the Top 10 with O'Brien's "Walk the Way the Wind Blows." O'Brien also released solo albums and recorded duet albums with sister Mollie throughout the years Hot Rize was in existence. In 1996 the band held a short reunion tour, which was highlighted by their appearance on the Martha White Bluegrass Series at Nashville's historic Ryman Auditorium. Once again, Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers threatened to steal the show, but all ended well as fans were reminded why Hot Rize will be remembered as one of the most innovative and important bluegrass/traditional bands of the 1980s.

what to buy: *Untold Stories* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1987, prod. Hot Rize) is an absolutely beautiful record with some solid bluegrass picking and O'Brien in fine voice.

what to buy next: The immensely entertaining *Take It Home* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990, prod. Hot Rize) is a thoroughly satisfying collection, and sadly, the band's last.

the rest:
Hot Rize ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1979)
Radio Boogie ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1981)
Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers/Hot Rize in Concert ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1982/1984)
Hot Rize Presents Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers: Shades of the Past ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Traditional Ties ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988)

solo outings:
Pete Wernick:
(With others) *Dr. Banjo Steps Out* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978)
On a Roll ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993)
I Tell You What! ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Tim & Mollie O'Brien, Pete Wernick
▶▶ BR5-49, Jeff White

see also: *Tim O'Brien*

Stephen L. Betts

Hot Tuna

Formed 1969, in San Francisco, CA.

Jorma Kaukonen, guitar, vocals; Jack Casady, bass; Will Scarlet, harmonica (1970–71); Papa John Creach, violin (1971–72); Sammy Piazza, drums (1971–74); Bob Steeler, drums (1974–77); Michael Falzarano, guitar, mandolin, harmonica, vocals (1990–present).

Formed in hotel rooms across the country after Jefferson Air-

380 hot tuna

plane concerts, when guitarist Jorma Kaukonen and bassist Jack Casady couldn't stop playing, Hot Tuna slowly emerged into the public, first as an acoustic duo and then as an electric quartet appearing often as a support act for the mothership. Essentially a vehicle for Kaukonen's remarkable skills as a country blues guitarist, Tuna specialized in lengthy improvisations in which Casady's fluid, inventive bass figures would wrap around Kaukonen's delta-blues lines almost endlessly. The band, on one occasion at least, performed for eight hours straight. Friends since childhood, Kaukonen and Casady split in the late '70s and re-formed about 10 years later. The original unplugged band, Tuna remains the sole surviving unit of the San Francisco psychedelic scene's heyday.

what to buy: Either *First Pull up, Then Pull Down* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1971, prod. Jorma Kaukonen) or *Burgers* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1972, prod. Jorma Kaukonen) will provide the quintessential Tuna experience, mixing the Rev. Gary Davis/Mississippi John Hurt fingerpicking nobody does any better than Kaukonen with Casady's imaginative bass playing.

what to buy next: The duo's quiet acoustic debut, *Hot Tuna* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1970, prod. Al Schmitt), captured the lads, fresh out of the hotel rooms, in a small Berkeley nightclub playing relatively straight-ahead elaborations on traditional country blues, unplugged before its time.

what to avoid: The sound quality on *Classic Hot Tuna Acoustic* ♪♪ (Relix, 1996, prod. Michael Falzarano), taken from a radio broadcast, leaves much to be desired, although the companion piece, *Classic Hot Tuna Electric* ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1996, prod. Michael Falzarano), fared better since it was taken from multi-track recordings made during the 1971 final week at the Fillmore West.

the rest:

The Phosphorescent Rat ♪♪ (RCA, 1973)
America's Choice ♪♪ (RCA, 1975)
Yellow Fever ♪♪ (RCA, 1975)
Hoppkorv ♪♪ (RCA, 1976)
Double Dose ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1977)
Pair a Dice Found ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1991)
Historic Hot Tuna ♪♪♪½ (Relix, 1991)
Splashdown Two ♪♪♪½ (Relix, 1991)
Live at Sweetwater ♪♪♪½ (Relix, 1992)
Live at Sweetwater Two ♪♪ (Relix, 1993)
Trimmed & Burning (Edsel, 1994)

solo outings:

Jorma Kaukonen:

klezmer music

Originating in Eastern Europe, klezmer is a form of Jewish folk music including fast dance tunes as well as more reflective pieces. It was influenced by Jewish prayer music and music from other Eastern European cultures. Klezmer was brought to North America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by immigrant musicians who continued to ply their trade in their new home. In fact, klezmer recordings were issued by U.S. record companies from the 1910s through the 1950s. In the 1970s a serious klezmer revival began when young musicians discovered these older recordings and decided to play the music. Since then the klezmer movement has developed and several distinct strands have emerged. There are bands like the Klezmorim and Kapelye, who prefer a traditional approach, basically re-creating what they've been listening to on older recordings. The Klezmer Conservatory Band, an eleven-member "big band," takes a slightly more theatrical tack, featuring dramatic vocalizing by Judy Bressler. And then there's the progressive wing, led by New York City's marvelous Klezmatics, who fuse traditional klezmer styles with modern jazz, rock, and "world" influences. Other bands charting new directions include Brave Old World, who incorporate classical music's finesse and jazzy improvisation into their sound, and the New Orleans Klezmer All Stars, whose klez-rock is guaranteed to get a party going. For a superb picture of klezmer and its evolution, check out the following collections: *In The Fiddler's House* (Angel), a collaboration between violin master Itzhak Perlman and four klezmer bands: Brave Old World, the Klezmatics, the Andy Statman Klezmer Orchestra, and the Klezmer Conservatory Band; *Klezmania* (Shanachie), a sampler of "progressive" klezmer tracks; and *Klezmer Music: A Marriage of Heaven & Earth* (Ellipsis Arts), a lush package with cuts from performers from the United States, Germany, and Canada.

Ken Roseman

Quah ♪♪♪½ (Relix, 1974)
Magic ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1985)
Too Hot to Handle ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1986)
Magic Two ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1994)
Land of Heroes ♪♪♪½ (American Heritage, 1995)
Christmas ♪♪♪ (Relix, 1997)

influences:
⏪ Rev. Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Scott LeFaro
⏩ Keb' Mo', Jeff Buckley, Chris Whitley, Jeff Healey

Joel Selvin

Hothouse Flowers

Formed 1986, in Ireland.

Liam O'Maonlai, lead vocals, piano, Hammond organ, Wurlitzer, low whistle, bodhrán, didjeridoo; Fiachna O'Braonain, electric and acoustic guitars, bouzouki, vocals; Peter O'Toole, bass guitar, bouzouki, backing vocals; Leo Barnes, saxophone, Hammond organ, Wurlizter, backing vocals; Jerry Fehily, drums, percussion.

More Memphis Stax than Dublin U2, Hothouse Flowers blends Celtic mysticism with R&B and gospel. The result is clearly Irish in its quest for the transcendental, though the band displays its spirituality more boldly than most. When the group gained critical acclaim for its debut, *People*, and a host of predictions that it would be the Emerald Isle's next big export, many of the reviews cited the Hothouse's apparent disdain for U2's more mainstream heroic vision. Maybe it was the horns and the gritty sound, but though the influences might differ, both bands are obviously in search of something bigger than rock stardom. With Hothouse Flowers, the embrace of American soul and Irish traditional as the road to God is more consistent, and for that matter, much more Irish. Liam O'Maonlai's impassioned vocals and the musicianship of guitarists Fiachna O'Braonain and Peter O'Toole frequently reach glorified heights, though occasionally 'O Maonlai has a tendency to over-testify. The band is also reluctant to record, with three albums to its credit since 1988, though members appear on a host of recordings by others (well, they have the time).

what to buy: *People* ♪♪♪♪♪ (London, 1988, prod. Clive Langer, Alan Winstanley) is a beautiful merging of original vision and mainstream influences and became the best-selling debut in Irish pop history. Standout cuts include "The Older We Get," which speaks to wisdom hard earned.

what to buy next: With an effective reworking of Johnny Nash's chestnut "I Can See Clearly Now" and the gorgeous "Christchurch Bells," *Home* ♪♪♪♪ (London, 1990, prod. Paul Barrett, Pat McCarthy, Daniel Lanois, Clive Langer, Alan Winstanley, Norman Verso) is a strong follow-up to the debut. Fiddler Steve Wickham, late of the Waterboys, guests on the live "Dance to the Storm."

the rest:
Songs from the Rain ♪♪♪ (London, 1993)

influences:
⏪ U2, Waterboys
⏩ 54.40

Martin Connors

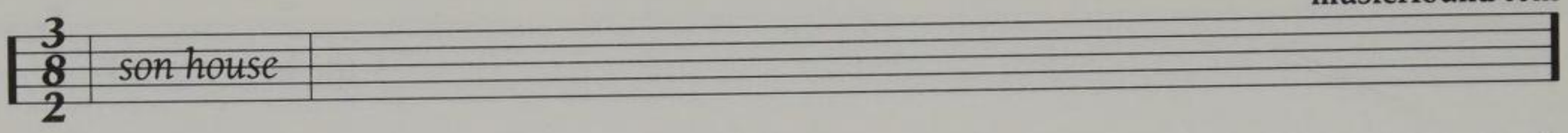
The House Band

Formed 1984, in England.

Ged Foley, vocals, acoustic and electric guitars, mandolin, Northumbrian pipes; Chris Parkinson, melodeons, keyboards, accordion, harmonica, vocals; Iain MacLeod, 10-string mandolin, guitar, vocals (1984–86); Jimmy Young, smallpipes, flute, whistles (1984–86); Brian Brooks, bouzouki, keyboards, whistle, vocals (1986–88); John Skelton, flutes, whistles, bombardes, bodhrán (1986–present); Roger Wilson, fiddle, guitar, viola, vocals (1995–present).

Ged Foley's trademark slow renditions of popular bar songs, Chris Parkinson's rhythmic accordion with a Cajun twist, and John's Breton dance tunes on wooden flute interspersed with shocking in-your-face bombarde leads characterize this unusual English/Celtic band. They have so much drive and variety in their arrangements it is easy to forget that for many years they were a three-piece band. Foley played with both the Battlefield Band and Jez Lowe for several years before starting the House Band. John played in London with an Irish band called Shegui, which also played Breton material. His driving flute playing, European repertoire, and dry wit were a natural addition to Foley and Parkinson. Foley and Skelton have married Americans and now live in the States. Parkinson comes over to tour and teach with the band at least every other year. On more recent releases the House Band has added Mark Hellenberg on bodhrán and dumbek. Continually developing new material, they seem to come out with a new CD every couple of years. In the musical chairs of Irish bands, Foley can now also be found playing with and producing Patrick Street's latest endeavors.

what to buy: *Another Setting* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. House Band) has the addition of Roger Wilson on fiddle. "Jig-jazz," as the title implies, stretches the concept of "jig" into a



lighthearted, contemporary context. In good humor, there are echoes of Jamaica's Jolly Boys on " African Marketplace." This CD would be remiss without Ged singing a mellow Irish bar song. In this case, "Rocky Road to Dublin" takes on an ominous overtone in this sober rendition.

what to buy next: *Rockall* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996) is named after a desolate rock island north of the Hebrides that is associated with the BBC Shipping Forecast. Much of the music is from the north of England and on maritime topics. The band includes two moving songs about dying industries. There is a brilliant transition from "The Flat Cap," an unusual 3/2 English piece, into "Sgean Dhu," an old Scots 6/8 jig. The album ends with a spirited, contemporary Breton bagad (pipe band) march. *Stonetown* ♪♪♪♪½ (Harbourtown/Green Linnet, 1991) received the British Retailers Association's award for the Best Folk Album of 1992. *Groundwork* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. House Band, David Kenny) is a partial compilation of the House Band's first two recordings—*The House Band* ♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1985, prod. House Band, David Kenny) and *Pacific* ♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1987, prod. House Band, David Kenny). Both of the original recordings are out of print.

the rest:
Word of Mouth ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1989)

worth searching for: John Skelton's recordings with the band Shegui, *All around the World* (Green Linnet) and *In the Wind* (Highway, 1984) are worth searching out. Chris Parkinson also has some obscure solo recordings he has produced himself.

influences:
◀◀ Battlefield Band, Shegui, Blowzabella, Kornog
▶▶ Rankin Family, Arcady

Karen Ashbrook

Son House

Born Eddie James House Jr., March 21, 1902, in Clarksdale, MS. Died October 19, 1988, in Detroit, MI.

One of the greatest exponents of Mississippi Delta blues was Son House. A sharecropper, House taught himself to play guitar, developing a highly dramatic slide guitar style. He traveled to Grafton, Wisconsin, in May of 1930 with his partner, Willie Brown, and recorded for Paramount. Three 78s were issued, which featured slashing slide guitar, dark, moaning vocals, and walking bass lines. House would become an early inspiration to Robert Johnson. Although he was one of the most popular bluesmen in the Delta, he wouldn't record again until 1942 when Alan Lomax taped him for the Library of Congress. Around this time, House took a job as a railway porter, moved to Rochester, New York, and forgot about music. However, House's rediscovery in 1964 helped fuel the first blues boom, and he made a courageous comeback. Although he hadn't picked up the guitar in nearly two decades, he quickly redeveloped his technique. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he recorded and toured extensively, entertaining audiences with his music and stories.

what to buy: *Son House and the Great Delta Blues Singers 1928–30* ♪♪♪♪½ (Document, 1994) includes the haunting Paramount sides as well as tracks by Willie Brown and Rube Lacey, among others. House rarely sounded better than on *Delta Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Biograph, 1991, prod. Arnold S. Caplin), which includes the Library of Congress field recordings from 1941 and 1942. Although House hadn't been in a recording studio in 35 years, he mustered all of his power on *Death Letter Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Edsel, 1965, prod. Alan Wilson), proving he was still a master of the Delta blues. Consisting of 1970 recordings, *Delta Blues and Spirituals* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995) has House accompanied by Alan Wilson on guitar and harmonica.

what to buy next: *At Home 1969* ♪♪♪♪½ (Document, 1969) contains several of the songs, monologues, and *a cappella* vocals House used in his performances.

the rest:
Father of the Delta Blues: The Complete 1965 Sessions (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)
Oberlin College Concert ♪♪½ (King Bee, 1993)
In Concert (Magnum America, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Charley Patton, Willie Brown, Willie Wilson
▶▶ Skip James, Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Elmore James, Alan Wilson, John Mooney

Jeff Hannusch

Cisco Houston

Born Gilbert Vandine Houston, August 18, 1918, in Wilmington, DE. Died April 29, 1961, in San Bernardino, CA.

A contemporary of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, Cisco Houston somehow survived during the Depression as a traveling minstrel. He later found fame on the college and folk-club circuit and as a member of the Weavers. A significant influence

on the likes of Bob Dylan, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, and Tom Paxton, Houston was truly a master of the folk genre.

what to buy: Houston was one of the best pure vocalists of the folk movement, though that didn't always work to his advantage with fans of the era. It has helped his recordings stay fresh with time, however. His easygoing baritone makes the versions of "Dark as a Dungeon," "Saint James Infirmary," the humorous "The Cat Came Back," and more than two dozen other tunes on *The Folkways Years, 1944–1961* ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1994, compilation prod. Guy Logsdon) thoroughly enjoyable.

the rest:
Cisco Houston Sings Woody Guthrie ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1989)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Tom Paxton, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Bob Dylan

Randall T. Cook

Ray Wylie Hubbard

Born November 13, 1946, in Soper, OK.

Ray Wylie Hubbard has been best remembered (saddled?) by his 1970s anthem, "Up against the Wall, Redneck Mother"—not that it has done him any real favors. The song linked him with Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, and Kris Kristofferson, but, unlike the outlaw triumvirate, Hubbard's boozin' and general lawlessness produced ill-fated (and out-of-print) albums coupled with years of inactivity. In the last decade, however, he put a cork in the bottle, experienced a musical rebirth of sorts, and returned to recording. Shrugging off the Nashville sound, Hubbard now favors acoustic fingerpicking and more comtemplative themes.

what to buy: *Loco Gringo's Lament* ♪♪♪½ (Dejadisc, 1994, prod. Lloyd Maines, Brian Hardin) finds a lean and confident Hubbard rambling through dusty tales of experience that clearly offer a more philosophical view than "Up against the Wall"—not that he can't still pen a bruiser like "Wanna Rock and Roll," in which he handles two-timers with clear adrenalin-pumping intent. Let's just say it involves knifeplay and leave it at that. *Dangerous Spirits* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1997, prod. Lloyd Maines, Brian Hardin) is another solid collection of Hubbard's world of gunfighters, wounded lovers, and resurrected souls. While he can get a bit florid on the love tunes, his redemptive outlaw tales have gritty authenticity. It cements the notion that Hubbard's return is more than a passing shot.

what to buy next: Initially self released in 1993, *Lost Train of Thought* ♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1995, prod. Ray Wylie Hubbard) is a hopeful, if not slightly tentative prelude of things to come. It's nowhere near as stripped down and saddle weary, but Hubbard emerges as a changed man with new tales to tell.

influences:
◀◀ Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Jerry Jeff Walker, Townes Van Zandt
▶▶ Steve Earle, Bill Morrissey

Allan Orski

Hui Ohana /Ledward Kaapana

Formed 1970s, in HI. Disbanded c. 1990.

Ledward Kaapana (born 1948, in HI), guitar, vocals; Nedward Kaapana (born 1948, in HI), bass, vocals; Dennis Pavao, vocals, rhythm guitar.

"Hui Ohana" is Hawaiian for "family group," a fitting name for a trio consisting of a set of twins and their cousin. The group was one of the most successful of Hawaii's local groups during the '70s and '80s. The group recorded 14 albums before disbanding around 1990, though only a handful are still available—and then only after diligent searching.When Hui Ohana disbanded, guitarist Ledward Kaapana joined another group called I Kona, with which he recorded five albums. All three members of Hui Ohana have gone on to record solo albums, though Ledward's 1994 album for Dancing Cat is the only one to receive significant national distribution.

what to buy: Though it's atypical of the Hui Ohana sound, Ledward Kaapana's solo album *Led Live Solo* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1994, prod. George Winston) is certainly the easiest album by any member of this group to find on the mainland. Recorded at an intimate venue, the album features not only Kaapana's wonderful guitar playing, but also his yodeling and informative between-song patter.

what to buy next: Hui Ohana's sound is marked by Ledward's facile picking—usually on electric guitar—and his cousin Dennis Pavao's ethereal falsetto. *Hui Ohana* ♪♪♪ (Paradise, 1987) was a reunion album recorded in 1987 and serves as a fine introduction to the group's Hawaiian pop sound. Perhaps it makes sense because of Hui Ohana's falsetto trio harmonies, but the title for *Live—Tahiti Come on Over* ♪♪½ (Paradise, 1989, prod. Tom Moffatt) comes from a Bee Gees tune. The group

hundred watt smile

also arranges "Stars and Stripes Forever" Hawaiian style, though elsewhere they settle into a more traditional sound on this live date from 1988.

the rest:
Volume I—Best of Hui Ohana ♪♪♪ (Lehua, 1997)
Volume II—Best of Hui Ohana ♪♪♪ (Lehua, 1997)

worth searching for: *Hawaiian Style Guitars* ♪♪♪ (Lehua, 1997, prod. Bill Murata, Charles Bud Dant) features alternating tracks by Hui Ohana and steel-guitar master Jerry Byrd.

influences:
◀◀ Fred Punahoa, Gabby Pahinui, Sonny Chillingworth
▶▶ George Kuo, Ozzie Kotani

Brian Mansfield

Hundred Watt Smile

See: Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Michael Hurley

Born December 20, 1941, in Bucks County, PA.

Michael Hurley is blessed with a rare and disarming quality one might associate with that of a skilled tailor: he makes things cut in an irregular pattern fit comfortably. Another way of putting it: Hurley makes the offbeat seem commonplace. Hanging out in Greenwich Village during the early '60s folk boom, the promising Pennsylvanian's progress was delayed due to health problems. He did, however, record for Folkways in 1964. Around that period, he moved in with Peter Stampfel, joining teen pals Robin Remailey and Steve Weber, a member of the New York City conceptual folk troupe the Holy Modal Rounders and a musical and spiritual kindred spirit. (Stampfel later fittingly characterized the Rounders as a "really bent traditional band"; Hurley could well be called a really bent folksinger.) Another companion from his teen years, Jessie Colin Young of the Youngbloods, brought Hurley to the Youngbloods' Warner Bros. subsidiary, Raccoon, during the early '70s; he recorded two LPs—*Armchair Boogie* and *Hi-Fi Snock Uptown*—for the imprint. In 1976 he linked up with an assortment of like-minded loons to cut *Have Moicy* for Rounder Records. The LP, on which Hurley shares billing with Stampfel, Jeffrey Frederick, and the Holy Modal Rounders, has become a modern folk touchstone, earning a rare A+ rating from *Village Voice* critic Robert Christgau, who credited the motley crew with "renewing the concept of American folk music as a bizarre apotheosis of the post-hippie estate." Hurley recorded two albums for Rounder—1977's *Long Journey* and 1980's *Snockgrass*. During the '80s, he made his living selling his cassettes and illustrated storybooks through his mail-order business, Bellemeade Phonics. His artwork also developed a devoted following. Hurley reemerged as a recording artist in 1995 with the KOCH title *WolfWays*, an assortment of new and old recordings.

what to buy: *WolfWays* ♪♪♪♪ (KOCH, 1994, prod. Ed Friedland, John Jordan, Gideon Freudmann, Gus Ziesing) was conceived as a primer for European folk fans. Given Hurley's rather limited following, however, it's also an apt intro for most Yanks. In addition to three new songs, *WolfWays* is fleshed out with four ditties from an out-of-print 1986 album called *Watertower* and re-recordings of a half-dozen old Hurley faves.

what to buy next: *Snockgrass* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980/1997, prod. Kornbread) is a very likable, very whimsical 18-song collection. The CD includes two selections not included on the original CD, including an alternate take of Hurley's classic "Sweet Lucy." As with his best work, *Snockgrass* is informed with folk familiarity yet is as idiosyncratic and unconstrained as its creator.

solo outings:
Michael Hurley, Unholy Modal Rounders, Jeffrey Frederick & the Clamtones:
Have Moicy! ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976/1991)

influences:
◀◀ Holy Modal Rounders, Peter Stampfel
▶▶ Ed's Redeeming Qualities, Eugene Chadbourne

Steven Stolder

Mississippi John Hurt

Born John Smith Hurt, July 3, 1893, in Teoc, MS. Died November 2, 1966, in Grenada, MS.

It reads like a fairy tale or a Hollywood script: "Ardent blues lover uses a song lyric to track down long-lost, thought-to-be-dead musician whose only recordings were 35 years past and who had since worked as a farm laborer. 'Rediscovered' musician takes folk world by storm." Truth is indeed stranger than fiction. In 1963 young blues enthusiast Tom Hoskins found Mississippi John Hurt in Avalon, Mississippi, a city Hurt had immortalized in "Avalon Blues," one of 13 songs Hurt recorded in 1928 for the OKeh label. Singer/songwriter/guitarist Hurt's return was marked by a triumphant appearance at the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival. He became the most celebrated of the rediscovered 1960s folk artists, a star at age 71. He moved his family from Mississippi to Washington, D.C., to take advantage of op-

portunities to play festivals and coffeehouses across the United States and Canada. He moved back to Mississippi shortly before his death in 1966. Hurt played gentle, folksy ballads and blues tunes with an even fingerpicking style and a friendly, front-porch demeanor. His guitar technique sounds deceptively simple, but Hurt possessed a smooth, rolling style characterized by a challenging combination of "constant bass" work with his thumb and an ever-present melodic line on top. His work remains a litmus test for fingerpicking acoustic guitar players and a unique pleasure for blues fans.

what to buy: There are no bad John Hurt albums. If you're starting from scratch, here's a recommended order: *Avalon Blues: The Complete 1928 OKeh Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1996, prod. Lawrence Cohn) includes the definitive, essential 1928 material mentioned above, digitally remastered and packaged with tender, loving care and attention to detail, including excellent liner notes and a reproduction of the OKeh label on the CD itself. Well done. The same recordings are available, in a different song sequence, on *1928 Sessions* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1990, prod. Nick Perls). The Yazoo liner notes and packaging are also excellent, but the recordings are noisier than those on the Columbia/Legacy release. *The Best of Mississippi John Hurt* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1987, prod. Bob Scherl) captures Hurt in an hour of superb 1965 live performance, demonstrating his affable command of enraptured folk audiences.

what to buy next: *Avalon Blues 1963* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Richard Spottswood, Thomas Hoskins) and *Worried Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Richard Spottswood, Thomas Hoskins) present Hurt's first recordings after rediscovery. The liner notes, duplicated on both CDs, are the best available for purposes of historical reference. One gripe: *Avalon Blues* is barely 30 minutes long; *Worried Blues* 40 minutes. Why aren't they on one CD? *Memorial Anthology* ♪♪♪♪ (Genes, 1993, prod. Gene Rosenthal) is a two-CD live set that clocks in at more than two hours. Most of the performances come from the Ontario Place coffeehouse in Washington in 1964, but the release also includes a 30-minute Hurt interview conducted by Pete Seeger followed by Hurt performing a handful of songs for Seeger. The performances are solid, well-recorded, and nicely packaged with a 16-page booklet. *Today!* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1987, prod. Patrick Sky) covers much of the same turf as the 1963 sessions released on Rounder, but the sound is not quite as crisp as the Rounder material.

the rest:
The Immortal Mississippi John Hurt ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967)
Last Sessions ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1972)
Satisfying Blues ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1995)
Legend N/A (Rounder, 1998)

worth searching for: The Canadian LP *Mississippi John Hurt: Volume One of a Legacy* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel) features excellent studio performances of tunes unavailable on the CDs listed above, such as "See See Rider" and "Do Lord Remember Me."

influences:
Chris Smither, John Fahey, Leo Kottke, Bob Dylan, Fred Neil, Dave Van Ronk

Bryan Powell

Ashley Hutchings /The Albion Band

Born January 26,1945, in Southgate, Middlesex, England.

Elton John was recently knighted. If the British are serious about honoring musical heroes, Ashley Hutchings's time is long overdue. No one person has done more to re-invigorate and popularize English folk traditions than "The Guv'nor." Like many teens of his generation, Hutchings fancied himself a rock 'n' roll star and even led a series of rock 'n' roll bands in the mid-1960s. But his initial claim to fame would come as bassist with folk-rock pioneers Fairport Convention. It was during his later Fairport days that he discovered traditional music, and he was one of the driving forces behind Fairport's landmark *Liege and Lief* set, one of the first recordings to blend Anglo-Celtic folk music with rock. That project altered Hutchings's career forever. He left Fairport in 1969 to more seriously pursue the goal of revitalizing traditional music, and his first step on this career path was the formation of Steeleye Span, with whom he recorded three albums. Since leaving Steeleye Span in 1971, Hutchings has concentrated on expanding his vision of a specifically English-rooted, contemporary music by leading the numerous incarnations of the Albion Band (the Albion Country Band, the Albion Dance Band), and producing a series of one-time-only projects such as *Morris On* (new arrangements of morris dance tunes), *The Compleat Dancing Master* (new arrangements of different kinds of dance tunes with readings), and even a romantic song cycle—*By Gloucester Docks I Sat Down and Wept—A Love Story*. Hutchings even starred in a one-man production called *An Evening with Cecil Sharp and Ashley Hutchings* in which he portrayed himself and the famed song researcher. He has amassed quite a collection of tapes from all of his projects and this archival material has begun to see the light of day as the series of "The Guv'nor" collections.

3/8/6 *frank hutchison*

At the 1997 Cropredy festival, Hutchings narrated the Fairport Convention "oldies" set and led the opening number, his song "Wings," which looks back fondly on the growth of English folk-rock. "Wings" is available on *The Guv'nor Volume IV* and the Cropredy performance featuring that song and several others by old and new members of Fairport Convention was scheduled to be released as an album in the spring of 1998.

what to buy: Phil Pickett's collection of "early music" instruments added a distinctive color to the arrangements of traditional dance tunes featured on *The Prospect before Us* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMI/Harvest, 1976/Hannibal, 1996, prod. Ashley Hutchings, Simon Nicol). *Rise up like the Sun* ♪♪♪♪♪ (EMJ/Harvest 1978, prod. Joe Boyd, John Tams), credited to the Albion Band, was not as dance oriented, and John Tams's role in the band had become much more prominent. He served as co-producer, did a lot of the lead singing, and brought in many of the songs. Among the Albion classics included on this album are: "Ragged Heroes" (a Tams composition), "Poor Old Horse," and Richard Thompson's "Time to Ring Some Changes."

what to buy next: *Battle of the Field* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1976, prod. John Wood) features a never to be duplicated line-up: Hutchings, Martin Carthy, John Kirkpatrick, Sue Harris, and Roger Swallow. *Twangin' n' a-Traddin* ♪♪♪♪ (Wildcat, 1995, prod. Ashley Hutchings), something completely different, was credited to a unit called the Ashley Hutchings Big Beat Combo. It's an unlikely pairing of morris and surf music—but who could resist an album that (1) credits Richard Thompson with playing electric guitar and pennywhistle and (2) includes a swingin' little tune called "Twistin' Welsh Girls"? It's a fitting reminder that Hutchings, now revered as a traditionalist, started out as a rock and rollin' Duane Eddy fan.

best of the rest:

(With the Albion Band) *Give Me a Saddle, I'll Trade You a Car* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1989)

(With the Albion Band) *In Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (Windsong, 1993)

(With the Albion Band) *Acousticity* ♪♪♪♪ (HTD, 1993)

(With the Ashley Hutchings Dance Band) *A Batter Pudding for John Keats* ♪♪♪♪ (HTD, 1996)

worth searching for: *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Charisma, 1979), credited to Keith Dewhurst and the Albion Band, contains music (and some spoken excerpts) from the stage production. The core of the Albion line-up involved—including John Tams—went on to form the magnificent Home Service.

influences:

◀◀ Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Cecil Sharp, Mr. Fox

▶▶ Home Service, Oyster Band, New St. George

see also: *Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Richard Thompson, Shirley Collins*

Pamela Murray Winters and Ken Roseman

Frank Hutchison

Born March 3, 1897, in Logan, WV. Died November 9, 1945, in Columbus, OH.

Hillbilly blues guitarist Frank Hutchison grew up in the coal mining regions of West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. In addition to performing square dance tunes on the harmonica, blackface minstrel routines, and Anglo-American ballads, he developed a taste for blues guitar, a style he apparently learned from a local black guitarist named Bill Hunt. Hunt reportedly inspired Hutchison to play slide guitar, re-tuning the instrument and then playing flat on his lap. In September 1926, Hutchison traveled to New York City to record his first two sides. These sold well enough for OKeh Records to continue to record him for the following four years; his last session was in 1929. After the Great Depression put an end to his recording career, Hutchison ran a grocery store in Lake, West Virginia. He died of liver cancer in 1945.

what to buy: Frank Hutchison is required listening for anyone with a serious interest in old-time country guitar. Hutchison's finest sides have been reissued on *Volume I 1926–1929* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1997). Here are some of old-time country music's most enduring and powerful guitar standards: "Train That Carried My Girl from Town" (later a staple of Doc Watson's repertoire), "Coney Isle" (reincarnated by Cowboy Copas as "Alabam"), and the first recording of what was to become one of the most famous of American folk songs, "Stackalee." The latter song had an extremely far-reaching influence as a result of its inclusion on *The Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music*; it entered the repertoire of seminal folk music figures such as Bob Dylan, who recorded it on *World Gone Wrong*. Perhaps most unusual and beautiful from *Volume I* are the mellifluous slide guitar pieces, particularly "Worried Blues." The remaining sides from Hutchison's final 1929 session can be found on *Old-Time Music from West Virginia* ♪♪♪ (Document, 1997). Both volumes contain a certain amount of duplication, since Hutchison recorded his most popular numbers several times, sometimes under the identical title, often changing the words slightly and renaming the song. Thus, we get several different versions of "Stackalee" (one instrumental, the other with lyrics); "Train That Carried

My Girl from Town" was also recorded twice. "Coney Isle" was recycled a year later as "Back in My Home Town," and the melody was used yet again the following year in the two-part "Johnny and Jane."

influences:

◀◀ Mississippi John Hurt, Sam McGee, Fiddlin' John Carson

▶▶ New Lost City Ramblers, Doc Watson, Ry Cooder, Bob Dylan

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Walter Hyatt /Uncle Walt's Band

Born October 25, 1949, in Spartanburg, SC. Died May 11, 1996, in FL.

In 1990 Lyle Lovett persuaded MCA to sign soulful Austin, Texas, crooner Walter Hyatt and produced his first solo album, the gorgeous *King Tears*. It seemed like a strange way to wield his newfound clout, but Lovett had some debts to repay. As the leader of the regionally revered Uncle Walt's Band—a genre-defying, harmony-laden acoustic trio featuring David Ball and Champ Hood—Hyatt often invited the young Lovett to open the group's Texas A&M campus concerts during the late 1970s. Lovett's esoteric blend of Texas swing, gospel, folk, and jazz clearly stems from Hyatt's daring vision, which flew in the face of Nashville convention and Austin's then-thriving Jerry Jeff Walker–led "Cosmic Cowboy" scene. Signing with Sugar Hill in 1993, Hyatt started drifting back to his Western swing roots on *Music Town*. He was benefiting from renewed interest in his music via Sugar Hill reissues of his influential 1974–82 recordings with Uncle Walt's Band and had started touring with a new band called King Tears when he was killed in the 1996 ValuJet crash in the Florida Everglades.

what to buy: Reissued at Lovett's request after Hyatt's death, the romantic *King Tears* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1990/1996, prod. Lyle Lovett) is an exquisite collection of gentle swing numbers and jazz-tinged ballads highlighted by the swaying "Tell Me Baby" and a faithful take on Ray Charles's "Ruby." This is the album Harry Connick Jr. always wanted to make.

what to buy next: Culled from three Uncle Walt's Band releases recorded between 1979 and 1982, *An American in Texas Revisited* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. various) contains the trio's liveliest music, partly the result of a temporary breakup that gave each member an opportunity to explore other styles. Although the country influences abound, such Hyatt numbers as "Motor City Man," "Deeper Than Love," and "Desiree" also resonate with the melodic stamp of the *Rubber Soul*–era Beatles.

the rest:

The Girl on the Sunny Shore ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991)
Music Town ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993)

worth searching for: Lovett fans who own *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1989, prod. Lyle Lovett, Tony Brown, Billy Williams) can hear the influence and reunited voices of Uncle Walt's Band on the jazzy closing track, "Once Is Enough."

influences:

◀◀ Bob Wills, Django Reinhardt, Ray Charles, Beatles, Grateful Dead

▶▶ Lyle Lovett

David Okamoto

Ian & Sylvia /Ian Tyson /The Great Speckled Bird /Sylvia Fricker Tyson

Formed 1959, in Toronto, Canada. Disbanded 1972.

Ian Tyson (born September 25, 1933, in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada); Sylvia Fricker Tyson (born September 19, 1940, in Chatham, Ontario, Canada).

British Columbia–born singer-songwriter Ian Tyson has become the musical voice of the American Cowboy and the Old West. But Tyson initially attracted acclaim with traditional Canadian folk ballads and covers of American folk tunes in a duo, Ian & Sylvia, that he shared with ex-wife Sylvia Fricker Tyson during the 1960s and early 1970s. Despite their heavily acoustic sound, which often featured Spike Lee's father, Bill, on upright bass, the duo played a major role in the evolution of folk-rooted rock and roll. Tyson, who grew up on a Canadian farm, traveled through western Canada and worked a variety of jobs, including performing on the rodeo circuit. An injury at the age of 19 convinced him to seek a different venture. While studying at the Vancouver School of Art, he began performing with a band, the

Sensational Stripes. Tyson and Fricker first met at a Toronto folk club in 1959, where Tyson was performing folk songs and hosting an open mic every Wednesday night. Accompanying herself on mando-cello, a cross between a guitar and a mandolin, Fricker, whose mother was a music teacher, organist, and church choir director, sang with a lovely high vibrato voice that caught Tyson's attention. Before long, the two were singing and playing music together. They were married in 1966. Moving to New York's Greenwich Village in 1961, the duo became swept up by the then-thriving folk music scene. When favorable word reached the ears of Bob Dylan's manager, Albert Grossman, Ian and Sylvia were signed to a management deal. Although their self-titled 1962 debut album featured interpretations of traditional songs, Ian and Sylvia began to showcase their songwriting skills on their subsequent recordings. Tyson's "Four Strong Winds" was the title track of their second album, in 1962, while Fricker's "You Were on My Mind," which became a pop-folk hit for the We Five, was featured on *Northern Journey* two years later. As the 1960s faded into the '70s, Ian and Sylvia expanded into a Nashville-influenced country band, the Great Speckled Bird. Their first full-band effort, *Great Speckled Bird* was produced by Todd Rundgren in 1972. When the band was dissolved, it put a further strain on Tyson and Fricker's marriage; they were divorced the following year. Tyson settled on his 160-acre T-Bar-Y ranch in Longview, Alberta, and balanced work as a cowboy with his career as a songwriter. His influential album of cowboy songs, *Cowboyography*, was released in 1985. The 1996 album, *All the Good 'Uns*, is a compilation of memorable tracks from his six albums of traditional and original cowboy songs. Fricker has recorded three solo albums—*Woman's World*, produced by her former husband, in 1975, *You Were on My Mind* in 1990, and *Gypsy Cadillac* in 1992.

what to buy: *All the Good 'Uns* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1996, prod. Ian Tyson, Adrian Chornowol, Louis Sedmark, Jim Rooney, Doug Riley) reprises 19 tracks from Tyson's post–Ian and Sylvia solo recordings of cowboy-related songs.

what to buy next: Recorded during their 1963 and 1965 appearances at the Newport Folk Festival, *Live at Newport* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1994, prod. Jeff Zaraya) documents the depth of Ian and Sylvia's early repertoire and the intimacy and vocal harmonies of their concert performances. In addition to tradition-rooted versions of Canadian folk songs—"Un Canadian Errant" and "V'la L'Bon Vent"—the duo showcase their songwriting talents with eight original tunes, including Ian's "Someday Soon," "Four Strong Winds," and Sylvia's "You Were on My Mind."

the rest:
Ian and Sylvia ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1962)
Four Strong Winds ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964)
Northern Journey ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1964)
Early Morning Rain ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1965)
Play One More ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1966)
So Much for Dreaming ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
Lovin' Sound ♪♪ (MGM, 1967)
Best of Ian and Sylvia ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968)
Nashville ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)
Full Circle ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)

solo outings:
Sylvia Fricker Tyson :
Woman's World ♪♪ (Capitol, 1975)
You Were on My Mind ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1990)
Gypsy Cadillac ♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1992)

Great Speckled Bird:
Great Speckled Bird ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1972)

influences:
Canadian folk music, Tom Paxton, Bob Dylan, Peter, Paul & Mary

Byrds, Band, Tom Russell, Riders in the Sky, Joni Mitchell, Gordon Lightfoot

see also: *Ian Tyson*

Craig Harris

Janis Ian

Born Janis Eddy Fink, May 7, 1951, in New York, NY.

Janis Ian was the Tiffany and Debbie Gibson of her time, with a crucial difference: her music was good, and serious. Ian was just 15 when she courted controversy with "Society's Child," her searing observation about interracial romance that was banned by some radio stations but finally won respect when Leonard Bernstein invited her to perform it on a 1967 TV special he hosted about rock. But the rest of Ian's career has been somewhat fitful, marked as much by commercial slumps and prolonged absences as by hits. She did return to the charts in 1975 with her hit "At Seventeen," but not long after that she began a 12-year break from recording. When she returned, Ian came out, and though her subsequent albums have not launched hits, they have been among the most moving and resonant of her career.

what to buy: On *Between the Lines* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1975), "At Seventeen" is only one of an album full of luminous, well-

crafted songs. *Breaking Silence* ♪♪♪♪ (Morgan Creek, 1993, prod. Janis Ian, Jeff Balding) is a bold return to recording on which Ian, never one to scrimp on her emotions, is even more frank and pointed.

what to buy next: Seek out *Society's Child: The Verve Recordings* ♪♪♪ (Polydor/Chronicles, 1995, prod. various) because you have to have "Society's Child," although this two-disc set would have been better as a more judiciously selected single.

what to avoid: *Present Company* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1971/One Way, 1994) is a transitional effort between Ian's earnest teenage recordings and her more deeply rooted work of the mid-70s, an awkward phase in anybody's life, much less a recording artist.

the rest:
Revenge ♪♪♪½ (Beacon, 1995)

worth searching for: *Between the Lines*' predecessor, *Stars* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974), marked a new maturity in Ian's music. It also includes "Jesse," which was a hit for Roberta Flack.

influences:
◀◀ Joan Baez, Rev. Gary Davis, Ronnie Gilbert
▶▶ Suzanne Vega, Tracy Chapman, Shawn Colvin

Gary Graff

Rob Ickes

See: Blue Highway

The Ill-Mo Boys

See: Geoff Seitz

Incredible String Band

Formed 1966, in Glasgow, Scotland. Disbanded 1974.

Robin Williamson, vocals, guitars, etc.; Mike Heron, vocals, guitar, sitar, etc.; Clive Palmer, guitar, banjo, vocals (1966); Christina "Licorice" McKenna, vocals, organ (1968–72); Rose Simpson, vocals, bass, percussion, violin (1968–71); Janet Shankerman, background vocals (1970); Pete Grant, banjo (1970); Greg Hart, sitar (1970); Malcolm Le Maistre, keyboards, bass, vocals (1971–74); Gerald Dott, clarinet, saxophone (1971–73); Stan Lee, bass (1972–74); Jack Ingram, drums (1972–73); John Gilston, drums (1973–74).

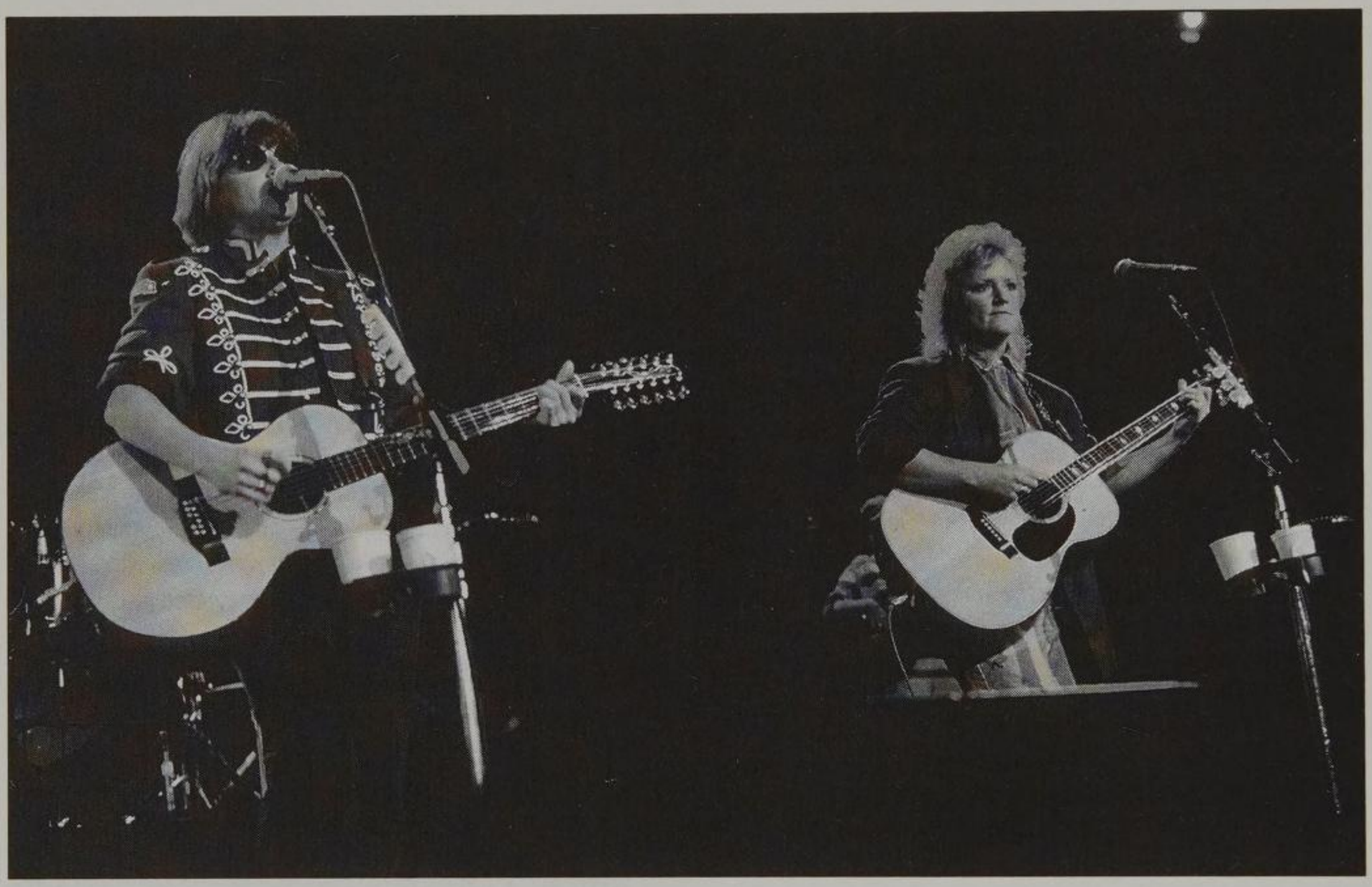
The Incredible String Band's reputation has been in ascendancy of late in part thanks to an extensive mid-'90s reissue program by Rykodisc via its Hannibal imprint. In its time, ISB ranked with the most curious anglo folk-rock outfits. They were, observed producer Joe Boyd, the first artists to connect folk music and psychedelia. Founders Robin Williamson and Clive Palmer began working together as a duo in 1965, performing regularly at Palmer's Incredible Folk Club. They soon added multi-instrumentalist/vocalist Mike Heron and appropriated Palmer's club's name for their ensemble. The trio recorded a debut LP in 1966, then set off to explore the world separately, Palmer venturing to Afghanistan while Williamson traveled to Monaco. When the threesome returned to Scotland, Palmer opted out of the group. Williamson and Heron recorded a second album, *The 5000 Spirits or the Layers of the Onion*, in 1968. It put the group in the British top 10. After releasing 1968's *The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter*, Williamson and Huron's girlfriends, Christina "Licorice" McKenna and Rose Simpson, respectively, signed on. Over the next half-dozen years, the band went through myriad personnel changes as it floated into hippie mysticism. The recorded yield, consequently, became less appealing. Heron released his solo debut, *Smiling Men with Bad Reputations*, on Elektra in 1971; the following year, Williamson tried his hand as a solo recording artist, releasing *Myrrh* on Reprise. By mid-decade, they dissolved the group.

what to buy: *The 5000 Spirits or the Layers of the Onion* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1967/Hannibal, 1994, prod. Joe Boyd) is an expert melding of a tremendous range of influences (including bits nicked from Indian, blues, African, and country-western sources) into a psychedelic-folk tapestry. The group was blessed with two distinctive frontmen in Williamson and Heron. Their instrumental versatility and Boyd's adroit production elevate *The 5000 Spirits* above the Brit-folk pack.

what to buy next: *The Incredible String Band* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966/Hannibal, 1994, prod. Joe Boyd) features material by all three founding members. Of a more traditional mind than that which followed, *ISB*'s spry appeal remains intact more than three decades after its appearance.

the rest:
The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1968/Hannibal, 1994)
Wee Tam & the Big Huge ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1968/Hannibal, 1994)
Changing Horses ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1969/Hannibal 1994)
I Looked Up ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1970/Hannibal, 1994)

worth searching for: *The Hannibal Sampler* ♪♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1994) is a nifty promo-only release that's worth hunting down in used-CD racks. It offers a discriminating assortment of choice tracks, including Williamson's "First Girl I Loved" and Heron's "Air."



The Indigo Girls: Amy Ray (l) and Emily Saliers **(© Ken Settle)**

influences:

◀◀ Pentangle, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Donovan

▶▶ Yo La Tengo

Steven Stolder

Indigo Girls

Formed 1984, in Decatur, GA.

Amy Ray, guitar and vocals; Emily Saliers, guitar and vocals.

Amy Ray and Emily Saliers easily won over sensitive folkies and alternative rockers alike with their 1989 major-label debut by baring their souls where others merely beat on their chests. Fusing biblical imagery, feminist integrity, and poetic pretensions, the Atlanta duo risked coming across as angstful overachievers, but their unflagging earnestness and soaring harmonies made an indelible impression. Since then, they have struggled to harness the power of their voices and their convictions: For every shimmering pop triumph like "Hammer and a Nail" or "Power of Two" there's a heavy-handed "The Girl with the Weight of the World in Her Hands" or "You and Me of 10,000 Wars." For every tasteful cover of Bob Dylan's "All along the Watchtower" or Elton John's "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters," there's an overwrought take on Dire Straits' "Romeo and Juliet" and Buffy Sainte-Marie's "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee." But 1994's hard-rocking *Swamp Ophelia* hit the emotional and artistic mark, proving that with each album, Saliers and Ray are indeed getting closer to fine.

what to buy: *Indigo Girls* ♪♪♪♪♩ (Epic, 1989, prod. Scott Litt) boasts help from R.E.M. and Hothouse Flowers, who lend an edge to "Closer to Fine," "Kid Fears," and "Tried to Be True." *Swamp Ophelia* ♪♪♪♪♩ (Epic, 1994, prod. Peter Collins) expands the duo's sound with horns, mandolins, African drums, accordions, and other textures that for once are conducive, not cosmetic.

what to buy next: The range of styles covered in the Indigo Girls' live shows is documented on the sprawling two-CD *1200*

Curfews ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1995, prod. Indigo Girls, Russell Carter), but the intensity is stronger on the eight-song *Back on the Bus Y'All* ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1991, prod. Timothy R. Powell), which also features the Ellen James Society.

what to avoid: *Strange Fire* ♪♪ (Epic, 1989, prod. John Keane), a reissue of the Indigo's 1987 indie debut, is burdened by an underdeveloped vision and tentative vocals. Their idea of a statement at the time was covering the Youngbloods' "Get Together."

the rest:
Nomads Indians Saints ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1990)
Rites of Passage ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1992)
Shaming of the Sun ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1997)

worth searching for: *Jesus Christ Superstar: A Resurrection* ♪♪♪½ (Daemon/Long Play, 1994, prod. Michael Lorant) is a rocking but uneven update of the Andrew Lloyd Webber–Tim Rice musical featuring Ray as Jesus Christ and Saliers as Mary Magdalene. Their duets on "Everything's Alright" and "What's the Buzz" top Saliers's shaky "I Don't Know How to Love Him."

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, R.E.M., Simon & Garfunkel
▶▶ Story, disappear fear

David Okamoto

Irish Rovers

Formed 1964, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Jimmy Ferguson (died October 8, 1997), vocals; Joe Millar, accordion, bass; Wilcil McDowell, accordion; Will Millar, vocals, guitar, banjo (1964–present); Wallace Hood, banjo, mandolin, whistle vocals; John Reynolds, banjo; George Millar, guitar; Kevin McKeown, percussion.

The Irish Rovers have been entertaining audiences for more than 30 years with their blend of Celtic folk, barroom novelties, and poignant parables. The Rovers' exuberant, untutored sound bolsters their image as a group of friends who travel the countryside sharing stories, jokes, and songs with their extended family of fans and admirers. The Rovers allow each individual member a moment in the spotlight. Their live show is a guaranteed good time for young and old alike. After moving to Canada from Northern Ireland, brothers George and Will Millar saw the Clancy Brothers with Tommy Makem on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and were inspired to start their own group. After scuffling in the nascent Celtic scene for a few years, they signed with Decca Records in 1967. The following year they scored their lone Top 10 U.S. hit with the Shel Silverstein–penned classic "The Unicorn," a mythical novelty that remains popular to this day. Several lesser hits followed, such as "Whiskey on a Sunday," "The Puppet Song," "The Biplane Evermore," "Lily the Pink," and "Did She Mention My Name," which were more popular in Canada than in the States, and which led to the Rovers starring in their own weekly TV variety show on CBC from 1971 through 1974. The group moved to Epic records in 1980, where their ode to alcoholic excess "Wasn't That a Party," reached Number 37 on the pop charts and the country music Top 10, and led to their last chart records "Mexican Girl," "Pain in My Past," and "No More Bread and Butter." Will Millar eventually left the group to be replaced by Wallace Hood from Pat's People and Kevin McKeown of Emerald Express. The Celtic music boom combined with the *Riverdance* craze has revived interest in the Irish Rovers in recent years, and the group has formed their own label where they have recorded new material as well as fresh versions of their classic hits. The death of Jimmy Ferguson (whose powerful vocal illuminates "Wasn't That a Party") temporarily shut down the group's activities, but the Irish Rovers planned to add a new member, and dedicated their entire 1998 world tour to their beloved late partner.

what to buy: All their early hits plus several fan favorites reside happily on *Irish Rovers' Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1981/1997, prod. various), a 20-track compilation.

what to buy next: The two-LPs-on-one-disc reissue *The First of the Irish Rovers/The Unicorn* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1980/1991, prod. various) gives you a lot of prime Rovers material in one budget offering. Nice.

what to avoid: The guys are in good voice and the production values are top-notch, but be forewarned: *The Irish Rovers' Gems* ♪♪♪ (Rovers Records, 1996, prod. Irish Rovers) features re-recordings of their best-known songs. The originals are classics.

the rest:
The Unicorn ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1971/1991)
The First of the Irish Rovers ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1971/1991)
The First of the Irish Rovers/The Unicorn ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1971/1996)
Years May Come & Years May Go ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1985/1993)
Celtic Collection: The Next 30 Years ♪♪♪½ (Rovers Records, 1995)
Ramblers & Gamblers ♪♪♪ (Carlton Sounds, 1997)

irish fiddle styles

While all Irish fiddlers play Irish traditional music, they may do so in very different ways, depending on their native district. These differences manifest themselves in various ways. Some have to do with specific fiddling technique, such as bowing, others with features of the music that may be common to other instruments, such as the preferred use of this or that ornament, others still with the repertoire being performed. The main Irish regional styles are, from north to south: Donegal, Sligo, Galway/Clare, Kerry/Cork. With some similarities to Scottish music, the music of Donegal fiddlers is fast-paced, played with insistent, short, single-note bow strokes, little or no swing, and a preference for bowed triplets over fingered ornaments. By contrast, Sligo fiddle music flows with a lilting swing and shows an emphasis on complex fingered ornaments and melodic flourishes. Further south, East Galway and East Clare are home to a strikingly different style of fiddle playing, slow paced and introspective, with an almost bluesy sound, locally called "the lonesome touch." The local fiddle tradition of the Southwest is most remarkable by its unique repertoire of polkas and slides (fast jigs) played for the local sets (dances). With the advent of better communications and of the mass media, regional styles have lost ground to a new hybrid form of playing. However, the recent commercial success of bands and players like Altan (Donegal) and Martin Hayes (East Clare) show that these regional styles have not entirely lost their appeal.

Philippe Varlet

worth searching for: For a jaunty good time seek out *Irish Rovers Live* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1972, prod. various), a solid set of laughs and great tunes in front of an enthusiastic live audience.

influences:

◀◀ Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, Dubliners

▶▶ Scaffold, Chieftains

Ken Burke

Irish Tradition /Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey

Formed 1975, in Washington, DC. Disbanded 1987.

Brendan Mulvihill (born July 12, 1954, in Northampton, England), fiddle; Billy McComiskey (born December 21, 1951, in New York, NY), button accordion; Andy O'Brien (born July 29, 1947, in Co. Kerry, Ireland), guitar, vocals.

Both as individuals and collectively, the members of the Irish Tradition stand out as some of the most talented and influential musicians in the recent history of Irish music. From their first appearance in 1975, the trio's technical virtuosity and great musical rapport created a surge of interest in Irish music in the Washington, D.C., area and led to the development of an outstanding local music scene. Some of the D.C.-area artists influenced, inspired, or taught by the Irish Tradition include Celtic Thunder, Maggie Sansone, Lisa Moscatiello, Grace Griffith, and Ceoltoiri, among many others. The group's two albums on Green Linnet records, both classics, were consistently that label's biggest sellers during its early years, and provided a base from which that now mighty label could expand to its present lofty heights. Finally, Brendan Mulvihill and Billy McComiskey, as teachers, have introduced new musicians to playing of the highest caliber, and have kept the standards for traditional music high in both Washington, D.C., and New York City.

Mulvihill is an explosive fiddler with tremendous power, grace, and sensitivity in his playing. Growing up in England and New York City, Brendan learned his music from his father, legendary fiddler and music teacher Martin Mulvihill, as well as from the many outstanding musicians he met in both New York and Birmingham, England. Mulvihill won the all-Ireland senior fiddle title in 1974, and moved to Washington, D.C., the following year. He has appeared all over the world, and has influenced many of today's top young musicians, including Eileen Ivers, Joannie Madden, and Natalie MacMaster. McComiskey is an incredibly talented accordionist with a deep sense of what makes traditional music and an incredible virtuosity on his instrument. While growing up in New York City, he learned his music from family members and from the great local box player Sean McGlynn. Billy won the all-Ireland in 1986 and has appeared all over the United States and Ireland as a solo performer and with his current group, Trian. He is a prolific composer of tunes and an outstanding teacher, having instructed or influenced performers as diverse as Celtic harpist Sue Richards, box players John Nolan, Colm Gannon, and Mary Rafferty, and piper Jerry O'Sullivan.

what to buy: The Irish Tradition's *The Corner House* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1978, prod. Mick Moloney) features some of the most beautiful note-for-note playing of Irish dance music ever recorded. Billy and Brendan had been playing together every night for years when they recorded this album and it shows in their tight, tasty duet playing. In addition to backing the other two on their virtuoso flights, Andy O'Brien contributes four sweet songs. Finally, the trio's setting of the song "The Dark-Eyed Sailor" shows how powerful and moving a simple song arrangement can be in the hands of master musicians.

what to buy next: McComiskey's *Makin' the Rounds* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1981 prod. Mick Moloney, Billy McComiskey) makes a very convincing case that the button accordion, in the right hands, can be as beautiful, expressive, and moving as any other instrument in traditional Irish music. Moving from tunes he learned in his youth from friends and heroes to his own compositions, many of which are now standards, Billy shows the past and present of Irish music. He rocks with the best of them on sets like "Leave My Way" and "The Chicago Reel," and brings a classical refinement to the slow set dance "Planxty Davis." This album is a tour-de-force of box playing. Mulvihill and Donna Long's *The Morning Dew* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Joe Wilson, Julia Olin) allows the musical genius to strut his stuff, ably backed by one of the finest piano players around today. Brendan's playing ranges from the ferocious to the elegant, and the sound is as good as any in Green Linnet's history.

the rest:
The Times We've Had ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1985)

solo outings:
Brendan Mulvihill:
The Flax in Bloom ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1979)

worth searching for: Mulvihill and Long's self-produced cassette, *The Steeplechase* ♪♪♪ (Steeplechase, 1990, prod. Donna Long, Brendan Mulvihill), was the first recording for the pair. The Irish Tradition's first recording, *Catchin' the Tune* (self-released, 1976, prod. Irish Tradition), is long out of print.

see also: *Trian*

influences:
◀◀ Martin Mulvihill, Paddy O'Brien, Andy McGann, Jack Coen
▶▶ Cherish the Ladies, Jerry O'Sullivan

Tony Ziselberger

Andy Irvine

Born June 14, 1942, in London, England.

Andy Irvine has the most bittersweet voice in Celtic music. It has that feel of Irish whiskey poured into a glass of hot tea with a couple of large dollops of sugar to sweeten it up. Whether he's singing his own compositions or his arrangements of traditional pieces, it just washes over you, hot and sweet, and then you feel that bite that lurks underneath. Later on you notice that he is a perfectionist, whether playing harmonica, mandolin, or the Irish bouzouki. Finally you'll notice that he is also an excellent songwriter and has written several tunes that seem to have become standards of Irish repertoire, most notably "West Coast of Clare." His impeccable taste and talent have made him the core of three important Irish groups: Sweeney's Men, Planxty, and Patrick Street. Born in London, Irvine was a child actor before developing an interest in jazz and classical music. Like many other musicians in the British Isles, it was through the skiffle music craze that he got interested in traditional music, particularly that of Woody Guthrie. By the early 1960s he was playing in the folk scene in Dublin where his first group, Sweeney's Men, was formed in 1966. The group made several recordings and lasted until he left for Eastern Europe during the turbulent summer of 1968. He spent over a year and half there, busking and absorbing the local music. The influence of that experience began to surface in the music of his next group, Planxty. That band first came together in 1972 while recording an album under Christy Moore's name. They rapidly became an extremely popular group, both in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe. The group lasted in one form or another until 1975, making several excellent recordings along the way. After Planxty, Irvine worked for a while with Paul Brady, with whom he made one highly acclaimed album and toured in Europe and the States. Shortly after that, he began to work with the musicians who comprise Patrick Street. While nowhere near the groundbreaking group Planxty, Patrick Street makes its mark with the extremely high-quality craftsmanship that it brings to traditional Irish music. Irvine's more adventurous side can be found in his solo efforts and his joint collaborations with Dick Gaughan, Davy Spillane, and others.

what to buy: *Andy Irvine & Paul Brady* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet, prod. Donal Lunny) might be the finest single record of Irish music available. These recordings were made after the demise of ground-breaking group Planxty, of which Irvine had been a founding member and Brady had joined as a replacement for Christy Moore. The arrangements here have a grittier sound than Planxty, with Kevin Burke's fiddle replacing

the role piper Liam O'Flynn played in the Planxty sound. There are more of the Balkan elements that Irvine had begun to introduce in Planxty, like the 7/8 break that transforms the middle of "The Plains of Kildare." Brady's innovative open-tuned guitar work is highlighted throughout, but nowhere like on his show-stopping "Arthur McBride." But the real magic of this record is the contrast between the voices of the two men. Irvine's bitter-sweet voice curls around songs like a fog while Brady's full-throated charge never sounded better than on this recording.

what to buy next: *Rude Awakening* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Bill Whelan) spotlights Irvine's songwriting, which is normally less visible in the more traditional settings like Patrick Street, where his instrumental prowess and singing of traditional songs is emphasized. This is a concept album, with the concept being that Irvine has selected his favorite heroes and anti-heroes to write about. His talent for setting traditional words and music in a contemporary context are still here, both in "James Connolly" and "Allan McLean," but his heroes are of a more international lot: Woody Guthrie, Raoul Wallenberg, and Zapata. The combination of topic and tradition is reminiscent of Dick Gaughan, someone with whom Irvine had recorded several years earlier.

the rest:

(With Dick Gaughan) *Parallel Lines* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1983/Appleseed, 1997)
(With Davy Spillane) *East Wind* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1991)
Corner Boys ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996)
Made in Cork ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997)

worth searching for: *Planxty* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1972, prod. Phil Coulter) was Planxty's first record and worth seeking for several reasons. First, because it was a ground breaking record and well worth the search just for that reason, but secondly because it has Irvine's "The West Coast of Clare," which is one of his finer compositions.

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Davey Graham, Seamus Ennis

▶▶ Pogues, Eileen Ivers, Seamus Egan

see also: *Planxty, Paul Brady, Patrick Street, Dick Gaughan, Sweeney's Men*

Jared Snyder

Barney Isaacs & George Kuo

See: George Kuo

Eileen Ivers

Born 1965, in the Bronx, NY.

No sooner had Eileen Ivers established herself as one of the finest traditional Irish fiddlers of her generation than she transcended that circumscribed world to tour the world, first with Hall & Oates and then with the *Riverdance* stage musical. Ivers grew up in the Bronx, where she studied with the legendary Irish fiddler Martin Mulvihill; she was only 14 when she first recorded, on an anthology of Mulvihill's students. She went on to win seven All-Ireland Championships on the fiddle, including the coveted Senior Championship in 1984. She was a member of the all-female Irish folk band, Cherish the Ladies, and accompanied many of the top Irish-American folk musicians, including Mick Moloney and Seamus Egan. She recorded a duet album with accordionist John Whelan in 1987. In 1990 she was recruited to play on Hall & Oates's *Change of Season* album and to accompany them on the subsequent tour. She released her debut solo album in 1993; collaborated with composer Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin on his Irish TV series *River of Sound*; joined the New York Celtic-rap-rock band, Paddy a Go-Go; and became a featured soloist in *Riverdance*. In every venture, Ivers's trad-fiddle virtuosity has been evident, but she has not been reluctant about combining her Irish roots with African drums, hip-hop rhythms, Broadway orchestration, and anything else that might catch her fancy.

what to buy: The best introduction to Ivers's work is the single-CD anthology, *So Far: The Eileen Ivers Collection, 1979–1995* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Kevin Yatarola), which features tracks from both solo albums, the duo album with Whelan, the Mulvihill School album, plus her appearances on the *Riverdance* soundtrack, a Cherish the Ladies album, a multiple-artist concert recording, and Jerry O'Sullivan's "The Invasion." It's a wonderfully diverse assemblage of music, but Ivers's surpassing technique and fearless chance-taking are evident throughout. The debut album *Eileen Ivers* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Gabriel Donohue, Eileen Ivers) finds the fiddler in transition between her traditional training and her bold experiments into the future of the Celtic fiddle, and she excels at both.

what to buy next: *Wild Blue* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Tom "T-Bone" Wolk, Eileen Ivers) is named after the varnished color and uninhibited sound of Ivers's violin. Ivers experiments with all sorts of drums, bass, and keyboards, but she never loses her foundation in traditional Celtic forms and pure violin tone. *Fresh Takes* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987, prod. Mick

Moloney) is a lovely, all-instrumental album built around the musical dialogues between Ivers's fiddle and Whelan's button accordion, though the Bothy Band's Triona Ni Dhomhnaill adds synthesizer and clavinet to half the cuts.

influences:

Martin Mulvihill, Brendan Mulvihill, Eugene O'Donnell

Natalie MacMaster

Geoffrey Himes

Burl Ives

Born June 14, 1909, in Jasper County, IL. Died April 14, 1995.

Burl Ives fits comfortably into the title of "Renaissance Man," as his contributions to entertainment far exceeded music. Ives fairly well mastered all media, landing theatrical roles on Broadway, hosting his own CBS radio show during the 1940s, and starring in several movies. He also compiled a number of books on folk songs and folk traditions. But as a singer and interpreter of folk music, particularly ballads, Ives enjoyed his most consistent success. Bearded, burly, and definitely benign, he projected a friendly, almost grandfatherly (even as a young man) image. The persona matched the vocal style, so fluid as to seem effortless. Ives learned folk traditions from his family, who handed down songs and anecdotes to him as a youth. He carried many of those same tunes with him to New York during the 1930s, where he had decided to stake his claim. The Village Vanguard in Greenwich Village hired him, but Ives correctly noted that better money could be made on the stage. During the 1930s and 1940s he performed on Broadway in *Ah, Wilderness* and *I Married an Angel*, among others. In 1940 Ives had a popular hit, "The Wayfaring Stranger," which subsequently became the title of his own show on CBS radio. The program featured Ives and guests in a mostly musical format. Also during the early 1940s, Ives produced and starred in a folk-song revue, *Sing Out, Sweet Land*. He won acclaim for his renditions of "Foggy Foggy Dew," "Blue Tail Fly," and other standards, furthering the Ives reputation. In 1945 he performed his first major concert to a sellout crowd at New York's Town Hall. The following year, he appeared with folk and blues legend Josh White in a full-length film about folk music. Ives scored his first breakthrough on the national record charts in 1948 with a rendition of "Blue Tail Fly." In 1949 he charted in the Top 30 with "Lavender Blue," leading to his first album that year, *The Wayfaring Stranger*. That was followed closely by *The Return of the Wayfaring Stranger* the same year. The overused term "prolific" was nearly understatement when applied to Burl Ives. In 1958 alone, he released four albums for Decca: *Down to the Sea in Ships*, *Folk Songs Dramatic and Humorous*, *Old Time Varieties*, and *Christmas Eve with Burl Ives*. His big year for singles came in 1962, when two Ives recordings, "A Little Bitty Tear" and "Funny Way of Laughin'," dented both the pop and country charts. "Call Me Mr. In-Between," written by Nashville titan Harlan Howard, hit #3 on the country charts that year. The gruff-but-kindly Ives charisma, coupled with his distinct speaking voice, made him a near-natural for movies. In 1954 he starred in a revival of *Showboat*, then picked up supporting parts in three 1958 films: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Desire under the Elms*, and *The Big Country*. His portrayal of Rufus in *The Big Country* earned him an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor. Acting accolades failed to interfere with his first love, music. Ives continued to record folk material during the 1960s, but also took a serious country turn during that era. His album *Funny Way of Laughin'* made extensive use of Nashville-based writers. Mel Tillis had four cuts on the album, while Roger Miller contributed "I Ain't Comin' Home Tonight." Top Music Row producer Owen Bradley was at the helm for *Big Country Hits*, in which Ives reprised such country favorites as "Cold, Cold Heart," "Devil Woman," and "Heartaches by the Number." Ives's contributions to the popularity and preservation of folk music were numerous. His most lasting gift is perhaps the six-record *Historical America in Song*, produced for Encyclopedia Britannica Films. Ives took folk music to the mainstream, while never neglecting its roots.

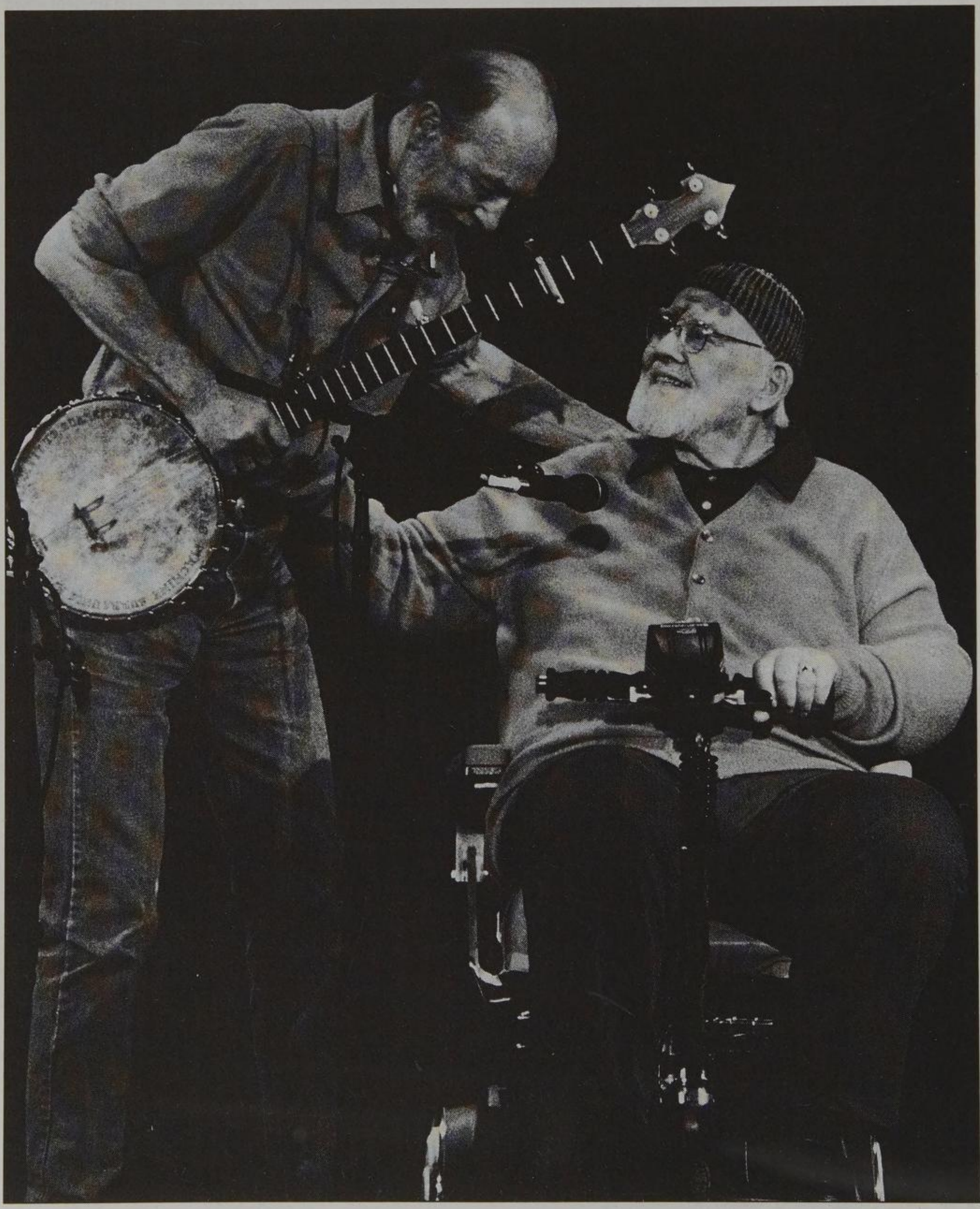
what to buy: *Greatest Hits!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1996, prod. Owen Bradley) is one grand collection, from "Little Bitty Tear" and "Funny Way of Laughin'" to his live rendition of "Blue Tail Fly," recorded at the Coronation Concert in London in 1954. Most of the material was cut in Nashville.

what to avoid: *Christmas Album* ♪ (Columbia, 1997) is standard fare, not even close to the far merrier *Have a Holly Jolly Christmas* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1996).

the rest:

The Best of Burl Ives for Boys and Girls ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1987)
At His Best ♪♪♪ (Special Music Company, 1993)
A Little Bitty Tear ♪♪♪½ (MCA Special Products, 1995)
In Memoriam ♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1995)
Sings His Favorites ♪♪♪ (Collector's Edition, 1996)
Poor Wandering Stranger ♪♪♪½ (Pearl Flapper, 1996)
Some of the Best ♪♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1996)
More of the Best ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1996)

burl ives



Little Bitty Tear ♪♪♪♪ (Members Edition, 1997)
Burl Ives Sings ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: Among Ives's early recordings worth looking up are *The Wayfaring Stranger* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1949/1960) and *Songs of the West* ♪♪♪♪ (Decca, 1968, prod. Milt Gabler). *Payin' My Dues Again* ♪♪♪ (1972, MCA, prod. Milt Gabler) is best-known for the title cut, reportedly one of Ives's favorites. *Funny Way of Laughin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Decca, 1962, prod. Milt Gabler) features the title single, plus songs from the pens of Mel Tillis and Roger Miller. *Coronation Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (Decca, 1953) was recorded live in London.

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Woody Guthrie

▶▶ Roger Miller, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Chad Mitchell Trio, Peter, Paul & Mary

Bob Paxman

J

Carl Jackson

Born September 18, 1953.

Multi-instrumentalist Carl Jackson (banjo, guitar, mandolin, dobro, fiddle) was hired at age 14 by Jim and Jesse McReynolds to become one of their Virginia Boys. After five years with Jim and Jesse he worked for the bluegrass gospel group the Sullivan Family, and then was in Glen Campbell's band for 12 years. Jackson also recorded solo albums for Capitol during the 1970s, Columbia during the 1980s, and three albums for Sugar Hill during the early 1990s. He is a much-in-demand session player and harmony singer and has had considerable success as a songwriter, both in country and bluegrass; he co-wrote Vince Gill's #3 hit "No Future in the Past" in 1993, and his bluegrass gospel number, "Little Mountain Church House," has rapidly achieved standard status in that realm.

what's available: *Spring Training* ♪♪♪½ (1991, Sugar Hill, prod. Carl Jackson, John Starling), Jackson's 1991 collaboration with longtime Seldom Scene vocalist and guitarist John Starling and Emmylou Harris's acoustic band the Nash Ramblers, received the 1991 Best Bluegrass Album Grammy.

influences:

◀◀ Earl Scruggs, Jim & Jesse

▶▶ Ricky Skaggs, Herb Pedersen

Randy Pitts

John Jackson

Born February 25, 1924, in Woodville, VA.

A talented singer and guitarist who playfully and lovingly reproduces bouncy classics like "The Midnight Special," John Jackson continues to show Washington, D.C., audiences why the music of Blind Blake and Blind Boy Fuller is so timeless. He performs (frequently with James, his son) in the traditional rickety rhythms and sing-song vocals of the East Coast Piedmont style. Jackson learned guitar and banjo as a child in Virginia by listening to 78s and paying attention when guitarists like Willie Walker visited his father's house. Though a popular performer at house parties in Rappahannock County, in 1951 he started work as a gravedigger to pay the bills. The 1960s folk revival gave him more clout as a performer, which he continues to use to this day, nailing down European festivals, album deals, and, of course, continuous nightclub bookings in the D.C. area.

what to buy: Jackson's folk music, by turns serious and goofy, comes across in a warm, friendly style on *Blues and Country Dance Tunes from Virginia* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1965), an excellent document of the Piedmont tradition played by a surviving master.

what to buy next: *Step It up & Go* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979) is more ragtime than blues, and also includes lots of hillbilly and folk tunes.

the rest:

John Jackson in Europe ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1969)
Don't Let Your Deal Go Down ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1970)
More Blues and Country Dance Songs ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1971)

influences:

◀◀ Willie Walker, Blind Blake, Blind Boy Fuller, Leadbelly, Jesse Fuller

▶▶ Cephas & Wiggins, Keb' Mo'

Steve Knopper

Burl Ives (r) with Pete Seeger **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

scott jackson

Scott Jackson

Born January 1, 1964, in Cleburne, TX.

Scott Jackson has been playing hammered dulcimer since 1985 and has even assisted in building the instruments with David Lindsey, a luthier from Alvarado, Texas, who builds "monster"-sized dulcimers with a floating soundboard and special side bridges. Scott's repertoire focuses on old time music, enjoying fiddle tunes on his big dulcimers as well as the slow, pretty tunes. He is usually accompanied by Todd Noyes who plays an excellent rhythm guitar, but they also enjoy swapping leads, which demonstrates Scott's ability to play interesting backup on the dulcimer.

what's available: *Shanty Tunes* ♪♪♪♪ (self-released, 1996) is a collection of old time tunes played with both imagination and skill, featuring the hammered dulcimer in a tight ensemble sound. The musicianship by all is impeccable, the tunes really swing, and the arrangements are extremely well planned. Tune selections include medleys of such well-loved dance tunes as "Liberty/Soldiers Joy/Rosetree" and "Missouri/Blackberry Blossom/Down the Brae" as well as "The Children Still Sing," a tune by Dana Hamilton. The supporting musicians include Todd Noyes (guitar), Shanda McDonald (fiddle), Dana Hamilton (mountain dulcimer, guitar), Betty Odum (banjo, mountain dulcimer, pennywhistle), Jean Roberts (bass), Mark Abbott (bass), and Annette Lindsey (piano). The band is hard-driving with each musician taking a turn in the spotlight, managing to keep the tempo danceable by not playing too fast. *Shanty Tunes* is available from the artist at Box 71, Alvarado, Texas 76009.

influences:

◀◀ Dana Hamilton, Bill Spence, Walt Michael

▶▶ Rick Thum, Kendra Ward-Bence

Heidi Cerrigione

Tommy Jackson

Born March 31, 1925, in Birmingham, AL. Died December 9, 1979.

Nashville's first great session fiddler, Tommy Jackson grew up in Nashville listening to the Grand Ole Opry. A child prodigy, he went on tour with Johnny Wright and Kitty Wells at age 12; by the time he was 17, Jackson appeared regularly on the Opry with Curly Williams and His Georgia Peach Pickers. After World War II he became a member of Red Foley's Cumberland Valley Boys (guitarist Zeke Turner, steel player Jerry Byrd, and rhythm guitarist Louis Innes), who became the first great "A" team of studio musicians in Nashville. During this period Jackson played fiddle on countless country classics, including Hank Williams's "I Saw the Light" and "Lovesick Blues" and Foley's "Satisfied Mind." The Cumberland Valley Boys then moved to Cincinnati in 1948, became the Pleasant Valley Boys, and continued to do studio work, primarily for King Records, while remaining Foley's band. Jackson began cutting records under his own name in Cincinnati, capitalizing on the then-current square-dance craze. He recorded first for Mercury, then signed a long-term contract with Dot Records and made 11 albums for them. He broke with Foley and, from 1954 on, made his living exclusively as a studio musician, pretty much inventing, then refining and redefining, standard country backup fiddle style. Jackson was the most imitated country fiddler of the time, and popularized the shuffle fiddle sound heard to great effect on the vastly influential recordings of Ray Price, among countless others.

what's available: Lamentably, the only currently available examples of Jackson's incredibly influential lead fiddle style are the 10 tunes on *Good Old Fiddle Music* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995). Titles include "Little Ida Red," "Bitter Creek Breakdown," "Acorn Hill Breakdown," "Big Sandy," "Snowflake Breakdown," "Stay a Little Longer," and "Done Gone."

worth searching for: Two of Jackson's instrumental albums served as primers for fledgling bluegrass fiddlers during the bluegrass boom of the 1950s. They were *Greatest Bluegrass Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Dot, 1962) and *Square Dances without Calls* ♪♪♪♪ (Decca, 1959).

influences:

◀◀ Fiddling Arthur Smith, George Wilkerson

▶▶ Gordon Terry, Vassar Clements

Randy Pitts

Kate Jacobs

Born January 11, 1959, in Alexandria, VA.

A winsome folkie with a melancholy streak, Kate Jacobs can sing about loss and regret with the best of them, but her ability to occasionally express contentment, happiness, and love truly sets her apart. After all, who writes songs about feeling good anymore? Jacobs's songs are as fully fleshed-out as quality fiction, but her lilting, girlish voice lifts them off the page. Backed

John Jackson **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

by an austere, three-piece band, Jacobs comes off as an East Coast answer to Iris DeMent. (*The Calm Comes After* even contains a song about DeMent, "Iris Has Faith.") Jacobs's EP *A Sister* is a companion recording to her children's book, *A Sister's Wish* (Hyperion, 1994).

what to buy: On the surface, *What about Regret* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bar/None, 1995, prod. Gary Arnold, Kate Jacobs, others) seems straightforward and breezy, but look a little closer and you'll find some of the richest, most complex songs written during the last decade. "See the Moon" seems to be about an old couple planning a dinner party, until you realize what they're contemplating is double suicide. Even the slightest songs, such as "Indiana," are carried along on such beautiful melodies that they seem instantly memorable. And there's even a touch of comic relief in "Three Years in Nebraska," about marijuana farming during the 1970s, and "A Sister," about a girl with too many brothers and no one on her side.

the rest:
The Calm Comes After ♪♪♪½ (Bar/None, 1993)
A Sister ♪♪♪ (Bar/None EP, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Nanci Griffith, Dolly Parton

Daniel Durchholz

Skip James

Born Nehemiah Curtis James, June 9, 1902, in Bentonia, MS. Died October 3, 1969, in Philadelphia, PA.

It's an incredible American tragedy that Skip James did not play blues concerts or make recordings from 1931 to 1964. But there's not much point in once again ripping early-century racism or the music industry for derailing James's career after Paramount put out 18 of his eerie, wonderfully sung and subtly played country-blues songs. James, a major talent, grew frustrated with music and became a gospel singer, touring with his father's revival show throughout the South and eventually becoming a minister. The often ill-tempered James, who did not suffer fools, had been in a Tunica, Mississippi, hospital in 1964 when John Fahey and two other blues historians tracked him down and persuaded him back into blues. (It should be noted that James was not always in a bad mood; he welcomed reverential young musicians and fans backstage and thrilled them by introducing them to friends such as Son House and Bukka White.) That was when James's career, 30 years too late, began to take off—his high-pitched, effortlessly lonesome vocals and haunting, textured acoustic guitar playing established him as one of the most reliable festival performers throughout the 1960s. Eric Clapton, among many others, took notice and stuck a bombastic version of "I'm So Glad" on one of Cream's million-selling classic rock albums, giving James serious royalty payments just before he died. James was responsible for some of this century's best popular songs—"Drunken Spree," "Devil Got My Woman," "Worried Blues," "Catfish" and, of course, "I'm So Glad." More important, like the more posthumously heralded Robert Johnson, James contributed a key haunting, moaning soul to American music. We're lucky James, unlike Johnson, hung around long enough so he could receive at least a fraction of his deserved popularity.

what to buy: Of 26 Paramount sides James was said to have recorded in 1929, 18 survive—and they're compiled on the absolutely essential *Complete Early Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1994). James's guitar-plucking style is more enthusiastic and pronounced than his 1960s recordings, but his voice is the main attraction; he sings like nobody else, smoother than Robert Johnson and grittier than Sam Cooke, but the direct or indirect inspiration behind them both. This collection includes definitive versions of "Drunken Spree," "22-20 Blues," "I'm So Glad" and "Devil Got My Woman."

what to buy next: There are many 1960s James recordings to choose from, so go with an original, *Today!* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1965/1988), in which James's guitar playing has slowed down but his voice seems richer and more textured. Another excellent document is *Greatest of the Delta Blues Singers* ♪♪♪♪½ (Biograph, 1992, prod. Arnold S. Caplin), James's first studio sessions after his legendary 1964 Newport Folk Festival appearance.

what to avoid: It's hard to go wrong with James's albums, but after the essential stuff his 1960s material gets somewhat repetitive; *Devil Got My Woman* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968/1988) is the least important. Also, the great *Complete 1931 Session* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1986) has been displaced on the market by the better *Complete Early Recordings*.

the rest:
Complete Recorded Works (1931) ♪♪♪ (Document, 1994)
Live 1964 & '66 (Document, 1994)
Skip's Piano Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Genes, 1996)

worth searching for: *She Lyin'* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Genes, 1964/1993, prod. John Fahey, Ed Denson, Bill Barth) was once hard to find, sitting inexplicably in the vaults for years until its recent reissue.

influences:

◀◀ Tommy Johnson, Charley Patton, Son House

▶▶ Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Sam Cooke, Eric Clapton, Charles Brown, Art Tatum, Charlie Parker, B.B. King

Steve Knopper

Bert Jansch

Born November 3, 1943, in Glasgow, Scotland.

Calling Bert Jansch one of the important figures in British folk music is an extreme understatement. Jansch's first record, *Bert Jansch*, was one of those seminal records—like *Doc Watson*—that seemed to have been worn out by every guitarist during the 1960s. Neil Young says that Jansch's impact on the acoustical guitar was equal to that of Hendrix on the electric and not many would argue the point. Young even credited him on the back of the Buffalo Springfield's *Buffalo Springfield Again*. Jansch had the most direct influence on Donovan, who could be called Jansch's protege. Jansch played some lead guitar on Donovan's first album and his "Bert's Blues" is included on *Sunshine Superman* and "The House of Jansch" on *Mellow Yellow*. Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page admits to an obsession with Jansch and it shows on Zeppelin's "Black Mountain Side" that lifts straight from Jansch's "Black Water Side." Born in Scotland, Jansch moved to London in his teens and became part of the early folk scene there. His guitar playing mixed elements of both classical style and American blues with the inflections from the traditional music of the British Isles. He was also writing his own material and singing in a gruff but effective voice. By the time he recorded his second LP, *It Don't Bother Me*, he had begun working with the only other guitarist in Britain on his level: John Renbourn. The initial collaboration grew to a highly regarded duet record *Bert and John* and laid the foundation for the British folk rock group Pentangle. This five-member group joined Jansch and Renbourn with vocalist Jacqui McShee and the rhythm section of Danny Thompson and Terry Cox. Their first three albums—*Sweet Child*, *The Pentangle*, and *Basket of Light*—show a wide diversity of styles and influences being melded together. Perhaps no folk group had a greater appreciation of the swing of jazz and found a way to integrate it into a traditional sound. Certainly no band swung so hard so quietly. After Pentangle's breakup, Jansch continued writing and recording, sometimes with Renbourn and occasionally with a re-formed Pentangle. While his catalog of recordings has continued to grow, his recordings from the '60s remain the most popular.

what to buy: The compilation *The Best of Bert Jansch* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1980, prod. Nathan Joseph) offers the listener an excellent place to begin with the music of Bert Jansch. The tunes are picked from his 1960s output, covering the best tracks from his first record *Bert Jansch*, including the influential traditional tune "Black Water Side" and his own "Needle of Death" that Neil Young rewrote as "Ambulance Blues" on his *On the Beach* LP. There is also an example of Jansch's longtime fascination with the music of jazz bassist Charles Mingus, "Alice's Wonderland."

what to buy next: It's nice to have *Bert Jansch/It Don't Bother Me* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Essential, 1996, prod. Bill Leader) cleaned up and on one CD. This brings together the first two records Jansch made. It may be a little hard, considering all of the guitarists who've emulated Jansch, to realize how there really was nothing like this before this record appeared on the scene. Get it and put it next to your copy of *Doc Watson* or *The Free Wheelin' Bob Dylan*, and you'll be very happy.

the rest:

Bert Jansch ♪♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1965)
It Don't Bother Me ♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1965)
Jack Orion ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966)
Early Bert, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Xtra, 1966)
(With John Renbourn) *Bert & John* ♪♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1966)
Nicola ♪♪♪ (Demon, 1967)
Lucky Thirteen ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1969)
Birthday Blues ♪♪♪♪½ (Demon, 1969)
Stepping Stones ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1969)
Sampler ♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1969)
Rosemary Lane ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1971)
Box of Love ♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1972)
Moonshine ♪♪ (Reprise, 1973)
L.A. Turnaround ♪♪ (Charisma, 1974)
Santa Barbara Honeymoon ♪♪ (Charisma, 1975)
Rare Conundrum ♪♪½ (Charisma, 1977)
Guitar of Bert Jansch ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1977)
Anthology ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1978)
Avocet ♪♪½ (Charisma, 1979)
13 Down ♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1980)
Heartbreak ♪♪ (Hannibal, 1982)
From the Outside ♪♪ (Mausoleum, 1985)
Strolling down the Highway ♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1986)
Essential Collection, Volume 1 ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1987)
Leather Launderette ♪♪ (Black Crow, 1988)
Ornament Tree ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1990)
Sketches ♪♪♪ (Temple Music, 1990)
After the Dance ♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1992)
BBC Radio 1 in Concert ♪♪♪ (Windsong, 1993)
When the Circus Comes to Town ♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1995)

Nicola/Birthday Blues ♪♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1995)
Collection ♪♪♪♪½ (Castle, 1995)
Live at the 12 Bar ♪♪♪ (Jansch, 1996)
Jack Orion/Nicola ♪♪♪♪ (Castle, 1997)
Birthday Blues/Rosemary Lane ♪♪♪♪½ (Castle, 1997)
Gardener: Essential 1965–1971 ♪♪♪♪½ (Demon, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ A.L. Lloyd, Ewan McColl, Charles Mingus, Davey Graham
▶▶ Martin Simpson, Richard Thompson

see also: *Pentangle, John Renbourn, Stefan Grossman*

Jared Snyder

Tommy Jarrell

Born 1901, in Surry County, NC. Died 1985, in Spray, NC.

Tommy Jarrell was born and raised in Surry County, North Carolina. He lived in the area known as Round Peak, which was rich in the regional music style. This area was isolated from most outside influences due to the lack of decent roads in and out of town, a fact that caused the regional styles to flourish. Jarrell's father, Ben, was the fiddler for Da Costa Woltz and His Southern Broadcasters, an old-time string band that recorded nine 78s for Gennett in 1927. Because of this Jarrell grew up around music. Picking up an instrument and having dad teach you some tunes wasn't as easy as you might expect, however, since Jarrell had 10 brothers and sisters. Jarrell watched his father "like a hawk," though, and started to play the banjo when he was eight. Later, when he was 14, he bought a fiddle with money he had won gambling. After Jarrell was married, he got a full-time job with the state working on the highways that were being built. He played fiddle on most nights and weekends, but it wasn't until he retired in 1966 that he really became known to people outside of his immediate surroundings. It was around that time that his son, B.F., was working as a DJ in Durham, North Carolina, and met Alan Jabbour. Alan was then a member of the Hollow Rock String Band, but later went on to head up the American Folklife Division of the Library of Congress. B.F. told Jabbour about his father and they took a trip back to Surry County to record him. The rest of Jarrell's years were spent playing fiddle and banjo with the young enthusiastic old-time musicians who sought him out at fiddler's conventions. Before Tommy's death in 1985, he was awarded the National Heritage Fellowship Award.

what to buy: *Sail Away Ladies* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1998, prod. Barry Poss) is the best introduction to the music of Tommy Jarrell. While going quickly out of print, County had plans to release it on CD soon. This album is also special because it contains spoken introductions by Jarrell that give some insight into the tunes. Also worth noting is that the entire album was recorded with just Jarrell and his fiddle; no backing band. If you love old-time music—particularly the fiddle—then there is hardly a better recording to suit your fancy. *Tommy & Fred: Best Fiddle-Banjo Duets Played by Tommy Jarrell & Fred Cockerham* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1992, prod. Ray Alden) is a fabulous recording compiled from recordings made in the mid-'60s (and released by County) when Tommy and Fred Cockerham got together with Oscar Jenkins to try to recreate Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters. The remaining cuts on this CD were recorded by Ray Alden and Dave Spilkia "for the sheer enjoyment of the music." With it you can hear two of the best old-time musicians ever to come out of Surry County, North Carolina playing together on many of the best-loved tunes of the area. No old-time music collection is complete without either of these two recordings.

the rest:
Rainbow Sign ♪♪♪♪♪ (County) cassette only
(With Kyle Creed) *Old-Time Fiddling & Clawhammer Banjo* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Heritage)

worth searching for: Jarrell recorded several LPs, none of which are currently in print. Should you find any of them at your local garage sale, buy them. They include: *Back Home in the Blue Ridge* ♪♪♪♪½ (County), *Down at the Cider Mill* ♪♪♪♪½ (County), *Stay All Night* ♪♪♪♪½ (County), and *June Apple* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mountain).

influences:
◀◀ Ben Jarrell, Charlie Lowe, Houston Galyean, Zack Paine
▶▶ Bruce Molsky, Ray Alden, Camp Creek Boys, Brad Leftwich

Steve Gardner

Blind Lemon Jefferson

Born reportedly as Lemon Jefferson, July 11, 1897, in Couchman, TX. Died December 1929, in Chicago, IL.

Blind Lemon Jefferson roamed thousands of miles and packed 100 recordings into his abbreviated 32 years, enough to establish himself as the first great male blues star of the 1920s and a man whose success set the standard for generations who followed. Corpulent, blinking out at the world through wire-rimmed spectacles, Jefferson's unmistakable keening voice and odd, stop/start strumming reportedly sold thousands of copies

of Paramount 78s. The record company issued 43 records, rare for a blues artist of that time. Jefferson was such an admired figure among his peers that blues titans like Leadbelly and T-Bone Walker talked reverently about leading Jefferson around Dallas for street performances. Titles and stanzas from his songs have found their way into the blues lexicon for decades. Among the most familiar: "That Black Snake Moan"; "Matchbox Blues" (later a standard for Albert King and Carl Perkins); "Easy Rider Blues"; and the solemn "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean" (adapted by Bob Dylan). Little is known about Jefferson's early years; he seemed to have appeared out of nowhere, a fully formed bluesman, on the streets of Dallas. Described by other musicians as an independent sort who equipped himself with both a cane and a gun, Jefferson could reportedly identify paper bills by feeling them in his hands. Brought to Paramount's attention by a Dallas retailer in 1925, Jefferson was an overnight success. Paramount treated him the way big labels now pamper gangsta rappers, buying him a new Ford equipped with a chauffeur. Jefferson had the repertoire to back up their confidence in him, able to trot out Texas specialties like "Mean Jumper Blues" or cover Leroy Carr's "How Long How Long." Commuting between Dallas and Chicago, where he recorded, Jefferson apparently found work as a porter during lean times. He was in Chicago for the harsh winter of 1929, dying under mysterious circumstances in the middle of a snowstorm. Some accounts maintain he froze to death; others insist he collapsed of a heart attack in his car and was abandoned there by his chauffeur. However he died, Jefferson left a motherlode of recordings and some of the most influential songs ever recorded.

what to buy: The four discs of *Blind Lemon Jefferson: Complete Works 1926–29* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. Johnny Parth) contain all of Jefferson's known efforts. Most are surprisingly clear-sounding, considering the fact that the Paramount 78s tended to scratch and wear out quickly. It is hard to choose a favorite among the four, but the third disc, which covers 1928, has better sound than the earlier volumes and a wide variety of fine performances, including "Grave." *Blind Lemon Jefferson* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Milestone, 1992, prod. Orrin Keepnews) is the best single-disc representation of Jefferson's work, ranging from 1926 to 1929 and including "Black Snake Moan," "Matchbox Blues," and 23 other cuts. The sound is as good as early-1990s technology can provide.

what to avoid: *Penitentiary Blues* ♪♪ (Collectables, 1994) offers a stingy sampling of Jefferson with mushy sound and haphazard notes. An afterthought.

the rest:
King of the Country Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1990)
Moanin' All Over ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Mamie Smith, Bessie Smith
▶▶ T-Bone Walker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Albert King, B.B. King, Carl Perkins, Bob Dylan

Steve Braun

Ella Jenkins

Born 1925, in St. Louis, MO.

Ella Jenkins is one of the prime originators of children's music. In the four decades since her debut album, the Chicago-based folklorist and performer has produced more than 25 additional albums of game songs, rhythmic exercises, and folk songs from around the globe and continued to enrich the musical tradition of her youngest listeners.

The music of different cultures has been a powerful tool for Jenkins. The daughter of a domestic, Jenkins, who grew up on Chicago's South Side, used songs and rhythms as a youth worker after graduating from San Francisco Sate College with a major in sociology. By the early 1950s she was attracting attention in Chicago folk clubs. On the strength of a four-song demo, she was signed by Folkways in 1956 and released her first album on the label. Her 1966 album, *You Sing a Song and I'll Sing a Song*, remains the biggest-selling album in the label's history. Jenkins, who continues to record for Smithsonian/Folkways, has released two videos, *Ella Jenkins Live at the Smithsonian* and *Ella Jenkins for the Family.* Jenkins, who pioneered the use of call-and-response in children's music, hosted her own children's television program in Chicago from 1964 to 1965.

what to buy: *You Sing a Song and I'll Sing a Song* ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1966/Smithsonian Folkways, 1989) remains one of the best-selling children's music recordings of all time. Joined by members of the Urban Gateways Children's Chorus, Jenkins leads the way for an exploration of the world's folk music. Spanish songs ("Dulce Dulce"), Hebrew songs ("Cadima" and "Shabot Shalom"), and New Zealand Indian chants ("Maori Indian Battle Chant") are successfully balanced by African American tunes ("The Train," "Did You Feed My Cow?," and "Guide Me"). The folk tune "Miss Mary Mack" is presented in three different versions.

what to buy next: Although Jenkins focuses on American and African American folk songs on *This-a-Way, That-a-Way* ♪♪♪

4/4 *john jennings*

bluegrass music

Bluegrass music seems as old as the hills, but actually it began in the 1940s, when mandolinist Bill Monroe put together his classic Bluegrass Boys (from whence the genre takes its name) with banjo wizard Earl Scruggs, guitar picker and singer Lester Flatt, and fiddler Chubby Wise. This band immediately set the standard for a brand-new style of country music, which blended old-time mountain ballads, breakdowns, and gospel singing with blues and swing. Vocals are central to bluegrass, usually sung in the high end of the range, with many duets, trios, and quartets. The distinctive instrumental texture often features the driving, syncopated 5-string banjo, played with finger-picks. Other instruments used include guitar, fiddle, mandolin, bass, and sometimes dobro; all the instruments are usually acoustic (with the possible exception of the bass). In the late '60s, many bluegrass musicians began adding influences of rock and roll and jazz to their sound. That trend continues, with artists like Alison Krauss borrowing material from rock and pop sources, and the instrumental hijinks of groups like Psychograss, which transplants modern jazz and new age music into a bluegrass instrumental setting.

Suzy Thompson

(Folkways, 1973/Smithsonian Folkways, 1989), the result is a similar, fun-filled collection of children's songs and chants. While the emphasis is on traditional material, Jenkins shows her mastery of the form with five original tunes.

best of the rest:

Fun with Rhythms and Sounds: Chants for Group Participation ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1959)
Adventures in Rhythm ♪♪♪ (Scholastic Records, 1959/Smithsonian/Folkways, 1989)
This Is Rhythm ♪♪ (Folkways, 1962/Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990)
And One and Two, and Very Early Children's Songs for Pre-school and Primary Children ♪♪♪ (Phonodisc, 1962)
Songs and Rhythms from Near and Far ♪♪♪ (Scholastic Records, 1964)
We Are America's Children ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1976/Smithsonian/Folkways, 1989)
Did You Feed My Cow? ♪♪ (Red Rover Records, 1989)
My Street Begins at My House ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1989)
Travellin' with Ella Jenkins: A Bilingual Journey ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1989)
Rhythms of Childhood ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1989)
Counting Games and Rhythms for the Little One ♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Danny Kaye, Woody Guthrie

▶▶ Raffi, Tom Chapin, Jon Gailmor, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Rachel Buchman, Sweet Honey in the Rock

Craig Harris

John Jennings

Born November 22, 1953, in Harrisburg, VA.

John Jennings is a multi-instrumentalist with a background in jingle and session singing who grew up in the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C. He is best-known for his successful collaborations with country-folk singer Mary Chapin Carpenter, for whom he has served as producer and guitarist. He also co-wrote her hits "Never Had It So Good" and "Goin' out Tonight." Jennings has also produced records by Janis Ian, Beausoleil, John Gorka, and Robin and Linda Williams; played on recordings by Tony Rice and the Indigo Girls; and toured with Lyle Lovett.

what's available: *Buddy* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1997, prod. John Jennings, Bob Dawson), Jennings's solo debut, contains the same suburban refinement of folk and rock that have made his recordings with other artists so well received. With a vocal and writing style reminiscent of Lyle Lovett's, Jennings primarily plays guitar, but also ventures onto bass, synthesizer, and even dobro.

influences:

◀◀ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Lyle Lovett

Brian Mansfield

Michael Jerling

Born April 17, 1952, in Joliet, IL.

Songwriting craftsmanship is combined with emotional tenor vocals and melodic acoustic-guitar fingerpicking by Illinois-born and Saratoga Springs, New York–based singer-songwriter Michael Jerling. The manager of a college coffeehouse in Wisconsin, Jerling absorbed the lessons taught him by the traveling musicians he booked. Continuing to perform after gradua-

tion, he fused the acoustic blues and country music that he had heard into his own distinctive style. In addition to recording several tracks for the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, Jerling was a finalist at the songwriter competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas. After releasing two self-produced, now out-of-print albums, Jerling recorded two albums—*My Evil Twin* and *New Suit of Clothes*—for Shanachie. His latest outing, *In Another Life*, was released by Waterbug in 1997.

what to buy: Jerling's first widely distributed CD, *My Evil Twin* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Tony Markellis, Michael Jerling), marked him as a promising vocalist and composer of country, blues, and folk-influenced songs, including the nostalgic tune "Before the Country Moved to Town."

what to buy next: Jerling continued to show his talents with his fourth album and second CD, *New Suit of Clothes* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994, prod. Tony Markellis, Michael Jerling).

the rest:
In Another Life ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Robert Johnson, Hank Williams, Bob Dylan, Jack Hardy
▶▶ Richard Shindell, Richard Meyer, Rod MacDonald

Craig Harris

Jewel

Born Jewel Kilcher, May 23, 1974, in Homer, AK.

When it was released in 1994, Jewel's *Pieces of You* introduced a sunny, sensitive folkie with a surfer-chick attitude and a poet's soul. But she immediately started bucking against the singer-songwriter pigeonhole: compared to the introspective sound of the album, Jewel's live shows were funny, funky, and loose, liberally dosed with cheerful monologues, yodeling exercises, and such sexually charged, unreleased rockers as "Race Car Driver" and the punk-pop "God's Gift to Women." Relentless touring as an opening act for everyone from Peter Murphy to Bob Dylan and a provocative video for "Who Will Save Your Soul" helped goose her debut to platinum status in 1996. But by the time she was plastered on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1997 for her role in the Lilith Fair tour, Jewel had sold an astounding seven million records. That feat was not a testament to her still-raw talent, but rather to the music industry's desperate need for a mega-platinum superstar in an era of sagging sales. Instead of letting Jewel naturally develop as an artist with successive albums, her record company chose to follow the "Hootie Principle" and flog *Pieces of You* from a merely promising debut into a "career" record, thereby catapulting her to an artificially induced level of significance that has triggered an inevitable critical backlash. Songs destined for her long-delayed follow-up album—like the Dylanesque "Sometimes It Be That Way" and the tender "Nikos"—eclipse everything on *Pieces of You*, most of which she wrote when she was 19. Let's just hope the industry allows her to mature before she turns 30.

what's available: Produced by Neil Young collaborator Ben Keith and recorded partly live and acoustic at a San Diego coffeehouse, *Pieces of You* ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1994) features "Who Will Save Your Soul" and the original, somewhat anemic versions of "You Were Meant for Me" and "Foolish Games" (both remixed significantly for radio by producer Peter Collins). Her lyrics are sometimes overly earnest, if not clumsy, but her voice—particularly on the majestic "Angel Standing By"—is stunning.

worth searching for: A 1994 Atlantic promo-only EP titled *Save the Linoleum* was designed to push "Who Will Save Your Soul" and "I'm Sensitive," but its non-LP B-sides, "God's Gift to Women" and "Race Car Driver," made it an instant collector's item among Jewel fanatics. For those two songs alone, it's worth whatever you have to pay for it.

influences:
◀◀ Tracy Chapman, Sheryl Crow
▶▶ Kacy Crowley, Meredith Brooks, Alana Davis

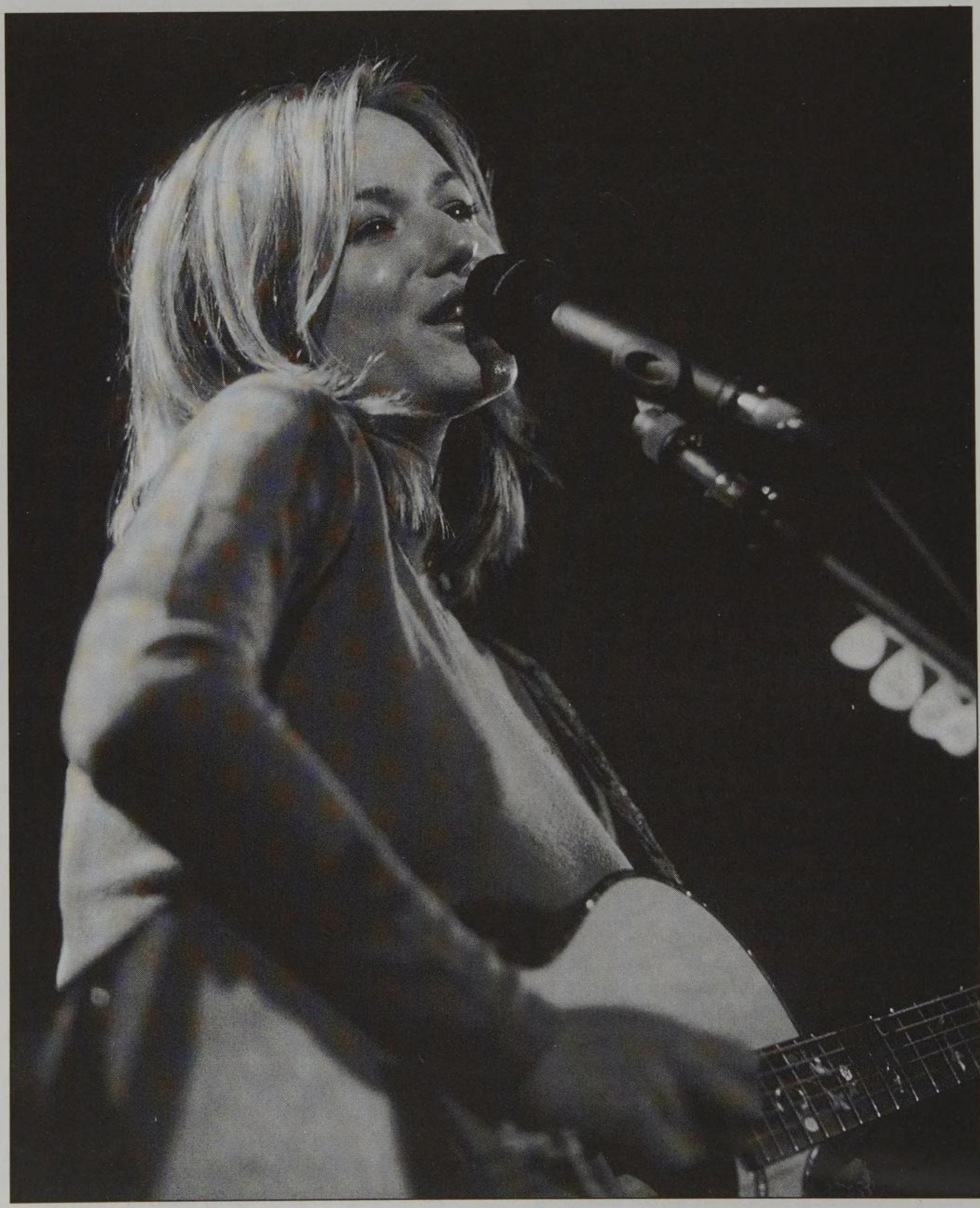
David Okamoto

Jim & Jesse

Jim McReynolds (born February 13, 1927, in Coeburn, VA), guitar, vocals; Jesse McReynolds (born July 9, 1929, in Coeburn, VA) mandolin, vocals.

Jim and Jesse are a pivotal duo in the history of bluegrass music. They and their band the Virginia Boys illustrated early on that the tight harmony vocals featured in much early country music could be adapted to bluegrass and be a very viable commercial force. Additionally, Jesse was and is an important influence as a mandolinist; his patented crosspicking style has added a dimension to bluegrass that hadn't previously existed. Jim and Jesse's band, the Virginia Boys, has also hosted many important musicians over the years, from fiddlers Vassar Clements and Jim Buchanan to banjo players Allen Shelton, Bobby Thompson, Vic Jordan, Carl Jackson, and many more. For a period during the late 1960s, they attempted with some suc-

jim & jesse



cess to adopt a more mainstream country sound, but, with the advent of bluegrass festivals, the duo has returned, for the most part, to the earlier high lonesome sound.

what to buy: The best single collection of Jim and Jesse material is *Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1993, prod. Don Law, Frank Jones, Jerry Kennedy, Billy Sherrill, Glenn Sutton), which contains everything the brothers recorded for Columbia and Epic between 1960 and 1970. The five-CD collection includes much classic bluegrass, but also their tribute to Chuck Berry (*Berry Pickin' in the Country*) and their more mainstream recordings, mainly from 1967 to 1972, when they had a country hit with "Diesel on My Tail." *Jim & Jesse* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1992, prod. Ken Nelson) is a reissue of all the McReynolds's early Capitol material, from 1952 to 1955.

what to buy next: *The Jim & Jesse Story* ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1990, prod. Bobby Thompson) contains excellent remakes of 24 of the brothers' biggest hits, with excellent accompanists and exhaustive liner notes. *In the Tradition* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Jim & Jesse) is a good representative mix of classic older material and newer stuff, featuring an outstanding band that includes Allen Shelton, Glen Duncan, Charlie Collins, and Roy Huskey. *Music among Friends* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Carl Jackson) is a nice set featuring many guest stars, including Bill Monroe, Emmylou Harris, Jim Buchanan, Porter Wagoner, and more.

worth searching for: *Border Ride* ♪♪♪♪½ (King, 1996), a minimally packaged, scantily programmed (10 cuts, 23 minutes) budget CD contains Starday singles circa the late 1950s and features one of the best groups of Virginia Boys (fiddler Vassar Clements and banjoist Bobby Thompson among them, although the cut that purportedly includes Carl Story probably doesn't). Overlook the cheesy packaging; this stuff has been hard to find for years.

solo outings:
Jesse McReynolds:
A Mandolin Christmas ♪♪♪ (Double J Entertainment)

influences:
◀◀ The Delmore Brothers, the Louvin Brothers
▶▶ The O'Kanes, the Wilburn Brothers

Randy Pitts

Jewel **(© Ken Settle)**

Flaco Jimenez

Born March 11, 1939, in San Antonio, TX.

The undisputed king of *conjunto* music and son of the influential Santiago Jimenez, Flaco Jimenez is a squeezebox master who plays a rousing mix of American folk and country and Mexican rancheras and polkas. In addition to his own records, his colorful accordion work and straightforward vocals have graced albums by Ry Cooder (who helped introduce Jimenez to the rest of America), the Mavericks, Dwight Yoakam, and the Rolling Stones. A *norteno* music veteran of more than three decades, Jimenez has branched out into American country both as a solo act and as a member of the Texas Tornados alongside Freddy Fender, Doug Sahm, and Augie Meyers (both of the Sir Douglas Quintet).

what to buy: Jimenez's most accessible solo work has been with Arista Texas, which released his best Tex-Mex album, *Flaco Jimenez* ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1994, prod. Bill Halverson). It includes the Grammy-winning "Cat Walk" and features contributions from the Mavericks' Raul Malo, Lee Roy Parnell, and Radney Foster.

what to buy next: *Buena Suerte, Senorita* ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1996, prod. Cameron Riddle, Flaco Jimenez) leans more heavily toward updating the Mexican side of his music. The rollicking *Partners* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1992, prod. Bill Halverson) features some big-name friends, including Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Dwight Yoakam, and Los Lobos.

the rest:
El Senido de San Antonio ♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1980)
Ay Te Dejo en San Antonio y Mas ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1986)
Flaco's Amigos ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1987)
Arriba el Norte ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
Entre Humor & Batellas ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
San Antonio Soul ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991)
Un Mojado sin Licencia (A Wetback without a Green Card) ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993)
Flaco's First ♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Santiago Jimenez
▶▶ Ry Cooder, Doug Sahm

Doug Pullen

Beau Jocque

Born Andrus Espre in 1956, in Kinder, LA.

Beau Jocque is a big man with a big voice and a taste for tight

funky music. When an industrial accident left him partially paralyzed in 1987, he learned to play his father's button accordion during his 10-month recovery. He found himself drawn to the hypnotic music of Boozoo Chavis. Jocque used Chavis's one-chord vamps as a launch pad for a more modern sound with a more contemporary beat. This combination of the most primitive of Creole sounds with the most contemporary of beats created a sensation that is still reverberating in Louisiana. Dance floors were filled to overflowing when Beau Jocque played and every other band jumped in to try and create their version of his sound. His band cut a wide swath across the zydeco landscape, much like Sherman's army burning everything in their path on their march to the sea.

what to buy: *Pick up on This!* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Scott Billington) gives the full effect of the Beau Jocque sound without too much of the more current rock and hip-hop influences. Those qualities are here but so is a real Creole Louisiana sound. Imagine a van carrying the old Sugar Hill rhythm section of Keith LeBlanc and Doug Wimbush getting lost on their way to the Jazz Festival and ending up at Beau Jocque's door as he is preparing to put his band together. Whether Jocque was responsible for the double bass beat that became his trademark, or the super deep slinky bass of Chuck Bush, both are clearly identified as part of the sound. Billington understands that and jacks up the sound of Bush's five-string bass unlike any zydeco record made before this time. "Give It to Me" starts with the band deep in the minor-key, double-clutched groove and Beau Jocque sounding like he and Malathini have genetically identical vocal chords. This process repeats itself, song after song, even on the relatively straight blues of "Do Right Sometime" and the waltz "Chere Migonne." This record will leave the dancers completely worn out and ready to put their feet up.

what to buy next: *Beau Jocque Boogie* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Scott Billington) was the ground-breaking record that started the Beau Jocque beat in zydeco country. From the opening beat of "Richard's Club," this record just sounded different from what had been around before. "Give Me Cornbread" was the first big Beau Jocque hit and led to him being pelted with the golden bread at some of the local festivals. "Damballah" may be the first zydeco tribute to a Haitian voodoo god ever recorded. This record barely deserves to be rated below *Pick up on This!* Another one of the big man's best is *Beau Jocque & the Zydeco Hi-Rollers* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Scott Billington), which contains much more rock and rap influence and a powerful crushing beat. It's the perfect record to play for people you think won't like zydeco.

the rest:
My Name Is Beau Jocque ♪♪♪ (Paula/Flyright, 1995)
Nursery Rhyme ♪♪♪ (Beau Jocque, 1995)
Get It, Beau Jocque ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
Gonna Take You Downtown ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Amédée Ardoin, Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
▶▶ Keith Frank, Chris Ardoin, Geno Delafose

Jared Snyder

Johnnie & Jack

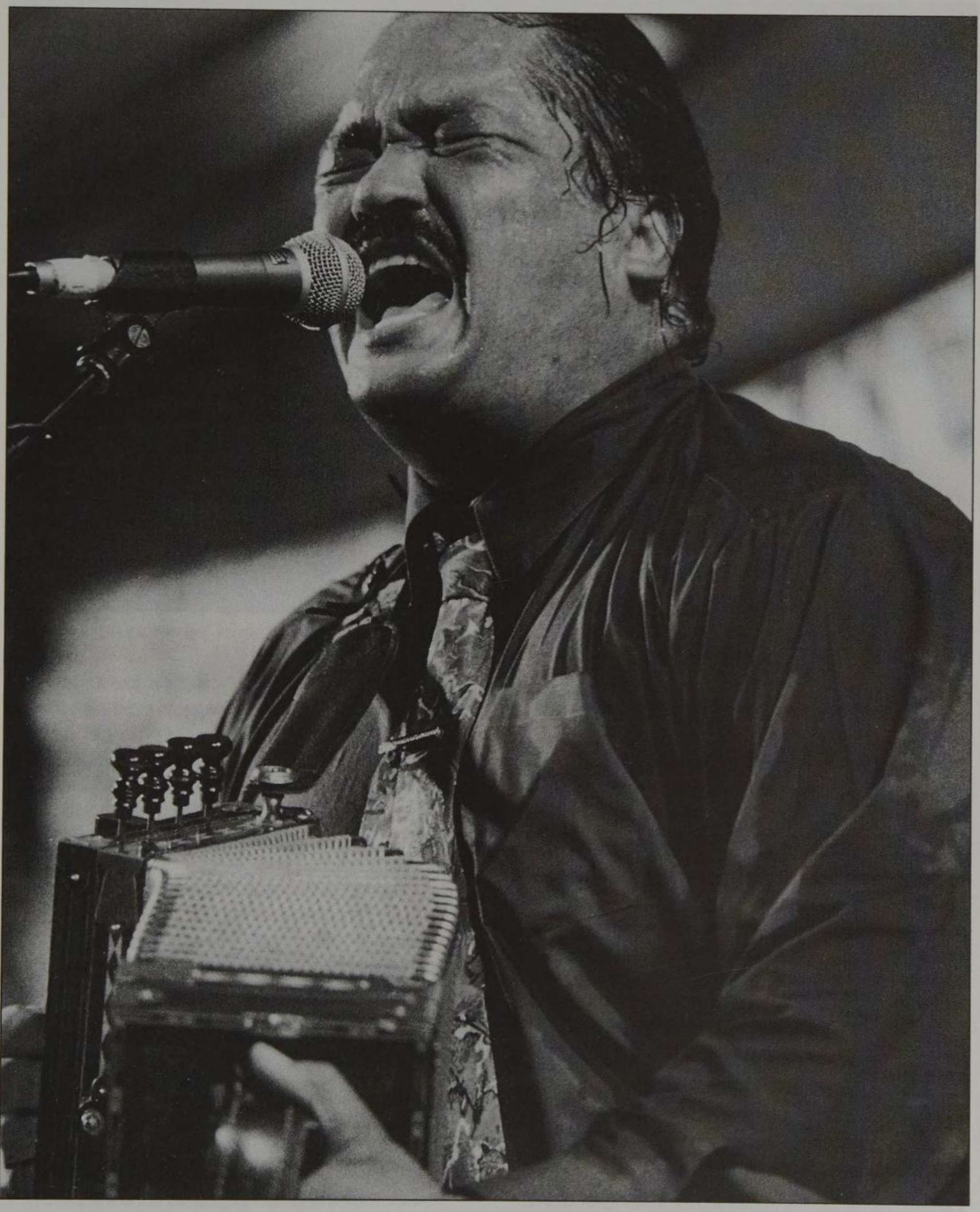
Formed 1938, in Nashville, TN.

Johnnie Wright (born May 13, 1914, in Mount Juliet, TN); Jack Anglin (born May 13, 1916, in Franklin, TN; died March 7, 1963).

Unique in their day for combining hard country arrangements and instruments with surprisingly uptown lyrics and rhythms, the exuberantly raw and raucous duo Johnnie and Jack often featured rhumba figures in their arrangements. They also favored fairly sophisticated vocal harmonies, often featuring a third male voice in their arrangements. Their biggest hits for RCA Victor, songs like "Poison Love," "Crying Heart Blues," "Slow Poison," "Ashes of Love," and "South in New Orleans," were suffused with Latin rhythms and their unique, hard-edged vocals, making for an infectious, very appealing sound. Johnny Wright is the husband of female country legend Kitty Wells; before she became a star in her own right, Wells often toured with the Johnnie & Jack road show. Since the death of Jack Anglin in 1963 (he was killed in an auto accident on the way to Patsy Cline's funeral), Wells has often toured with her family; in recent years, son Bobby Wright has often performed old Johnnie and Jack material with his father on live shows. Wright had a fairly substantial recording career for years after the death of Anglin, reaching his peak commercially with the Number One hit "Hello Vietnam" in 1965.

what's available: *Johnnie & Jack* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1992, prod. Sidney Prosen, Syd Nathan, Chet Atkins, Steve Sholes, Paul Cohen, Owen Bradley) contains everything commercially recorded by this unique duo for Apollo, King, RCA Victor, and Decca. *Johnnie & Jack with Kitty Wells at KWKH* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family , 1994, prod. Richard Weize) provides a fascinating look at what a country radio show was like in 1949. This recording,

Beau Jocque **(© Linda Vartoogian)**



Johnson Mountain Boys **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

taken from a live broadcast from Shreveport, Louisiana, also features Wells, not yet a star, as just another member of the show's cast.

influences:

◀◀ Anglin Brothers, Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper

▶▶ Farmer Boys, Wilburn Brothers

Randy Pitts

Johnson Mountain Boys

Formed 1978, in Washington, DC, area. Disbanded 1995.

Dudley Connell, guitar, vocals; David McLaughlin, mandolin, vocals; Tom Adams, banjo, vocals; Eddie Stubbs, fiddle, vocals; Richard Underwood, banjo, vocals; Larry Robbins, bass; Marshall Willborn, bass; Ed Ferris, bass; Earl Yager, bass; others.

Guitarist Dudley Connell formed this hard-driving traditional bluegrass band and, with the 1978 release of its debut single on Copper Creek, the Johnson Mountain Boys became an instant success on the D.C. bluegrass circuit. The group quickly widened its fan base once its Rounder debut came out in 1981. Four superb albums followed during the next five years, with the group touring the United States extensively, even playing the Grand Ole Opry. It is of great interest, to Opry fans especially, to note that the band's exemplary fiddle player is WSM/Grand Ole Opry announcer Eddie "Deep Catalog" Stubbs, who's not only one of the finest fiddlers you'll ever hear, but one of old-time and bluegrass music's best friends. Stubbs's radio shows are loaded with lovingly chosen old songs from classic performers. In 1988 the JMB (as many fans are likely to refer to them) decided to retire, but instead merely scaled down their performance schedule and shifted personnel slightly. Their 1993 album was highly praised, but would also be their last studio recording (at this point, anyway). The Boys finally went their separate ways in 1995, following the release of a live album.

what to buy: *Blue Diamond* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Ken Irwin, Ronnie Freeland, Johnson Mountain Boys) features "Duncan and Brady," along with several other great tunes. It's a real treat, when you consider the band had been close to breaking up by this point. (And, since they now have, it's an even more essential purchase!)

what to buy next: *Favorites* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987, prod. various) is another outstanding mix of JMB-brand bluegrass.

the rest:

Let the Whole World Talk ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Requests ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
Working Close ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
At the Old Schoolhouse ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Live at the Birchmere ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Walls of Time ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994) (cassette only)
We'll Still Sing On ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995) (cassette only)

influences:

Bill Monroe, Warrior River Boys

Del McCoury Band, Seldom Scene

Stephen L. Betts

Blind Willie Johnson

Born 1902 or 1903, reportedly in Temple, TX. Died December 1949, in Beaumont, TX.

Although he recorded only religious music, Blind Willie Johnson was influential in the blues world as one of the great purveyors of the bottleneck style of guitar. A guitar evangelist also known as Blind Texas Marian, the adolescent Johnson was taken by his father to the small towns between Houston and Dallas, where he played on the streets. While the lyrics to his songs were religious, his relentless guitar rhythms and harsh, growling vocals were as intense as that of any blues singer. Johnson recorded extensively for Columbia, but the Depression eliminated the demand for his recordings. Some were later re-released on Vocalion, but Johnson never recorded again after 1930. Eventually Johnson moved to Beaumont, where he earned a meager living singing on street corners and at church benefits.

what to buy: An intense two-CD set, *The Complete Willie Johnson* ♪♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1993, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains all of the known sides recorded by the great guitar evangelist.

what to buy next: All of the tracks contained on *Praise God I'm Satisfied* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1991), *Sweeter as the Years Go By* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1991), and *Dark Was the Night* ♪♪♪♪ (Indigo, 1995) are contained on *The Complete Willie Johnson*.

influences:

Leadbelly, Texas Alexander, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Black Ace, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Lightnin' Hopkins, Bob Dylan

Jeff Hannusch

Earl Johnson /Earl Johnson & His Dixie Entertainers /Earl Johnson & His Clodhoppers

Born August 24, 1886, in Gwinnett County, GA.

Earl Johnson, fiddle, vocals; Emmett Bankston, banjo, vocal; Byrd Moore, guitar, vocals (Dixie Entertainers); Lee "Red" Henderson, guitar, vocals (Clodhoppers).

Earl Johnson is one of several wild and crazy Georgia fiddlers who recorded extensively during the 1920s, when fledgling record companies were eager to record bands who might sell as well as the very popular Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers, one of Columbia's most popular artists. Johnson recorded with several groups (with some overlapping personnel): in 1925 with the Dixie String Band and under the name of his banjo player, Arthur Tanner, and a few years later with his Dixie Entertainers and his Clodhoppers. This is rough-and-ready Southern old-time music with a vengeance! Its roots are in the Scots-Irish fiddle music and ballads brought to the Appalachians by the early white settlers, but there are also echoes of such early comic Tin Pan Alley songs as "They Don't Roost Too High for Me" and of early African American blues songs like "I'm Satisfied." Johnson's manic versions of fiddle standards like "Mississippi Sawyer" and "Hen Cackle" are notable not for their finesse, but for the juggernaut of the strummed guitar and banjo backup. It is not known what became of Johnson following his recording sessions.

what's available: Johnson's frenzied fiddling can be heard to best effect on his *Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 1 (1927)* ♪♪♪ (Document, 1997). This volume contains all his recordings with his Dixie Entertainers and his Clodhoppers, including both fiddle instrumentals and old-time songs. Here are many of the standards associated with old-time string-band music, including animal imitations ("Hen Cackle"), centuries-old British ballads ("Three Night's Experience"), well-known American folk songs ("John Henry,"

"Sourwood Mountain"), popular songs of the day ("I Don't Love Nobody"), and energetic fiddle tunes featuring a short-bow style ("Boil Them Cabbage Down," "Leather Breeches"). The nearly ever-present falsetto singing may not be to everyone's taste, but it is a big part of the Georgia string-band style of the 1920s, as evidenced not only by the Johnson sides but also by the many popular recordings of Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers. These songs are all unremittingly energetic; although introspective old-time string-band music of the '20s definitely exists, you won't find it in Earl Johnson's music. Lyrically, these are not especially deep songs. Those listeners bent on political correctness should be warned that some of the words to some of the songs are likely to offend. *Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order: Volume 2 (1927–1931)* ♪♪♪ (Document, 1997) contains Johnson's earlier sides.

influences:

◀◀ Gid Tanner & the Skillet Lickers, Grayson & Whittier, Fiddlin' John Carson, Uncle Dave Macon

▶▶ New Lost City Ramblers, Highwoods String Band, Freighthoppers, Primitive Characters

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Larry Johnson

Georgia-born Larry Johnson can truly be called a practitioner of the country blues guitar, not just an interpreter or re-creator. Building on his studies with the Rev. Gary Davis, he developed a style he called "stride guitar," with the loping bass lines and ornate treble of the great stride pianists like Fats Waller.

what to buy: Johnson's rich voice and clean, speedy, melodic picking were captured beautifully on the recently re-released 1971 Blue Goose album *Fast and Funky* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Goose, 1971/Baltimore Blues Society, 1996).

what to buy next: *Midnight Hour Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Biograph, 1995) is another 1970s re-release. John Hammond sits in on harp and National Steel guitar, though his embellishments are hardly necessary. Technically brilliant, but a bit less warm than *Fast and Funky*.

influences:

◀◀ Rev. Gary Davis, Fats Waller

Jennifer Zogott

Mark Johnson /Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Formed 1992, in Dunnellon, FL.

Mark Johnson (born 1955, in New York, NY), clawhammer banjo; Tony Rice, guitar (1992–present); Wyatt Rice, guitar (1992–94); Larry Rice, mandolin, vocals (1992–94); Ron Rice, bass (1992–94); James Tucker, dobro (1992–94); Jason Thomas, fiddle (1992–94); Tammy Murray, fiddle (1992–94); Terry Campbell, lead vocals, bass (1996–present); Allen Watkins, mandolin, harmony vocals (1996–present); Allen Shadd, guitar (1996–present).

Mark Johnson likes to tell the story of the time when, as a young man then living in his native New York, he visited Jay Ungar, the highly regarded old-time musician who has become well-known in recent years as the composer of "Ashokan Farewell," featured in Ken Burns's PBS series *The Civil War.* Primarily a fiddler, Ungar was also teaching clawhammer banjo at the time, and when Johnson said he wanted to learn to play like the kid in *Deliverance,* Ungar laughed and said, "I can't teach you that, but I can show you another style." From Ungar, Johnson learned the basics of the clawhammer, or frailing, style of playing that is predominant in old-time music, a style that predates the three-finger "Scruggs style" that has become the hallmark of bluegrass banjo. While a Scruggs-style player wears thumb- and fingerpicks and plucks upward on the strings with the fingers, a clawhammer player does not use picks at all and brushes downward on the strings. In watching clawhammer playing, the derivation of the term becomes readily apparent—the player's right hand appears to be paralyzed as if it were a claw, and seems indeed to be hammering away at the head of the banjo. Johnson went on to learn the three-finger style as well, but found himself continually being drawn back to clawhammer. By the early 1980s he had moved to north central Florida and was working in the nuclear power industry when he discovered, to his pleasant surprise, that his neighbors and co-workers were the legendary Rice Brothers—guitarists Tony and Wyatt, mandolinist Larry, and bassist Ron. He began playing music with them, and he credits them with opening his eyes to the many possibilities his unique combination of clawhammer and three-finger techniques opened to him. While jamming with friends at a Florida bluegrass festival, Johnson started describing what he was doing, half-jokingly, as "bluehammer." Before long, he had turned that around into "clawgrass," and with strong encouragement from the Rices—not to mention a few bathroom recording sessions—he released his first album, *Clawgrass,* on his own label. The critical response was enthusiastic, enough so that a second album fol-

lowed in 1997, and he was soon able to tour with his own band, proving that old-time music fans and bluegrass fans can find common ground–no mean feat, as the two groups tend to view each other as slightly disreputable cousins. As suggested by the title of his second album, Mark Johnson is doing a lot to bridge that gap.

what to buy: With *Bridging the Gap* ♪♪♪♪ (Pinecastle, 1997, prod. Bill Emerson), Johnson has taken the clawgrass concept to its next logical level, adding the solid vocals of Terry Campbell to the instrumental foundation provided by the members of what is now his regular band—in addition to Campbell, Allen Watkins and Allen Shadd now tour with Johnson as Clawgrass. For this second album, Tony Rice returns to guest on three banjo-guitar instrumental duets with Johnson, and as he did on the earlier album, Rice concentrates on supporting and highlighting Johnson's banjo, with the kind of interplay between them that commands close attention. Also helping out in guest roles on this release are fiddler Pat White and Seldom Scene dobroist Fred Travers. As difficult as it is to put any recording involving the Rice Brothers in the back seat to anyone, the added presence of Campbell's warm and engaging vocals on tunes like the traditional "Rosewood Casket" makes *Bridging the Gap* the better choice of the two current Clawgrass releases.

what to buy next: *Clawgrass* ♪♪♪ (Bangtown, 1994, prod. Mark Johnson) is an entirely instrumental album, with the exception of one vocal by Larry Rice. Although accustomed to being in the spotlight, the Rice Brothers are masterful here as backup musicians, adding a great deal of subtlety and texture to the music. The fiddling of Tammy Murray and Jason Thomas, as well as James Tucker's dobro are welcome additions as well.

influences:

◀◀ Rice Brothers, Don Stover, John McEuen, Herb Pedersen

John Lupton

Michael Johnson

Born August 8, 1944, in Alamosa, CO.

Michael Johnson is a singer/songwriter whose mellow folk-pop has enabled him to have success in a number of markets. Having learned guitar by listening to early rock and jazz, Johnson spent a year studying in Italy and later played alongside John Denver in the Mitchell Trio. He had three Top 40 pop hits during the 1970s, the biggest being 1978's "Bluer than Blue." Johnson recorded for the Nashville divisions of RCA and Atlantic during the 1980s and 1990s with even more success.

what's available: *Departure* ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1995, prod. Michael Johnson, Randy Goodrum) doesn't have "Bluer than Blue" or "Give Me Wings." Instead, it's an album from Johnson's latest incarnation as a folkie. Which doesn't mean it's substantially different from his days as a pop or country singer. It is, however, one of Johnson's weakest albums, with songs like the electro-pop "Software," which would have sounded silly even in 1984. Note of interest: "Cain's Blood" became a minor hit in 1995 for country vocal quartet 4 Runner. On *Then & Now* ♪♪♪ (Intersound, 1997, prod. Viktor Krauss, Michael Johnson, Gary Paczosa), Johnson reprises his biggest singles and throws in a few new cuts for good measure. Working with dobroist Jerry Douglas, fiddler Stuart Duncan, and three members of Alison Krauss's Union Station, these covers sometimes outshine the originals. Krauss plays viola and sings duet harmony on "Whenever I Call You Friend," a cover of Kenny Loggins's 1978 pop hit.

worth searching for: Johnson had nine charting singles for RCA between 1985 and 1988. His two #1 songs, "Give Me Wings" and the exquisitely romantic "The Moon Is Still over Her Shoulder," appear on *Wings* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1986, prod. Brent Maher), which has yet to be issued on CD.

influences:

◀◀ James Taylor

▶▶ Billy Dean, David Wilcox

Brian Mansfield

Prudence Johnson

There's no mystery about the enduring appeal of Prudence Johnson. Although she's written some fine songs, she's not known as a songwriter—nor is she celebrated as an instrumentalist. What she does do is sing, well enough to inspire jealousy among the seraphim. Johnson fronted a sophisticated vocal group called Rio Nido that was based, as was she, in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, and which had the good fortune to appear regularly on the earlier days of *A Prairie Home Companion*'s national radio syndication. Since then she's issued three albums under her own name for Red House Records, one of folk and roots music's more respected independent labels. The discipline and technique required to sing jazz has served Johnson well—she's sort of a folk songwriter's Sarah Vaughan—but good technique will take your career only so far. Only those who can breathe life into a song, who can

sing it with conviction and heart, can expect to make a song uniquely one's own as Prudence Johnson does.

what to buy: The wedding of great songs with a great voice achieves near-perfection in *Prudence Johnson Sings the Songs of Greg Brown* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1990, prod. Prudence Johnson). Greg Brown's songs are among the most clever and beguiling in the genre; and where his distinctive voice growls and wheedles, Johnson's fairly soars, taking these well-crafted gems to a new dimension. Eleven of Brown's best of the day, including "Dream On," "The Train Carrying Jimmie Rodgers Home," "Band of Gold," and "Who'da Thunk It."

what to buy next: Nearly every folk artist seems to have made a kids' album, supplying the boomer generation's increasingly urgent need to keep their children occupied or to get them to fall asleep—but few have the enduring charm of *Little Dreamer . . . Lullabies for Young and Old* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1991, prod. Bob Feldman, Eric Peltoniemi). Once again, a nearly perfect selection of songs (in this case, lullabies) defines the project, with some newly composed pieces mixed in with a helping of standards like "Summertime," "A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes," "Nature Boy," and perhaps the best version yet of the oft-recorded "John of Dreams," Bill Caddick's gorgeous lullaby set to a Tchaikovsky theme.

the rest:
Vocals ♪♪½ (Red House, 1992)

worth searching for: Despite the fact that it's available only on cassette tape, check out Rio Nido's *Hi Fly* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1988, prod. Bob Feldman). It sounds as good now as it did then, and marks Johnson's first appearance on record (guitarist Tim Sparks was a member, too).

influences:
◀◀ Maria Muldaur, Maura O'Connell
▶▶ Mollie O'Brien

Chris Rietz

Robert Johnson

Born May 8, 1911, in Hazlehurst, MS. Died August 16, 1938, in Greenwood, MS.

More has been made about the 29 songs Robert Johnson recorded during three sessions 60 years ago than any other blues music, or almost any other music, for that matter. That thin, smoldering sheaf of songs, his edgy, high moaning voice, cryptic life, and the unusual circumstances of his death (apparently poisoned by a jealous husband at a country roadhouse gig), compounded by rumors of Johnson's pact with the devil, have made him much larger than whatever he could have become on his own. Despite the deluge of hype over the last few years, really listening to *King of the Delta Blues Singers* is still the next scariest thing to spending the night alone at a crossroads in Coahoma County under a full moon. The ironies have proliferated: one of the youngest of a generation of Delta acoustic bluesmen, Johnson was nearly an anachronism by the time he was recorded (although who knows what he could have done with electricity coursing through his guitar?); producer John Hammond came looking for Johnson for his From Spirituals to Swing black revue several months after his death; he didn't make the *Billboard* charts until a half century after he died; and though no one is sure where he's buried, at least two cemeteries have markers for him. Except for those fortunate enough to buy the few 78s distributed during his lifetime and an ever-growing list of tape collectors, Johnson's music was pretty much unavailable until more than 20 years after his death. Research has lifted some of the clouds from his life just as it seemingly has obscured others. But beyond the myth, it's those existential songs—"Hellhound on My Trail," "Stones in My Passway," "Love in Vain," "32-20 Blues"—and that tightly strung, slightly scared, tormented voice—all frozen in time—that burn right through the decades and the scratches, pointing the way to the future. Recent advances in studio technology have attempted to make those scratchy recordings more clear. But no matter how re-mastered a version of "Hellhound on My Trail" you wind up with, you'll still have to squint a little to see that big devil dog in the shadows behind paranoid Bob's hunched back.

what to buy: There is no let-up on *King of the Delta Blues Singers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1961, prod. Don Law, Frank Driggs), which introduced Johnson to the world at large, heavily influencing a generation of superstars, including Keith Richards and Eric Clapton. Johnson sometimes sounds like a band, and the connection between his voice and guitar is complete—they sound like one instrument. (There's even a gold disc version of this one available.) And it's an album, not a greatest-hits collection. If you're interested in hearing the full sessions in chronological order, pick up *Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990, prod. Don Law, Frank Driggs, Stephen LaVere), the two-disc set that landed old Bob in the pop charts and on *Entertainment Tonight*.

what to avoid: For some inexplicable reason, there's a "new" compilation, *Robert Johnson: King of the Delta* ♪♪♪ (Colum-

bia/Legacy, 1997), which, since all tracks have been released before—most of them twice—there is no reason to own.

the rest:
King of the Delta Blues Singers Volume 2 ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1970)

worth searching for: For more on Johnson's life, we heartily recommend *Deep Blues* (Viking, 1981), Robert Palmer's groundbreaking book that makes the connection between the acoustic Delta blues of Johnson and the electric version that Muddy Waters conceived in Chicago. Also worth watching is *The Search for Robert Johnson* (Sony Video, 1992), with narrator John Hammond traveling the Delta in a convertible, stopping to talk to historians and scholars, former Johnson girlfriends, and contemporaries (including Honeyboy Edwards, who was there the night Johnson was poisoned). On the flip side, except for a short, sepia-toned opening segment, steer way clear of Walter Hill's totally inept 1986 film, *Crossroads*, which stars Ralph Macchio as a blues kid who winds up in a guitar "duel" with a heavy-metal devil played by Steve Vai. Really!

influences:
⏪ Lonnie Johnson, Tommy Johnson, Charley Patton, Willie Brown, Son House

⏩ Muddy Waters, Eric Clapton, Keith Richards, Robert Junior Lockwood

Leland Rucker

Freedy Johnston

Born March 7, 1961, in Kinsley, KS.

It's sad when a musician peaks too early, but it's easier to stomach when he leaves you with a pop-folk-rock masterpiece as perfect as Johnston's second album, *Can You Fly*. "Well I sold the dirt to feed the band," he sings on the album's first line, referring to his longtime family farm, which he ditched to become a New York City rock 'n' roll singer. Like the Beatles and Squeeze, Johnston has a knack for squeezing rich poetic images into cleverly rhyming three-minute pop songs; his imaginative world includes a love affair with the mortician's daughter and a town called Hopeless. Since then, though his high-pitched, impossibly clear voice remains a powerful pop tool, Johnston has slowly started trying too hard. After a mass of critical raves earned him enough clout to sign with the major label Elektra Records, Johnston's songs have subtly become more labored and less spontaneous. His Elektra debut, *This Perfect World*, had some excellent moments—including the sublime "Two Lovers Stop," a *Romeo and Juliet*–style fable about a couple jumping to their deaths—but producer Butch Vig imposed a more formulaic rock style. Though Johnston remains an excellent singer and songwriter, recent material like "On the Way Out" is disappointingly competent.

what to buy: The slower songs on *Can You Fly* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bar/None, 1992, prod. Graham Maby) tell terrific folk tales, but the rockers, including the opening "Trying to Tell You I Don't Know" and "In the New Sunshine," are what provoke the involuntary dancing around the room. Johnston's lines are consistently sharp and rich; in "The Mortician's Daughter," he observes that "we drew our hearts on the dusty coffin lids," and in "Responsible" he describes the New York City streets as "slick with dew and motor oil." All this in a snappy voice that recalls Paul McCartney, or at least Michael Penn.

what to buy next: Continuing with the dramatic opening lines, the solid-but-disappointing *This Perfect World* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1994, prod. Butch Vig) begins with "I know I got a bad reputation, and it isn't just talk, talk, talk." It's gloomier than the optimistic *Can You Fly*, but it's Vig's straightforward production that blunts Johnston's natural wonder and enthusiasm.

what to avoid: There are excellent moments on *Never Home* ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1997, prod. Danny Kortchmar), mostly because Johnston's talent shines even when he's coasting or loading himself up with bland material. But the catchy "On the Way Out" and the well-written "He Wasn't Murdered" aren't enough to overcome a creeping mediocrity.

the rest:
The Trouble Tree ♪♪½ (Bar/None, 1990)
Freedy Johnston EP ♪♪♪ (Hello Recording Club, 1995)

worth searching for: *Unlucky* ♪♪♪ (Bar/None, 1993, prod. Gene Holder) contains one track from *Can You Fly*, but it's most notable for a clear-eyed reading of the country classic "Wichita Lineman."

influences:
⏪ The Beatles, Squeeze, Jimmy Webb, XTC, Big Star, Raspberries

⏩ Jonny Polonsky, Wilco, Gin Blossoms

Steve Knopper

The Johnstons

Formed in Slane, Co. Meath, Ireland. Disbanded 1974, in London.

Luci Johnston, vocals; Adrienne Johnston (died 1975), vocals; Mick Moloney (born 1944), vocals, guitar, tenor banjo, mandolin; Paul

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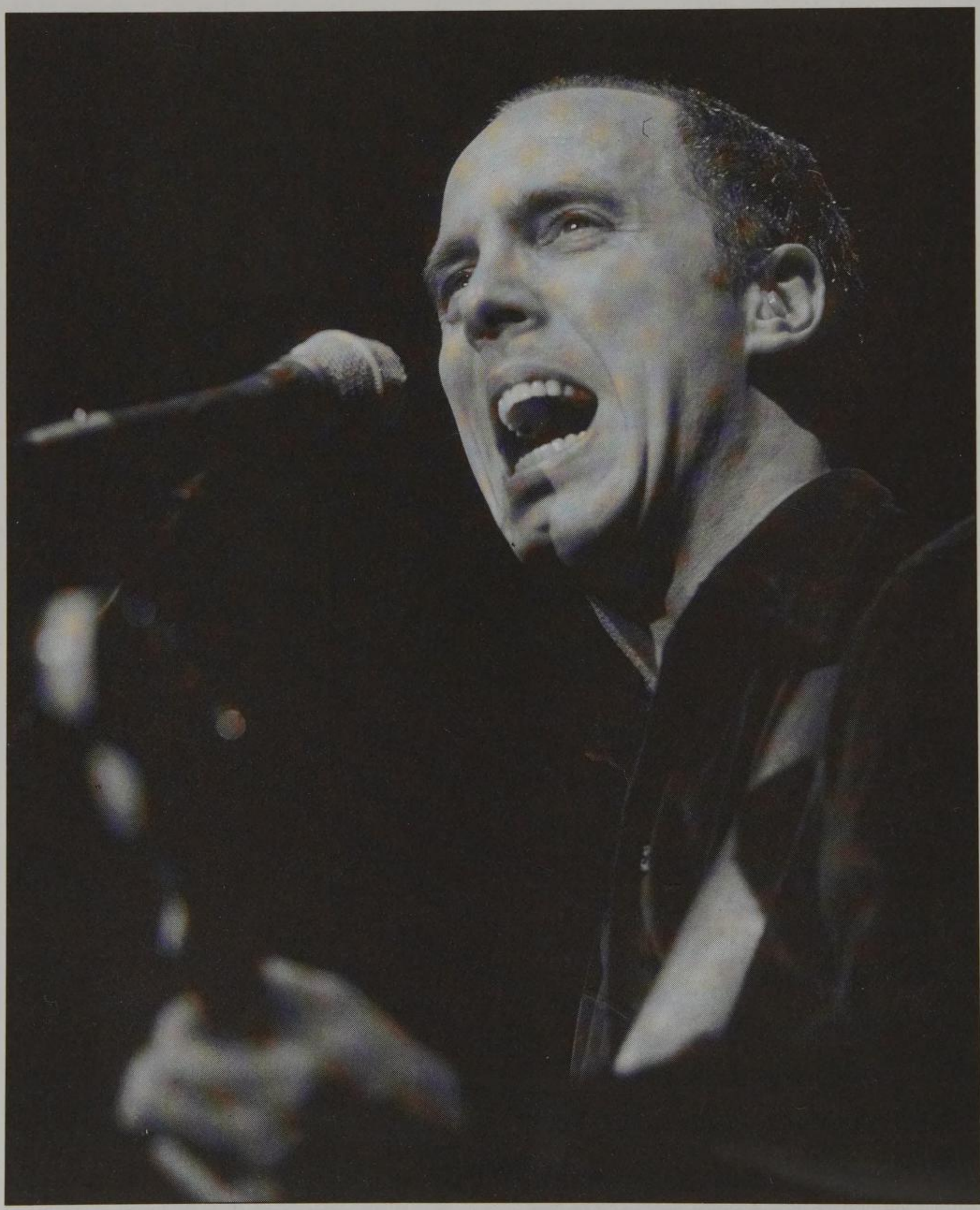
6 *the johnstons*



the johnstons

Brady, vocals, guitar, mandolin, fiddle; Michael Johnston, vocals, guitar.

The original lineup of the Johnstons was purely a family affair, made up of Luci, Adrienne, and Michael Johnston, siblings from the Boyne Valley. They played and sang together all their lives, and became well known in 1966, when their record, a version of Ewan MacColl's "The Travelling People," went to #1 on the Irish charts. They began to tour the country, and eventually ended up playing a folk club in Harcourt Street, Dublin, which was run by banjo and mandolin player Mick Moloney. Feeling that they needed to beef up their instrumental sound, they asked Mick to join the group. Shortly after that, Michael was replaced by Mick's roommate Paul Brady. This lineup of the Johnstons was to last five years, to tour all over Europe and America, and to record seven albums. Their repertoire was mostly songs, and all four of the members were singers capable of leading or harmonizing. In addition, Moloney and Brady worked out arrangements of a few of their favorite tunes to include in their live sets and on their albums. The Johnstons topped the charts in Ireland and trod the boards worldwide, becoming the most popular Irish music group of their era (barring perhaps the Clancys and the Dubliners, both of which groups influenced them greatly). They were also spectacular musicians; Ron Kavana, one of today's more progressive Irish guitarists, banjo players, and mandolinists, remembers seeing the Johnstons once, and being "positively gobsmacked" by their musical acuity. After playing traditional music for a while, the Johnstons were convinced by their management and by Transatlantic, their record company, that contemporary material was to be their ticket to fame. They began to sing and play songs by many top songwriters of the time. They remember recording a few songs by a woman they'd never heard of: Joni Mitchell. They also played songs by Leonard Cohen, Gordon Lightfoot, and others, as well as many early songs by Paul Brady. Luci Johnston left the London-based band in 1969 to return to Ireland. Mick Moloney left in 1972, and came to America, where he remains a strong presence on the American Irish music scene. The remaining duo broke up in 1974. Adrienne recorded a single solo album before she was killed in 1975 (the official verdict was accidental death, but many believe she was murdered). Paul Brady joined the group Planxty until it broke up, then performed traditional music solo and in a duo with Andy Irvine. In the 1980s he decided to concentrate on writing his own songs, and since then has been one of Ireland's most popular songwriters.

Freedy Johnston **(© Ken Settle)**

what to buy: The CD reissue *The Johnstons/The Barleycorn* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Castle/Transatlantic, 1996, prod. Nathan Joseph) contains two of the Johnstons' best albums of traditional Irish material, both recorded in 1968. The voices and instrumental work are all excellent, all the more so for being ahead of their time. Among the material not to be missed is Adrienne's particularly moving version of "The Flower of Northumberland," an old Scots border ballad, "What Put the Blood," a version of the ancient ballad "Edward," and a cute version of "Frog's Wedding," a song which came over from English tradition. More local songs given colorful treatments include "The Dublin Jack of All Trades," a veritable catalog of Dublin street names, "They'll Never Get Their Man," an energetic song set in the Belfast linen mills, and "The Coleraine Regatta," a magnificent track teaming Brady's sharp voice up with Moloney's very accurate banjo. Several Gaelic songs, including "Fhir A' Bhata" and "Fuigfidh Mise 'N Baile Seo," add depth to the group's commitment to Irish material, and a few instrumentals, including "O'Carolan's Concerto" and two sets of dance tunes, hint at the capabilities of Moloney and Brady, which were just beginning to be explored.

what to buy next: On the sampler *The Transatlantic Years* ♪♪♪ (Demon, 1992), some of the tracks are solid traditional material showcasing the Johnstons' four great voices, Moloney's mandolin and banjo, and Brady's trend-setting guitar work. Others are tight but unexciting renditions of Joni Mitchell–, Gordon Lightfoot–, and Leonard Cohen–penned songs, drowning in the strings of nameless arrangers. There are also three original Johnstons songs composed by Brady and producer Chris McCloud that are quite good. Still, the most compelling things on the album by far are the traditional songs; you may want to program your CD player to skip "Both Sides Now" or "Hey That's No Way to Say Goodbye." Although this is still a good collection on its own, don't buy it if you own *The Johnstons/The Barleycorn*, because most of the best songs are on both CDs.

the rest:

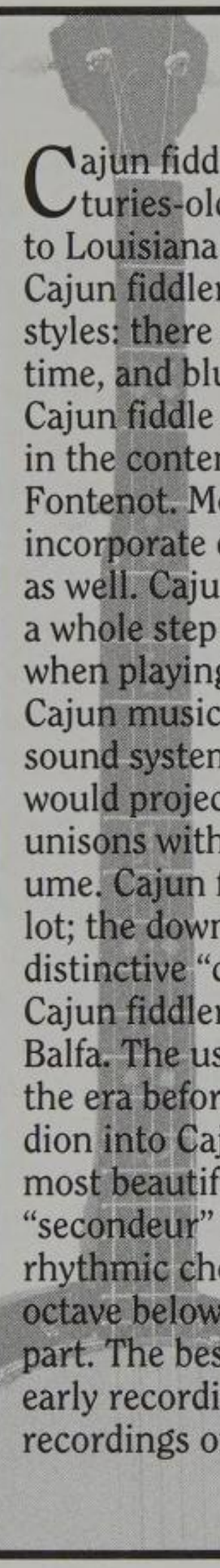
Give a Damn/Bitter Green ♪♪ (Castle/Transatlantic, 1969/1997)

influences:

- Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, Dubliners, Donal Lunny, Christy Moore, Sean Corcoran
- Planxty, Mick Moloney, Moloney, O'Connell & Keane, Green Fields of America, Paul Brady.

Steve Winick

418 *carol elizabeth jones & james leva*



cajun fiddle

Cajun fiddle style has its roots in the centuries-old tunes that the Acadians brought to Louisiana from Canada, but over 200 years Cajun fiddlers have borrowed from many other styles: there are echoes of Western Swing, ragtime, and blues in the archaic stylings of Cajun fiddle pioneer Dennis McGee as well as in the contemporary Creole fiddling of Canray Fontenot. Modern players like Michael Doucet incorporate elements of rock and roll and jazz as well. Cajun fiddlers often tune their fiddles a whole step low, in order to use open strings when playing with a C accordion. Because Cajun music evolved long before the use of sound systems, fiddlers developed a style that would project, using lots of droning and unisons with open strings to boost their volume. Cajun fiddlers slide in and out of notes a lot; the downward slide is what produces the distinctive "cry" that is a hallmark of great Cajun fiddlers like Harry Choates and Dewey Balfa. The use of two fiddles was the norm in the era before the introduction of the accordion into Cajun music, and it is one of the most beautiful sounds in Cajun music. The "secondeur" plays a separate part, sometimes a rhythmic chording, sometimes a melody an octave below the lead, sometimes a harmony part. The best examples can be heard in the early recordings of Dennis McGee and the recordings of the Balfa Brothers.

Suzy Thompson

Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Formed early 1990s, in Lexington, VA.

James Leva and Carol Elizabeth Jones have been playing and performing old-time Appalachian music, vintage and classic American country, and multi-influenced original music for most of their lives. Fans of traditional music will know them for their work with numerous bands such as the Renegades, the Wandering Ramblers, the Wildcats, the Freewill Savages, and the Hellbenders as well as many others. Jones has one of the most wonderful voices in old-time and folk music today. One word from her beautiful voice from the mountains is worth a thousand pictures. Leva also has a great voice, as well as being a magnificent guitarist, clawhammer banjo player, and fiddler. He shines not only when he is taking the lead in a fiddle tune like "Cluck Old Hen" from the Renegades, but also when he is accompanying an original song.

what to buy: *Light Enough to Find My Way* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. James Leva, Carol Elizabeth Jones, Dave Grant, Paul Kovac) is their debut album for Rounder. It puts the spotlight on their original songs, although on many occasions, such as with the Jones-penned "North Country," you'll swear that this is some traditional song, just discovered from some old-timer in the southern mountains. The same is true for the devastating "Black as a Crow," which James wrote himself. This song about the real-life tragedy that struck an Alaskan family is so powerful that you can't listen to it and not be affected. The stark accompaniments bring the songs down to their basics and the result is that you feel as if you are in direct contact with James, Jones, and their stories.

what to buy next: If you want a mixture of their original songs with the traditional cuts they do so well, then you should get their work together as the Renegades. Their album *I Need to Find* ♪♪♪♪ (Carryon, 1995, prod. Renegades) features Jones and Leva, along with June Drucker, Richie Stearns, and Al Tharp. From "Highlander's Farewell" to "Ain't No Ash Will Burn," this is a solid recording.

worth searching for: Jones has some cassette-only releases out on the Marimac label based in Crown Point, Indiana, that are worth searching out. Bands include the Wandering Ramblers and the Wildcats, all excellent old-time revival bands who concentrate on traditional tunes and songs. All of this material is superb. Marimac is starting to release their newer albums on CD so, hopefully, they'll get to their wonderful back catalog in the near future.

influences:

◀◀ Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, Doug & Jack &Wallin

▶▶ Rhythm Rats, Red Mules

Steve Gardner

Diane Jones and Hubie King

Formed 1988, in Elkins, WV.

Diane Jones (born October 31, 1942, in Mt. Holly, NJ), banjo, vocals; Hubie King (born March 1, 1933, in Washington, DC), banjo.

Diane Jones got her start in traditional Appalachian music on the mountain dulcimer during the late 1970s and took up the

banjo in 1981. She was influenced by a wide range of old-time musicians in the Washington, D.C., area and at various music camps in West Virginia and North Carolina. Along the way, she connected with fiddlers Dave Bing and Pete Vigour, of West Virginia and Virginia, respectively. Like many other traditional performers who did not grow up with the music, much of her early exposure came through programs such as the Augusta Heritage Workshops in Elkins, West Virginia. She met Hubie King when both were taking summer classes in folklore at Augusta. Like Jones, King is an urban musician with a strong preference for traditional mountain music. He played banjo in a bluegrass band for several years during the 1950s and drifted into the old-time camp years later, through much the same process as Jones. Eventually, their friendship and musical compatibility led them to the recording studio.

what's available: Jones and Hubie team up with others to present a wide range of traditional Appalachian music on *There Are No Rules* ♪♪♪♪ (1996, prod. Diane Jones, Hubie King). This is primarily a banjo recording, but with diversity. Jones is a rock-solid clawhammmer banjo player and plays with exceptional clarity. Her control of the instrument stands out on solo banjo pieces like "Singing Birds," which ought to be required listening for those aspiring to play this style. Her voice is strong and without affect, a big plus when singing traditional songs, and she excels at providing banjo accompaniment to the fiddle. This combination of instruments is at the very heart of old-time music, and the five such pieces on this disc are fine examples. King plays both clawhammer and fingerpicking styles, and it's the latter that really shines on this recording. Fingerstyle banjo is less popular than clawhammer among contemporary old-time banjo players, but it's every bit as authentic. Tunes like "Coal Creek March" and "Lost Gander" are extremely complex and difficult, and King does a yeoman's job of presenting them close to their original form. Jones and King team up to combine clawhammer and fingerstyle on a couple of tunes. This is difficult to do and have it sound right, but they succeed. The liner notes are comprehensive, including the tuning of the instruments. This disc might be difficult to find in stores but is available from the artists at 4639 Luxberry Drive, Fairfax, Virginia 20032.

influences:

⏪ Gerry Milnes, Dwight Diller, Dave Bing, Ron Mullenex

⏩ Arnie Naiman, Chris Coole

Dave Shombert

George Jones

Born September 12, 1931, in Saratoga, TX.

George Jones—"The Possum"—is one of the few real living legends in country music today. He has been cited as a major influence by just about every popular country singer of the day, from Garth Brooks to Tanya Tucker. Even though he can't compete with most of them for space on the radio these days, Jones's hurtful nasal tones and honest delivery is all over contemporary country music. And they don't call Jones the "Rolls-Royce of country singers" for nothing. Nobody can cry in their beer more pitifully, bemoan the loss of their woman more painfully, or put himself down more severely than Jones can. He has pretty much stuck to what works over the 40-plus years he's been a recording artist, though he has dabbled briefly with rock 'n' roll (he cut "Heartbreak Hotel" as Hank Smith and "Rock It" as Thumper Jones) and has tried his hand at gospel occasionally. But Jones is at his best when he's singing those honky-tonk blues. His ability to convey pain and regret has made him an excellent duet partner, too; the team-up of the Possum and ex-wife Tammy Wynette was the most formidable male-female duo in country, and one of its most colorful. The key to the Texan's success has been his ability to pick material that mirrors his own messy life—three divorces, years of drinking, and hard living—though the man who once earned the nickname "No-Show Jones" because of his frequently canceled shows has settled down since the early 1980s, living a relatively clean and uneventful life with current wife Nancy. Now in his mid-60s, Jones keeps on plugging away, with tributes and honors still coming his way, including induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame and a tribute duets album featuring everyone from Alan Jackson to Rolling Stone Keith Richards. A number of Jones's songs are considered definitive country, and one of them, "He Stopped Loving Her Today," was voted the #1 country song in a *Country America* magazine reader's poll.

what to buy: Jones has recorded for several labels during the past 40 years, which makes it hard to own the more than five dozen albums he's released since 1955. Compilations are your best bet, but with so many of them, stick to *The Essential George Jones* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1994, prod. various). Most of his best known hits are here, along with guest performers like Johnny Paycheck, James Taylor, Melba Montgomery, and, of course, Wynette.

what to buy next: *The Best of George Jones* ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, comp. prod. Bill Inglot) covers top hits between 1955 ("Why

Baby Why") and the late 1960s, before Jones dumped producer Pappy Daily for the broader palette of Billy Sherrill and the wider distribution of Epic Records. *The Bradley Barn Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1994, prod. Brian Ahern) is a loving tribute to the man, with a diverse array of roots, country, and rock people contributing to this upbeat, loving collection of modern remakes of some of his greatest songs.

what to avoid: Several of Jones's early recordings are out of print, though some have been saved by reissue labels like Razor & Tie and Hollywood/Rounder. Still, there's a lot of bad hits packages and compilations out there that conform to the same formula: throw a couple of widely known hits in with a bunch of average or mediocre stuff and call it a hits album. Among them: *Greatest Country Hits* ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990); *All-Time Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1994); *Golden Hits* ♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1965); *Party Pickin'* ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1967); *14 Greats* ♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1992); and *Greatest Hits, Volume 2* ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1966). Some of his thematic albums don't fare much better, such as the gospel records *Homecoming in Heaven* ♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1962, prod. Pappy Daily) and *24 Gospel Greats* ♪♪ (Deluxe, 1993, prod. various), or the salute *George Jones Sings Bob Wills* ♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1963, prod. Pappy Daily).

the rest:

The New Favorites of George Jones ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1962)
George Jones Sings the Hits of His Country Cousins ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1962)
George Sings like the Dickens! ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1963)
My Favorites of Hank Williams ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1963)
The Race Is On ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1965)
At His Best ♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1967)
Life Turned Her That Way ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1967)
(With Tammy Wynette) *We Love to Sing about Jesus* ♪♪♪ (Epic 1972)
George Jones Sings the Great Songs of Leon Payne ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/Rounder, 1973)
The Grand Tour ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1973)
(With Tammy Wynette) *Golden Ring* ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1976/1997)
(With Tammy Wynette) *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1977)
All-Time Greatest Hits, Volume 1 ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1977)
Bartender's Blues ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1978)
My Very Special Guests ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1979)
I Am What I Am ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1980)
(With Johnny Paycheck) *Double Trouble* ♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1980)
(With Tammy Wynette) *Together Again* ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1980)
(With Tammy Wynette) *Encore: George Jones & Tammy Wynette* ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1981)
Still the Same Old Me ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1981)
Anniversary—Ten Years of Hits ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1982)
Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1984)
By Request ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1984)
George Jones Salutes Hank Williams ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1984)
Wine-Colored Roses ♪♪ (Epic, 1986)
Super Hits ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1987)
I'm a One-Woman Man ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1988)
First Time Live ♪ (Epic, 1989)
You Oughta Be Here ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1990)
Hallelujah Weekend ♪♪ (Columbia, 1990)
And Along Came Jones ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991)
20 Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Deluxe, 1991)
Friends in High Places ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1991)
Walls Can Fall ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992)
(With Tammy Wynette) *George & Tammy's Greatest Hits, Volume 2* ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1992)
High-Tech Redneck ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1993)
Super Hits Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1993)
(With Melba Montgomery) *Vintage Collections* ♪♪♪ (Capitol/EMI, 1993)
A Cup of Loneliness ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1994)
(With Tammy Wynette) *The President & the First Lady* ♪♪♪ (TeeVee, 1995)
(With Tammy Wynette) *One* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)
(With Tammy Wynette) *Super Hits* ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1995)
I Lived to Tell It All ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1996)
Hits ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1997)

worth searching for: *Ladies' Choice* ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1984, prod. Billy Sherrill) teamed the duet master with a formidable (in its day) cast of partners that included Loretta Lynn, Barbara Mandrell, Emmylou Harris, and Lacy J. Dalton. It's currently available only as an import.

influences:

◀◀ Lefty Frizzell, Hank Williams, Roy Acuff

▶▶ Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, Randy Travis, Mark Chesnutt, Vern Gosdin, Sammy Kershaw

Doug Pullen

Grandpa Jones

Born Louis Marshall Jones, October 20, 1913, in Niagara, KY. Died February 19, 1998, in Nashville, TN.

Born to a musically talented family, Louis Jones won a talent contest on the guitar at 16, then launched his career as a country singer, banjo player, and comedian with radio appearances in 1929. Billed as "The Young Singer of Old Songs" while paired with ballad singer Bradley Kincaid, Jones became "Grandpa" at 22, wearing an old-man costume because he sounded so much older on the radio. Tall tales about mountain folk, accompanied by the banjo, became Jones's trademark as he struck out on his

own in 1937. Although World War II interrupted Jones's career, he cut his first records during the mid-1940s with "It's Raining Here This Morning," "Eight More Miles to Louisville," and "Mountain Dew." After beginning work on the Grand Ole Opry in 1946, Jones worked on radio and TV shows in Virginia and Washington, D.C., until returning to Nashville and a regular stint on the Opry in 1959. That year he had a Top 25 hit with Bobby Bare's "The All-American Boy," then hit the Top 5 with Jimmie Rodgers's "T for Texas." Jones's popularity remained high until his death, having been boosted by a regular slot on *Hee Haw*, induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1978, and continued Opry appearances.

what to buy: Though the 16 recordings on *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Country Music Foundation) don't come from Jones's heyday (that would come later for Monument), this is certainly the best-assembled collection available on Jones. Recorded between 1956 and 1959, these 15 studio tracks and one live cut from the Opry find Jones flirting with country (Johnny Cash's "Pickin' Time") as well as recording such old tunes as Bascom Lamar Lunsford's "Mountain Dew" and Jimmie Rodgers's "Waiting for a Train."

what to buy next: Recorded in Cincinnati during 1969, *Grandpa Jones Live* ♪♪♪½ (Sony Music Special Products, 1969/1992, prod. Ray Pennington) captures Jones in all his hillbilly-vaudevillian glory just as a whole new audience was discovering him through *Hee Haw*. It's a wonderful introduction to Jones's style and charm—particularly his famed cowbell routine on "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean," though that's a better sight gag.

the rest:
(With Ramona) *Grandpa Jones Story* ♪♪½ (CMH, 1976)
Old Time Country Music Collection ♪♪½ (CMH, 1978)
Family Album ♪♪½ (CMH, 1979)
Family Gathering ♪♪½ (CMH, 1981)
24 Country Hits ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/IMG, 1988)
16 Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1992)
Good Ole Mountain Dew ♪♪♪½ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
A Pickin' and a Grinnin' ♪♪♪½ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)

worth searching for: Details about release dates and such are extremely sketchy, but Jones released a number of cassettes on his own. Among them are *Poems and Songs* ♪♪, *Poems and Songs Volume 2* ♪♪, and *Fifty Years of Country* ♪♪. For the true fanatic, Germany's Bear Family label offers *Everybody's Grandpa* ♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1997), a five-disc box set that covers Jones's recordings between 1960 and 1973.

influences:
◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Jimmie Rodgers
▶▶ Stringbean

Randall T. Cook

Rickie Lee Jones

Born November 8, 1954, in Chicago, IL.

When she stormed on the moribund late '70s music scene like a breath of funky fresh air in 1979 with "Chuck E.'s in Love," Rickie Lee Jones was heralded as the next Joni Mitchell. More of a chanteuse than Mitchell, however, Jones sometimes went for the minimalist beatnik approach (beret and all) and sometimes for lush stylings with heavy jazz leanings. Her range of styles makes her an artist not to be trifled with, though, like Mitchell, it also hurts her commercially because she can't be pigeonholed. Jones songs are less cerebral than Mitchell's, but are sometimes more accessible for just that reason. A stormy childhood and early barfly existence seasoned her at a young age, as did a relationship with Tom Waits. Her songwriting talents were noticed by Lowell George, who recorded her "Easy Money" on *Thanks I'll Eat It Here* in 1978. Since then, she's recorded dozens of her own and others' compositions in her slurry, sometimes breathy soprano—always backed by impeccably pedigreed talents, some of whom seem to cross genres just for her. Today she's firmly in the "lite music/smooth jazz" mode, though radio could do a lot worse than Rickie Lee—in those or any other formats. And with her penchant for trying new directions, there's no telling where she'll head next.

what to buy: From the soul of Laura Nyro ("Young Blood") to the cool jazz/blues of "The Last Chance Texaco" and "Danny's All-Star Joint," Jones's debut, *Rickie Lee Jones* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979, prod. Lenny Waronker, Russ Titelman), is the kind of album that earns Best New Artist Grammys, and in fact, put one in her hands. On *Traffic from Paradise* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1993, prod. Rickie Lee Jones), a matured, more introspective Jones crafts a wonderful collection of songs, highlighted by the shimmering "Stewart's Coat" and "Beat Angels" and an interestingly minimalist version of David Bowie's "Rebel Rebel."

what to buy next: Starker, sadder, and more experimental than her debut, *Pirates* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1981, prod. Russ Titelman, Lenny Waronker) is relieved by the infectious funk of "Woody and Dutch on the Slow Train to Peking" and "Pirates (So Long Lonely Avenue)," a near remake of "Chuck E.'s in

ledward kaapana

Love." On *Flying Cowboys* ♪♪♪♪½ (Geffen, 1989, prod. Walter Becker), Rickie finds reggae/funk on "Ghetto of My Mind," while still paying her great debt to the Laura Nyro/girl group harmonizers who helped popularize the styles from which she draws. Crisp production and delightful arrangements abound, and she gets extra points for her cover of "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying" and the syncopation-meets-gospel of "Love Is Gonna Bring Us Back Alive." "Juke Box Fury" and "The Real End" are catchy standouts on *The Magazine* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1984, prod. Rickie Lee Jones, James Newton Howard).

what to avoid: For *Ghostyhead* ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1997, prod. Rickie Lee Jones, Rick Boston), Jones veers off toward techno, acid jazz, drum machines, and programmed loops—with mixed results.

the rest:
Pop Pop ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1991)
Naked Songs ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1995)

worth searching for: *Girl at Her Volcano* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1983) includes Billy Strayhorn's "Lush Life" and the Left Banke's "Walk Away Renee," along with "My Funny Valentine" and "Under the Boardwalk."

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan, Billie Holiday, Laura Nyro, Carole King, Randy Newman
▶▶ Laura Love, Bruce Cockburn, Jewel

Lynne Margolis

Ledward Kaapana

See: Hui Ohana

Brenda Kahn

Born May 3, 1967, in Hartford, CT.

Rising out of the Alphabet City "anti-folk" scene in late 1980s Manhattan, singer-songwriter Brenda Kahn took lessons from folk scene veteran Dave Van Ronk but was equally influenced by punk—especially its DIY ethic and emotional directness. She chose the solo acoustic path because, while growing up in New Jersey, local bands resisted the idea of a female guitarist. She's persevered through horrible record label experiences and continues to put her vividly etched depictions of relationships and occasionally piquant political statements before the public, working solo or with a trio. Given the recent public acceptance of "angry women" a la Alanis Morrisette, the underexposed Kahn could, with luck, find a major audience.

what to buy: With minimal bass-and-drums backing, *Goldfish Don't Talk Back* ♪♪♪♪ (Community 3, 1990, prod. Albert Garzon) showcases fantastic songwriting (the elegiac "Winchester Chimes"), powerful politics (the viciously sarcastic "Eggs on Drugs"), and in-your-face romantic plaints. *Epiphany in Brooklyn* ♪♪♪♪ (Chaos/Columbia, 1992, prod. David Kahne) is slightly less consistent, but some of Kahn's inspired touches allow her to break out of the acoustic troubadour mold on quiet pieces full of atmosphere and foreboding ("Sleepwalking").

what to buy next: Columbia declined to issue *Destination Anywhere* ♪♪♪ (Through Being Cool/Shanachie, 1996, prod. Tim Patalan), Kahn's rock album, but "Yellow Sun" was catchy enough to have been a hit.

the rest:
Life in the Drug War Trenches ♪♪ (Crackpot EP, 1992)
Hey, Romeo/...and Door Locks ♪♪♪½ (Through Being Cool single, 1995)
Outside the Beauty Salon ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

worth searching for:

60-Second Critic ♪♪♪ (Chaos/Columbia, 1992, prod. Brenda Kahn, Dave Pirner), a duet with Soul Asylum's Dave Pirner, was a promo-only cassette single bitterly commenting on the choices in the '92 presidential election campaign.

influences:
◀◀ Bessie Smith, Phil Ochs, Dave Van Ronk, Lou Reed, Elvis Costello, Clash, X-Ray Spex, Pretenders, Michelle Shocked, Roger Manning
▶▶ Alanis Morrisette, Meredith Brooks

Steve Holtje

Si Kahn

Born April 23, 1944, in Boston, MA.

Politics, social concern, and the folk tradition are combined through the music of topical singer-songwriter Si Kahn. Accompanying his deep, rustic, baritone vocals on acoustic guitar, Kahn continues to musically chronicle modern society. His songs have not only provided a unique perspective on the struggles of the American working class but have explored the people of Poland, Ireland, and the Soviet Union. In addition to

being featured on his solo albums and duo recordings with John McCutcheon, Kahn's folk-like tunes, including "Aragon Mill," "Gone Gonna Rise Again," "Goin' to Work on Monday," and "Wild Rose of the Mountain," have become staples of contemporary bluegrass repertoires. The son of a rabbi and president of the national Hillel organization, Kahn grew up in Pennsylvania with the music of the Jewish liturgy. Although he's been involved with music for over two decades, Kahn has made the bulk of his living as a political organizer. All fees from his concerts go directly into his non-profit organization, Grassroots Leadership. Kahn has written two books on political organizing—*How People Get Power* and *Organizing*.

what to buy: On *In My Heart: Live in Holland* ♪♪♪ (Strictly Country, 1993/Philo, 1994, prod. Jesse M. Kahn, Pieter Groenveld), captured during a 1993 concert in Holland, Kahn offers an intimate sampling of his best-known tunes.

what to buy next: On *Good Times and Bedtimes* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Cathy Fink), Kahn turns his focus to the youngest members of his audience. Accompanied by Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer, Pete Kennedy, and the Critton Hollow Stringband, Kahn forsakes his usual themes and presents a child's-eye view of bedtimes, parents, and peanut-butter sandwiches.

the rest:
New Wood ♪♪½ (June Appal, 1974/Philo, 1994)
Home ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1980)
Doing My Job ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1982)
Unfinished Portraits ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)
(With John McCutcheon) *Sign of the Times* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
I'll Be There ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)
I Have Seen Freedom ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Companion ♪♪½ (Appalseed, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Joe Hill, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs

▶▶ John McCutcheon, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Scott Alarik

see also: *John McCutcheon, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer*

Craig Harris

George Kahumoku Jr.

Born early 1950s, in HI.

Like many of Hawaii's slack-key guitarists, George Kahumoku Jr. comes from a family of pickers, most notably his father, George Sr., and younger brother, Moses. Also like many slack-key guitarists, music isn't his only profession: Kahumoku is also a self-employed farmer with degrees in sculpture and agriculture. A player, singer, and composer, Kahumoku began playing professionally at age 13 with Hawaiian singer-songwriter Kui Lee; he also performed with Moses as the Kahumoku Brothers during the '70s and '80s.

what's available: The 12-string guitar that Kahumoku uses throughout *Drenched by Music* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1997, prod. George Winston, George Kahumoku Jr.) gives this album a fuller guitar sound than most of the other releases on Dancing Cat. The occasional vocal recording is sung in Hawaiian. Steel guitarist Bob Brozman joins Kahumoku on the duet "Hanohano Hawai'i" and Hawaiian singer Diana Aki contributed vocals to "Kaulana O Kawaihae (Famous Is Kawaihae)," a song also performed by Ledward Kaapana and his group Hui Ohana.

influences:
◀◀ Sonny Chillingworth, Gabby Pahinui, Ledward Kaapana, Leonard Kwan, Ray Kane

▶▶ Moses Kahumoku

Brian Mansfield

Moses Kahumoku

Born 1953, in Honolulu, HI.

Moses Kahumoku is known in his home region for more than just his music. In addition to being a noted slack-key guitarist and one half of the popular Kahumoku Brothers (George Kahumoku Jr. is his older sibling), Kahumoku is a well-known activist working for Hawaiian sovereignty as well as a fisherman and farmer. Although he does compose, he's more highly regarded as an interpreter and improviser on his instrument.

what's available: Kahumoku sings on only four of the 14 tracks on *Ho' okupu ("The Gift")* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1995, prod. George Winston), so the rest of the album focuses on his singular style, which is marked by its arpeggiated melodies, single-note runs, and flamenco influence. It includes a couple of familiar Hawaiian songs, "Hawai'i Aloha" and "Kaula 'Ili," the latter a tune associated with Sonny Chillingworth, who died shortly before the album's release.

influences:
◀◀ Sonny Chillingworth, Gabby Pahinui, Ledward Kaapana, Leonard Kwan, Ray Kane

▶▶ George Kahumoku Jr.

see also: *George Kahumoku Jr.*

Brian Mansfield

connie kaldor

Connie Kaldor

Born c. 1955.

Connie Kaldor likes being called a "folk chanteuse." It highlights the theater that is so much a part of her creativity. Kaldor is one of the strongest of the folk-influenced artists who have surfaced in Canada in the last three decades. She draws on her experiences as an older woman (in the entertainment world, anything over 30 passes for "older") and a mother; she also endeavors to keep her songs universal rather than exclusively personal.

what's available: *Small Cafe* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1997, prod. Paul Campagne), Kaldor's first U.S. release, reveals her as a rich-voiced, contemplative singer with the zing of Joan Armatrading and a fine sense of melody. "What Do They Know?" is a strong rock track (and a caveat to critics everywhere).

influences:

⏮ Sylvia Tyson, Ferron, Holly Near

⏭ Susan Werner

Pamela Murray Winters

Cindy Kallet

Born January 10, 1955, in New York, NY.

Cindy Kallet is a well-respected singer-songwriter hailing from Rockland, Maine. She is widely known for her heartfelt singing, her honest and intelligent songwriting, her skillful playing, and her quietly outrageous humor. Music has always been a part of Kallet's life, from singing in the car with family, to piano and violin lessons at ages seven and eight, to teaching herself guitar at age 11. She began writing songs when she was about 13 years old and as a young adult she was encouraged by her brother, Tony, to find a wider audience for her songs. In 1979, after playing a few concerts on Martha's Vineyard, where she lived for several years, Kallet sent a note to Sandy and Caroline Paton of Folk-Legacy Records in Connecticut, asking if she might send them a tape of her songs. The ensuing correspondence resulted in her appearance at the 1980 Folk-Legacy Festival in Hartford and then in the release of her first album, *Working on Wings to Fly*, followed by two additional solo albums since then. Kallet's songs arise from just about anything—life's many trials, love (lost, mostly), water (the ocean in particular), and some overtly political topics, although "she never hits us over the head with her concerns," according to a *Hartford Advocate* review. Kallet enjoys singing and performing with her friends Ellen Epstein Maxwell (vocals, guitar) and Michael Cicone (vocals, hammered dulcimer, piano), and this trio made two recordings—one in 1988 and the second in 1993. While there is some instrumental accompaniment on selected cuts, the *a cappella* singing of this trio is exceptional on traditional songs, Kallet original compositions, and songs by Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Dillon Bustin, and Larry Kaplan. One of Kallet's more recent collaborations has been with Gordon Bok, a poet, woodcarver, and songwriter from Camden, Maine. In 1983 the Patons suggested they join their music in a concert or two, and the result was so much fun that they continued to meet occasionally over the next few years. Twelve years later they recorded *Neighbors* together, which is a wonderful collection of traditional and contemporary pieces (several focused on sailors and the sea) that also features the duo's outstanding guitar skills. Any of these recordings are available through Folk-Legacy Records, or from the artist at P. O. Box 784, Rockland, Maine 04841.

what to buy: *Dreaming down a Quiet Line* ♪♪♪♪ (Stone's Throw Music, 1989, prod. Cindy Kallet) is filled with Kallet's quiet masterpieces. With help from Gordon Bok, Michael Cicone, Ellen Epstein, and Lisa Kallet-Mare, she presents 13 originals, "Sarah's Song" by Joel Zoss, and the traditional "Cherry Tree Carol." The songs are more about people than nature but she still manages to evoke the stunning images of the shoreline that mark her best work. Her guitar playing adds considerably to the moods she sets. "Song for Margaret" is sung for an infant with the marvelous line, "oh, Margaret, your name is longer than you."

what to buy next: *Working on Wings to Fly* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1981/1997, prod. Cindy Kallet, Folk-Legacy) is Kallet's debut recording of 16 original compositions. She accompanies herself with a tasteful guitar and is joined in wonderful harmony on four selections by Ellen Epstein Maxwell and her sister, Lisa Kallet. Songs include "Three-Masted Schooner," about an imaginary sea voyage, "Hang in There," a song of encouragement for a friend, and "Shores of Africa," a song of grim thoughts about the hardened world around us. *Cindy Kallet II* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1983, prod. Sandy Paton) (cassette only) differs from the first in that there are more complex melodies, more emphatic political statements, and more emphasis on instrumentals. Your choice.

solo outings:

Cindy Kallet, Ellen Epstein & Michael Cicone:

Angels in Daring ♪♪♪ (Overall Music, 1988)

Only Human ♪♪♪ (Overall Music, 1993)

Gordon Bok & Cindy Kallet:
Neighbors ♪♪♪ (Timberhead Music, 1996)

influences:

⏪ Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, Mimi & Dick Fariña, Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez, Tom Paxton

⏩ Sally Rogers, Claudia Schmidt

Heidi Cerrigione and Neal Walters

Kathy Kallick

Born September 19, 1952, in Chicago, IL.

Singer/songwriter Kathy Kallick first made a name for herself in 1975 as a co-founder of the Bay Area bluegrass band the Good Ol' Persons. Originally comprising five women (including Laurie Lewis), the band incorporated swing, Latin, and folk music into their bluegrass sound. Kallick released a solo children's album in 1987 and has since released one children's and two "adult" albums.

what to buy: *Use a Napkin (Not Your Mom)* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Alan Senauke, Kathy Kallick) is considered by many to be among the best children's album in recent years. It mixes old-timey country/bluegrass songs with elements of jazz, swing, and zydeco. It contains great originals like the title song, as well as traditional numbers ("Liza Jane") and historic pieces ("Did You See Jackie Robinson Hit That Ball?").

what to buy next: *Matters of the Heart* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Todd Phillips), Kallick's first solo album, was a bit of a change of pace from her music with the Good Ol' Persons. The 13 original songs are played on bluegrass instruments plus drums and/or percussion. Piano and accordion appear in spots. Jazz progressions and a rock beat make this something other than a bluegrass album.

the rest:
What Do You Dream About? ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990/1997)
(With Laurie Lewis) *Together* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991/1995)
Call Me a Taxi ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

influences:

⏪ Good Ol' Persons, Doc Watson

⏩ Laurie Lewis, Sally Van Meter

see also: *Good Ol' Persons*

Douglas Fulmer

editor's choice
15 old time fiddle albums

Ed Haley, *Forked Deer* (Rounder)
Various Artists, *Virginia Breakdown* (County)
Buddy Thomas, *Kitty Puss* (Rounder)
Benton Flippen, *Old Times New Times* (Rounder)
John Salyer, *Home Recordings 1941–1942* (Berea College)
Tommy Jarrell, *Tommy and Fred* (County)
Bruce Molsky, *Lost Boy* (Rounder)
Various Artists, *Old Time Fiddle Classics* (County)
Hank Bradley, *Hassle the Caller* (Sage Arts)
Dirk Powell & John Herrmann, *One Eyed Dog* (Yodel-Ay-Hee)
Bruce Greene, *Five Miles of Ellum Wood* (BG)
Rafe Stefanini & Bob Herring, *Old Paint* (Yodel-Ay-Hee)
Lynn "Chirps" Smith, *Midwestern Harvest* (Marimac)
Lyman Enloe, *Fiddle Tunes I Recall* (County)
Brad Leftwich, *Say Old Man* (County)

Rev. Dennis Kamakahi

Born 1953, in Honolulu, HI.

A popular and prolific Hawaiian songwriter, the Rev. Dennis Kamakahi has recorded only rarely as a frontman or solo performer. The son and grandson of slack-key guitarists and a direct descendant of Maui's last chief, Kamakahi grew up with a deep love and respect for Hawaiian musical history that remains evident in his music. He formed the popular group Na Paniolo during the 1960s and in 1973 replaced Gabby Pahinui as the slack-key player in the Sons of Hawaii, a group with which he continues to play. He is an ordained, but rarely practicing, Episcopalian minister.

what's available: When *Pua'ena ("Glow Brightly")* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1996, prod. George Winston) came out, it marked Kamakahi's first recording session in more than a decade and his

kieran kane

first ever as a solo slack-key artist. Sung mostly in Hawaiian, the music is soothing and often romantic in nature, with tunes split between Kamakahi's originals and songs by nineteenth-century Hawaiian royalty.

influences:

⏪ Sons of Hawaii, Gabby Pahinui, Sonny Chillingworth, Leonard Kwan, Raymond Kane

⏩ George Kuo, Hawaiian Style Band

Brian Mansfield

Kieran Kane /The O'Kanes

Born October 7, 1949, in Queens, NY. O'Kanes formed 1986, in Nashville, TN. Disbanded 1990.

Jamie O'Hara (born August 8, 1950, in Toledo, OH), guitar, vocals; Kieran Kane, guitar, vocals.

Kieran Kane began his musical career as a rock 'n' roll drummer at age nine. He also worked as a Los Angeles session musician before moving to Nashville in 1979 and making a name for himself as a writer of songs for Alabama and other acts. Kane recorded for Elektra and Warner Bros. during the early 1980s, reaching the Top 20 six times with songs like "You're the Best" and "It's Who You Love." In 1986 he and songwriting partner Jamie O'Hara formed the O'Kanes and recorded three albums for Columbia. The O'Kanes disbanded in 1990, and Kane began recording on his own. In 1994, he started an artists' cooperative indie label, Dead Reckoning, with Kevin Welch, Harry Stinson, and Tammy Rogers, and has become one of the leading voices of independent music in Nashville.

what's available: *Dead Reckoning* ♪♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1995, prod. Harry Stinson, Kieran Kane) was a ground-breaking album because it was one of the first Nashville albums produced by an artist-run independent label. Since Kane was working on his own terms, this is a stripped-down affair (even more so than his other records), with songs that may take a while to get under the skin but stay there longer. The instrumentals center around Kane on guitar, drummer Harry Stinson, and fiddler Tammy Rogers (all co-owners of the label). Guitarist Mike Henderson brings his blues bite in on three cuts, including a cover of Buck Owens's "Love's Gonna Live Here." Emmylou Harris and Lucinda Williams contribute harmonies to "This Dirty Little Town." On the Dead Reckoners' *A Night of Reckoning* ♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1997, prod. Harry Stinson) Kane joins compatriots Mike Henderson, Tammy Rodgers, Harry Stinson, Kevin Welch, and others for an album-length guitar pull that defines the label's raison d'être as well as anything. Kane contributes two tunes, "I Desire Fire" and "Rocky Road," an O'Kanes-era tune.

worth searching for: The O'Kanes had only a half-dozen hits (and one #1, "Can't Stop My Heart from Loving You") in their four years together; the act's influence has outstripped its success. *The O'Kanes* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987, prod. Kieran Kane, Jamie O' Hara) has the lion's share of the hits. *Find My Way Home* ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1994) is Kane's first solo album after the breakup of the O'Kanes.

influences:

⏪ Foster & Lloyd, John Prine

⏩ Kevin Welch, Lucinda Williams

Brian Mansfield and Daniel Durchholz

Ray Kane /Raymond Kane

Born 1925, in 'Ele'ele, Kaua'i, HI.

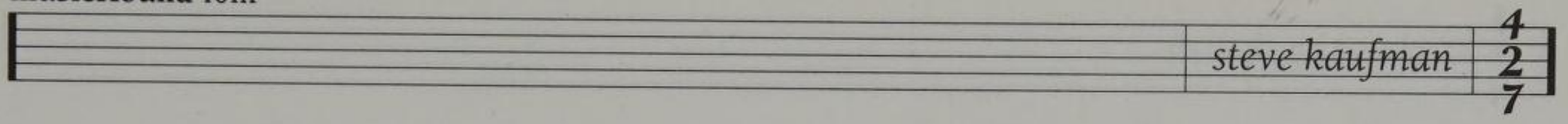
One of the oldest slack-key guitarists who still performs regularly, Ray Kane grew up the son of a fisherman and traded fish for guitar lessons as a youngster. He didn't begin playing seriously until after a stint in the armed services, making his first recordings in 1961 and his first full-length album more than a dozen years later. Though he was the first slack-key player to give a full-length solo recital, he made his living as a welder through most of his career. In 1987 Kane received a National Endowment for the Arts Heritage Fellowship Award, and he continues to record and tour frequently.

what's available: Kane relishes his role as one of the elder statesmen of slack key, and half the charm of the live *Master of the Slack Key Guitar* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Robert Mugge) are the history lessons Kane offers with the performances. For a more purely musical experience, there's *Punahele* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1994, prod. George Winston). It features a version of Kane's most popular tune, "Punahele" (written in 1938) and vocals on four tracks, including "Hawai'i Aloha."

worth searching for: Kane recorded two albums for the Hawaiian Tradewinds label: *Nanakuli's Raymond Kane* (Tradewinds, 1974), which featured a backing band, and *Slack Key* (Tradewinds), which contained a half-dozen tracks recorded by Kane in 1961, along with six cuts from Leonard Kwan.

influences:

⏪ Sonny Chillingworth, Gabby Pahinui



Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, George Kuo

Brian Mansfield

Lucy Kaplansky

Born February 16, 1960, in Chicago, IL.

You might say Lucy Kaplansky's career didn't start to take off until she stopped practicing—psychology, that is. As part of the late '80s Greenwich Village folk scene that spawned Shawn Colvin, Suzanne Vega, and John Gorka, Kaplansky emerged as a highly sought-after background singer, contributing to such albums as Colvin's *Steady On*, Dar Williams's *Mortal City*, and most of Gorka's albums (that's her and Colvin lending the plaintive harmonies to his 1991 hit, "Houses in the Fields"). Still, she kept her day job counseling drug addicts and mentally ill patients at a local hospital and had even started her own practice when longtime pal and former duo partner Colvin agreed to produce the covers of Richard Thompson, David Massengill, Bill Morrissey, and Cliff Eberhardt tunes that make up the bulk of her 1994 solo debut, *The Tide*. That album, and a high-profile tour as Gorka's opening act, brought her name and her stirring, soulful alto out of the background. But she truly found her voice on 1996's *Flesh and Bone*, an engaging album that suggests her only sessions from now on should be recording, not therapy.

what's available: *The Tide* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994, prod. Shawn Colvin) is a pleasant tribute to her folkie peers, highlighted by a bluegrass version of Sting's "Secret Journey" that hints at her interpretive savvy. *Flesh and Bone* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996, prod. Anton Sanko) is a stronger, warmer, and more personal effort, partly because Kaplansky co-wrote eight of the 12 tunes. Yearning, acoustic guitar–driven folk-pop is still her forte, but such full-throttle country numbers as Gram Parsons's "The Return of the Grievous Angel," her own "Love Is the Ride," and a rollicking bluegrass take on Nick Lowe's "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding" reveal her playful side.

influences:

Suzanne Vega, Joni Mitchell

Shawn Colvin, Dar Williams

David Okamoto

Steve Kaufman

Born April 20, 1957, in New York, NY.

Steve Kaufman was introduced to music by his father, a jazz pianist, and his mother, a classically trained pianist. At the age of four, he started to play the piano and later moved on to the cello. At 10 he began playing the guitar, but after a few years of strumming, he put the guitar under the bed. At 14, he picked it up again and has not put it down since. Kaufman is the only three-time winner of the prestigious National Flatpicking Championships held in Winfield, Kansas, capturing first place in 1978, 1984, and 1986. His music covers a broad range of styles including bluegrass favorites, popular swing standards, Irish and Appalachian folk tunes, folk and country classics, and novelty tunes. He has been pleasing crowds from California to Austria since 1976, performing in a wide variety of settings, from elementary schools and colleges to major bluegrass festivals and concerts. Perhaps best known as a teacher, Kaufman keeps busy writing instructional manuals for Mel Bay Publications and audio and video instructional material for Homespun Tapes. His instruction catalog shows nearly 25 titles. He now lives in Alcoa, Tennessee.

what to buy: *Bullet Train* ♪♪♪ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1997, prod. Steve Kaufman) is Kaufman's latest release and contains an interesting selection of tunes, all played with verve and finesse by one of the finest flatpickers around. His guitar playing is astounding in terms of speed and precision, but he's not just flashy. As Doc Watson says, "the boy can pick."

what to buy next: *Not Much Work for Saturday* ♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Wayne Henderson, Steve Kaufman) teams Kaufman with Wayne Henderson, another hot picker and renowned luthier. The two tear though a collection of standards that stretch from "Freight Train" to "Bells of St. Mary." Henderson's unique style—he uses fingerpicks to get a flatpicked sound—complements Kaufman's straight-ahead flatpicking, and the contrast keeps things from getting even the least bit boring.

the rest:

Frost on the Window ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1986) (cassette only)
Strange Company ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1990) (cassette only)
Breaking Out ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1990)
To the Lady ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1993)
The Arkansas Traveler ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1994)
One Eye Open ♪♪♪½ (Andy Owens Project, 1996)
Star of the Country Down ♪♪♪½ (Sleeping Bear Productions, 1998)

influences:

Mark O'Connor, Dan Crary, Doc Watson

Allen Shadd

Neal Walters

jorma kaukonen

Jorma Kaukonen

See: Hot Tuna

Dolores Keane

Born in Caherlistrane, Co. Galway, Ireland.

The surname Keane was, and is still, O Catháin in the Gaelic language, and has ancient connections with the O'Neills. In the year 1260, the Irish Annals record the death in battle against the English invaders, of the "Chieftain Brian O'Neill . . . and 15 chieftains of the O'Kanes." Dolores Keane's family has lived at Caherlistrane in County Galway for generations and is justifiably famous for its singing and musicianship. Her own talent blossomed early: "Learning songs and tunes was like learning to walk," she once said. A neighbor of Frankie Gavin, Keane appeared on De Danann's first album. By that time she was already a mesmerizing presence on the Irish traditional music scene. She left the band to perform with her husband, John Faulkner, reunited with De Danann for a time (including a memorable performance of "Let It Be," dueting with Mary Black), and then eventually began to pursue a solo career. She is, as Nanci Griffith describes her, "the voice of Ireland."

what to buy: *The Best of Dolores Keane* ♪♪♪♪ (Dara, 1997, prod. various) is a compilation of 16 of the best songs from Keane's catalog. In addition to selections from her previous solo albums, it includes collaborations with Emmylou Harris, De Danann, Liam Bradley, and Mick Hanly. Keane's best material is traditional and she can be compelling. Her work with De Danann and her various collaborations with husband John Faulkner attest to that. Her last several solo albums have been more contemporary in nature as she tries to follow in the commercially successful footsteps of Mary Black and others. Fortunately this retrospective stays primarily in a traditional vein with only a nod towards her more contemporary efforts.

what to buy next: Keane's solo album *There Was a Maid* ♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1978) and her collaborations with Faulkner contain some great material; any of several releases are worthwhile. Try *Farewell to Eirinn* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1981, prod. John Faulkner, Dolores Keane, Seamus O'Neill, Carsten Linde), *Broken Hearted I'll Wander* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1981, prod. P.J. Curtis), or *Sail Óg Rua* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1984, prod. Dolores Keane, John Faulkner). You can't miss with any of them.

the rest:
Dolores Keane ♪♪♪ (self produced)
Solid Ground ♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993)
Lion in a Cage ♪♪½ (Rings End Road, 1989)

influences:
Sarah Keane, Rita Keane
Niamh Parsons, Eleanor McEvoy, Karan Casey

see also: *De Danann*

Neal Walters

James Keane

Born February 7, 1948, in Drimnagh, Dublin, Ireland.

While James Keane's achievements may have been somewhat overshadowed by that of his older fiddle-playing brother, Chieftains member Seán Keane, they are impressive nevertheless, and Keane must be counted as one of Ireland's top exponents of the B/C button accordion. Keane is first and foremost a "reel man": he can play reel after reel for hours with the same great drive and energy, a penchant which one can undoubtedly trace back to his days with the Castle Ceili Band of Dublin.

Keane was born in a musical family. His mother and father were both fiddle players, from Longford and Clare respectively, and they made sure to expose Seán and James to as much traditional music as they could find, taking them to the Dublin Pipers' Club and to the many local and national *fleadhs* (music festivals). Being a bit of a rebel, James went against the family tradition and became interested in the accordion, beginning at age six when he began toying with a small instrument his uncle Mick Keane had left at his parents' house. As soon as he started showing promise, his father got him his own instrument. When asked about his early influences, Keane names musicians like Clare piper Willie Clancy and accordion players Joe Cooley, whom he met again years later in San Francisco, Sonny Brogan, and Bill Hart. By age 11, Keane was entering competitions, and by the time he was 16 was a member of the famous Castle Ceili Band alongside such performers as Clare fiddle players John Kelly and Joe Ryan, flute players Michael Tubridy and Mick O'Connor, and Bridie Lafferty on piano. It was during the mid-1960s that Keane accomplished the unprecedented feat of winning three consecutive All-Ireland senior titles on the accordion: in 1964, 1965, and 1966. In 1967 he came to the United States on a three-week tour with the Loughrea Ceili Band, composed of Joe Burke (accordion), Kathleen Collins (fiddle), and Paddy Carty (flute). As soon as he returned to Ireland, Keane began making plans to return. He was back in New York the very next year to start performing at the John Barleycorn, a well-known Manhattan "ballad pub," with Dublin-born singer Michael "Jesse" Owens. This was a quite a change of pace for Keane, who could

no longer just play the traditional jigs and reels but mostly had to accompany songs. However, in the early 1970s he recorded two instrumental albums, one of them being the 1971 release *Sweet and Traditional*, which also featured Longford fiddler Paddy Reynolds and New York-born accordionist Charlie Mulvihill. The album has now been partially reissued as *Atlantic Wave*, with newly recorded tracks by Keane. Before he left Dublin, Keane had shared an apartment with two members of the famous Johnstons, Paul Brady and Mick Moloney, both of whom credit Keane with their introduction to traditional Irish music. During the 1970s Moloney would also find himself in the United States, working towards a Ph.D. in folklore and as a producer of recordings of Irish traditional music. Keane was one of the musicians recorded for *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from the East Coast of America, Volume I*, one of the anthologies Moloney produced for Rounder Records in 1977. In 1980, soon after Keane moved to Canada to join the band Ryan's Fancy, he was invited by Moloney to record for Green Linnet. The result was the release of Keane's powerful *Roll away the Reel World*, with brother Seán playing fiddle on a few tracks. Settling back in New York in 1983, Keane resumed his musical activities in the city and renewed his collaboration with Moloney, touring with the Green Fields of America and appearing on Moloney's 1984 duet album *Uncommon Bonds* alongside fiddler Eugene O'Donnell. In 1991 Keane appeared with many other Irish performers in an event organized to bring attention to the plight of Joseph Doherty, an Irish patriot held in a U.S. jail, a recording of which was released as *The Rights of Man*. Keane's long-awaited second solo album, *That's the Spirit*, finally came out in 1994, with a little surprise for his fans. The preceding year, Keane had switched from his trademark Paolo Soprani accordion to a Castagnari box, the difference in sound being quite noticeable on the recording. James Keane's latest recording project, just released on the Shanachie label, is an album entitled *With Friends Like These*. It features legendary musicians like Tommy Peoples, Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn, Paddy Glackin, and Kevin Conneff, all of whom Keane met around 1962–63, when traditional music sessions were taking off in Dublin.

what to buy: *Roll away the Reel World* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1980, prod. Mick Moloney) is the classic Keane recording. The duet tracks of the two Keane brothers are especially good, for instance on the reels "The Tempest/Sean Frank," but Keane's accordion playing is nowhere better than on the opening reel medley "Crossing the Shannon" or on "Master Crowley's," one of his favorite sets. *That's the Spirit* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Gabriel Donahue, James Keane) is Keane's first album recorded with his new Castagnari accordion. This, as well as the aggressive guitar and bodhrán accompaniments, account for the album's somewhat different sound. However, the gain in precision that the new instrument allows, as Keane explains in the notes, serves well his energetic style and easily makes up for whatever raw edge from the old Paolo Soprani may have been lost in the transition. Listen to him play Martin Mulhaire's reel "Carmel Mahoney Mulhaire," which he had recorded as "O'Mahoney's" on the previous album, and you'll be convinced. *With Friends Like These* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1998, prod. Garry O'Briain, Greg Anderson) is Keane's "going home" album, recorded with the musicians with whom Keane used to play back in Dublin when a teenager. They also happen to constitute a virtual "who's who" of Irish traditional players: Tommy Peoples and Paddy Glackin (fiddles), Matt Molloy (flute), Liam O'Flynn (uilleann pipes), Kevin Conneff (bodhrán, vocals), with Garry O'Briain (keyboards, guitar, mandocello) providing the accompaniments.

what to buy next: Although *Atlantic Wave* ♪♪♪♪½ (Kells Music, 1997, prod. Tom Horan, Paddy Noonan) is a reissue of sorts, half of it being from *Sweet and Traditional Music of Ireland* ♪♪♪♪ (Rego, 1971, prod. Paddy Noonan), Keane's tracks are brand new. The producers and performers were uncomfortable with the electric bass part on the original recordings, and Keane, who already had re-recorded some of his original tunes on later solo albums, asked to redo his tracks entirely, although still with piano great Felix Dolan as the accompanist. Keane's accordion would be easy to miss in the ensemble sound of *The Rights of Man: The Concert for Joseph Doherty* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Mick Moloney), but he plays a long and fiery solo on the excellent *Gaelic Roots* ♪♪♪♪½ (Kells Music, 1997, prod. Séamus Connolly), recorded live at Boston College during the festival of the same name.

worth searching for: Keane's great solo on the reels "Within a Mile of Dublin/The Spike Island Lassies" is only one of 22 reasons to look for *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from the East Coast of America, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977, prod. Mick Moloney), an anthology of some of the best Irish musicians in America today. Collectors will undoubtedly want the original version, on *Sweet and Traditional Music of Ireland*, for its historical value.

influences:

◀◀ Willie Clancy, Joe Cooley, Sonny Brogan, Bill Harte

▶▶ Joe Burke, Bobby Gardiner, Billy McComiskey, John Whelan

see also: *Seán Keane*

Philippe Varlet

Seán Keane

Born July 12, 1946, in Drimnagh, Dublin, Ireland.

A member of the internationally renowned Irish band, the Chieftains, Seán Keane was born to fiddle-playing parents who had moved from their native counties of Clare and Longford to the Dublin suburbs. Although traditional music was odd to the average Dubliner and traditional musicians were not welcome in public houses at the time, Keane and his brother, accordionist James Keane, were raised in a house always open to musicians and were encouraged to study dancing and music. Seán Keane's first love was apparently the uilleann pipes, which he first heard played by his uncle Peter Hanley. His hands being to small for the chanter, however, he started learning the fiddle, first with lessons on violin playing and classical music. But traditional music was never too far away, as Keane's parents took their children to hear it whenever possible. By 1960 Keane had abandoned the classical training and was already playing in several bands. In particular, he had joined the famous Castle Ceili Band, which counted among its members Seán's brother as well as a virtual who's who of Clare musicians in Dublin: John Kelly Sr., Joe Ryan, Michael Tubridy, and others. By age 16 Keane had left school and started working, eventually settling on a job at the post office. He was also frequenting O'Donoghue's, the only Dublin pub to allow traditional music and therefore the place to meet other musicians. In 1964 a particular event sealed then 18-year-old Keane's future; he became the grand winner of the fiddle competition held on the Ceoltóirí Cualann radio show and was invited by Seán Ó Riada, who was one of the judges, to join the group. Among its members was, of course, Paddy Moloney who, just a year earlier, had launched the Chieftains by recording, on the Claddagh label, an album conceived similarly to the ideas of Ó Riada. It wasn't long before Keane was the new Chieftain. While the Chieftains were starting to spread their wings, Ó Riada's health was declining rapidly and Ceoltóirí Cualann was dismissed shortly before Ó Riada died in October 1971. With Moloney fully in control as leader of the band and manager of Claddagh Records, the Chieftains' star continued to rise steadily. After a tremendously successful concert at the Royal Albert Hall of London in 1975, the musicians took the plunge and turned professional. It was that same year that Seán Keane recorded his first solo album, the impressive *Gusty's Frolicks*, for Claddagh. In all likelihood, Chieftains-related commitments have kept Keane busy enough over the years that he has had to be particular about when and what to record on his own. After a guest appearance on his brother's *Roll away the Reel World* in 1980, Keane participated in the anthology *An Fhidil Sraith II (The Fiddle, Volume II)* the same year, and recorded his second solo album, simply called *Seán Keane*, in 1981. His next trip to the studio was for the 1985 album *Contentment Is Wealth*, a fantastic duet recording with Roscommon flute player Matt Molloy, who had joined the Chieftains in 1979, and ace guitarist Arty McGlynn, later with Patrick Street. A third solo album, *Jig It in Style*, came out in 1990, as well as a book-and-tape set of fiddle tunes titled *50 Fiddle Solos*. Keane's last album appearance to date was on the 1992 *The Fire Aflame*, recorded with Molloy and Liam O'Flynn.

what to buy: *Gusty's Frolicks* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1975, prod. Paddy Moloney) is a masterful display of pure, unaccompanied, traditional fiddle playing. By the same token, this is not an album to listen to in a casual manner. Keane's love of the pipes and their idiom is plainly in evidence throughout, in the repertoire chosen as well as in the complex ornamentation developed by the fiddler. Seán Keane plays on four tracks of his brother James's *Roll away the Reel World* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1980, prod. Mick Moloney), an excellent album made all the more remarkable by these masterful duets. *Contentment Is Wealth* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1985, prod. Brian Masterson), with Chieftains colleague Matt Molloy (flute), is a superb album of tremendous duet playing, supported by Arty McGlynn's superior guitar accompaniments. Keane's only solo track is a mesmerizing tour-de-force where an imitation of piobaireachd is followed by William Marshall's strathspey "The Marquis of Huntley" and the high-wire hornpipe "The Mathematician," complete with flying spiccato bowing. On *Jig It in Style* ♪♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1990, prod. Brian Masterson, Paul Brady, Seán Keane), the emphasis seems to be on the mix of styles, as diverse as Scottish tunes learned from the recordings of Scott Skinner to American classics like "The Tennessee Stud" and "Heartbreak Hotel," with appropriate Dobro and bass accompaniment. Paul Brady's guitar and piano backing and the participation of former Planxty piper Liam O'Flynn give the album an enjoyable variety, but the overwhelming complexity of Keane's technique can sound somewhat contrived at times. Intended as a teaching package, *50 Fiddle Solos* ♪♪♪♪ (Conway Editions, 1990) is a book-and-tape set (distributed in the United States by Music Sales) presenting fiddle tunes played one at a time, with accompaniment on keyboards, bouzouki, guitar, and bodhrán. Keane is in great company on *The Fire Aflame* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1992, prod. Seán Keane, Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn), with Molloy (flute), O'Flynn (uilleann pipes), and McGlynn (guitar). As on *Contentment Is Wealth*, to which it is a worthy sequel, Keane ap-

pears to be toning down his fiddling for the sake of the ensemble playing, and all for the better.

worth searching for: Seán Keane was one of four fiddle players featured on the LP *An Fhidil Sraith II (The Fiddle, Volume II)* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1980, prod. Paddy Glackin), an outstanding collection of unaccompanied traditional fiddle playing. Keane's second solo album, *Seán Keane* ♪♪♪♪ (Ogham, 1981/Shanachie, 1982, prod. Brian Masterson, Seán Keane), is no longer available but well worth a search, if only for the fiddler's performance of the showpieces "The Banks" and "The Contradiction."

influences:

◀◀ Patrick Kelly, Willie Clancy, Ceoltóirí Cualann

▶▶ Frankie Gavin, Tommy Peoples, Paddy Glackin, Seán Montgomery

see also: *Chieftains, James Keane*

Philippe Varlet

James Keelaghan

Born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada

James Keelaghan is one of the many young Canadians who've hit the folk scene with a grace and panache that makes some wonder if there's something in the drinking water up there. He first gained acclaim for his songwriting skills; his ballad "Jenny Bryce" was published in *Sing Out!* Keelaghan's first appearance on the main stage at the Winnipeg Folk Festival was the focus of a CBC documentary. Since then, he's toured extensively and was the first Canadian to perform at the 1996 Hong Kong Folk Festival. He was also part of the Canadian Festival Tour with Ferron, Connie Kaldor, and Stephen Fearing. Keelaghan is a careful musician. His songs are precisely worded, the words precisely sung. His sensitivity to the natural world is clear even when his lyrics aren't explicitly about environmental concerns; you can hear his native Alberta behind every song.

what's available: *My Skies* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Don Pennington) won a Juno award for Best Roots and Traditional Album. It contains some sterling songs, miniature movies caught in four-minute skeins of melody. "River Run" is an environmental warning presented as a soft ballad; "Glory Bound" is an energetic look back at a friend who died young. All the songs are unexpected, free of cliché, and full of heart. The same can be said for *A Recent Future* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Don Pennington), which is even better arranged than its predecessor. As always, Keelaghan points a finger at the injustices many people choose to hide or overlook. He ducks south of the border for "Lazarus," a scathing look at the posthumous acclaim given to Richard Nixon.

influences:

◀◀ Stan Rogers, Ferron, Al Stewart, Paul Simon

▶▶ Ellis Paul, Tom Prasada-Rao

Pamela Murray Winters

Robert Earl Keen Jr.

Born January 11, 1956, in Houston, TX.

Less weirdly fascinating than his old Texas college buddy Lyle Lovett, this singer/songwriter has penned a handful of the best (and unfortunately unknown) country songs of the past decade. He's friendly and straightforward and brags about his love of old-fashioned Texas hats, food, and style. His songs occasionally match his personality, especially when he weighs in on funny, dysfunctional Christmas tales and (of course) barbecue. But more frequently they're dark, outlaw story-songs about men who've snapped or hard-luck couples wavering between a serene future or becoming the next Bonnie and Clyde. Among his Austin peers, Keen's writing commands respect; Joe Ely did a great rock 'n' roll version of "The Road Goes on Forever" (later recorded by the Highwaymen) and Lovett continues to perform "This Old Porch," which he co-wrote with Keen during their Texas A&M days.

what to buy: Many of the characters on *A Bigger Piece of Sky* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Garry Velletri) are as hopeless as those on Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska*, but they have a distinctly Texas edge, such as the frustrated narrator who wants to blow you away or the stud with the trunk full of Pearl beer.

what to buy next: *West Textures* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1989, prod. Jim Rooney) is an early portrait of the still-developing artist; "The Road Goes on Forever" is a classic story song, and there's some great youthful energy in the rock songs, but it's a little cluttered and filled with clunky phrases. *Gringo Honeymoon* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Garry Velletri) contains Keen's live romp "Barbecue," but it doesn't quite have the focused power of *Bigger Piece of Sky*.

what to avoid: *No. 2 Live Dinner* ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Lloyd Maines) is an interesting but not particularly meaty album that serves as a holding pattern until Keen can go back to the studio.

garrison keillor

the rest:
No Kinda Dancer ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1984)
The Live Album ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Picnic ♪♪♪ (Arista Texas, 1997)

worth searching for: Two great cover versions of Keen's "The Road Goes on Forever" appear on Joe Ely's *Love and Danger* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Tony Brown, Joe Ely) and the Highwaymen's *The Road Goes on Forever* ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1995, prod. Don Was).

influences:
⏮ Lyle Lovett, Joe Ely, Townes Van Zandt, Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings
⏭ Richard Buckner, Billy Ray Cyrus, Bottle Rockets, Tracy Byrd

Steve Knopper

Garrison Keillor

Born Gary Edward Keillor, August, 7 1942, in Anoka, MN.

Garrison Keillor is best known as the author of several best-selling books and the host of National Public Radio's *Prairie Home Companion,* which offers him a weekly forum as a monologuist, sketch player, and singer. As a vocalist, Keillor's quiet, serviceable bass lacks range and power, but can be pleasingly expressive, especially on gospel, country, and folk material. Keillor's musical work is greatly aided by his playful writer's nature, especially on radio where he enjoys combining public domain ditties with well-known poems and prayers, or retrofitting classic lyrics to make a sharp comic point. The power of his ideas, whether comic, sad, whimsical, or strange, gives his work an undeniable energy and charm. Keillor began broadcasting *A Prairie Home Companion* (an inside reference to a local cemetery) over Minnesota Public Radio in 1974. It was there he introduced audiences to his mythical hometown Lake Wobegon. Keillor's monologues are not unlike Frank Capra's best films. While he extols the humorous eccentricities and virtues of small-town life and people, he uncovers the scary, sometimes paranoid undercurrents inherent in a reclusive, off-the-beaten-path existence. The show's sketches are consistently funnier, but Keillor's Lake Wobegon stories are the backbone of each and every show. Keillor retired the program at its national peak in 1987, only to return a few years later with *The American Radio Company of the Air.* The slick, New York–based program never really clicked, and soon Keillor returned to his original format. A fine presenter, shrewd judge of material, and underrated comic, Keillor may well be radio's last great variety star.

what to buy: Keillor combines T.S. Eliot's obsession with cats and Peter Schickele's penchant for musical parody with his own folksy narrative powers on *Garrison Keillor/Frederica Von Stade: Songs of the Cat* ♪♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1992, prod. John McClure) and comes up with a thematic winner. Frederica von Stade adds classical appeal, but it's Keillor's show. Also, Keillor's lengthy run on *A Prairie Home Companion* is smartly compiled on several sets available from the Wireless and Land's End catalogs as well as your local bookstore. Most enjoyable are *Lake Wobegon Days* ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge/PHC, 1986, prod. Lynn Cruise) and *Comedy Theater* ♪♪♪♪ (Highbridge, 1997, prod. Peter O'bleness, Garrison Keillor). Both are four-tape sets.

what to buy next: Keillor's playful bass vocals are put to good use on harmonies with Kate MacKenzie and Robin and Linda Williams on *Garrison Keillor & the Hopeful Gospel Quartet* ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1992, prod. Chet Atkins), and is closer to the music he does on the radio.

what to avoid: Unless you're of an extremely religious bent and speak more than a little Norwegian, *Now It's Christmas Time* ♪♪ (RCA, 1994/Angel, 1997, prod. John McClure) is pretty heavy-handed stuff, with only casual sidesteps into humor.

the rest:
News from Lake Wobegon ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1983/1997)
Ain't That Good News ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1987)
A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor: The Final Performance ♪♪ (HighBridge, 1987)
A Prairie Home Companion Anniversary Album: The First Five Years ♪♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1988)
A Prairie Home Companion: The 2nd Annual Farewell Performance ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1988)
Prairie Home Comedy ♪♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1989)
Lake Wobegon Loyalty Days ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1989) (cassette only)
A Prairie Home Companion: The 3rd Annual Farewell Performance ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1990)
A Prairie Home Companion: The 4th Annual Farewell Performance ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1990)
American Radio Company First Season ♪♪½ HighBridge, 1990)
More News from Lake Wobegon ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1990)
Prairie Home Companion: Tourists ♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1991)
Prairie Home Companion 10th Anniversary ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1991)
Local Man Moves to the City ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1991)
WLT: A Radio Romance ♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1991)
Garrison Keillor's Stories ♪♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1992)
A Visit to Mark Twain's House ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1992)

Lake Wobegon USA ♪♪♪♪ (Highbridge, 1993) (cassette only)
The Book of Guys ♪♪ (Penguin/HighBridge, 1994)
A Prairie Home Companion: 20th Anniversary Collection ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1994)
Guy Noir: Radio Private Eye ♪♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1995)
A Prairie Home Christmas ♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1995)
Horrors ♪♪♪ (HighBridge/PHC, 1996)
Three Dozen Poems ♪♪ (HighBridge, 1996)
Johnny Appleseed ♪♪½ (Rabbit Ears, 1996)
Parables That Jesus Told ♪♪ (Rabbit Ears, 1996)
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn ♪♪♪½ (Penguin Audio, 1996)
The Family Radio ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1988/1997)
Mother Father Uncle Aunt: A New Monologue Collection ♪♪♪ (HighBridge, 1997)
Wobegon Boy ♪♪♪½ (HighBridge, 1997)

worth searching for: The stories of faith and spirituality are unusually poignant on *Gospel Birds and Other Stories of Lake Wobegon* ♪♪♪♪ (PHC, 1985/1992).

influences:
◀◀ Cecil Adams, John Henry Faulk, Jean Shepherd, Bob & Ray, Arthur Godfrey
▶▶ Rob Fisher/Coffee Club Orchestra, Noah Adams

Ken Burke

Paul Kelly

Born January 12, 1955, in Adelaide, Australia.

In the late '80s, it seemed that Australian folk-rocker Paul Kelly was positioned for, if not stardom, then enduring esteem. If, for example, John Hiatt could always count on major-label interest and solid sales, why couldn't one of Down Under's best singer-songwriters? Kelly, after all, possesses a convincing voice, both as a singer and composer. He is that rare songwriter with the ability to be topical without seeming preachy, personal without seeming cloying, literate without seeming haughty. And he's not afraid to break the mold, frequently writing from the perspective of a female protagonist. Kelly began performing solo as a youth in his hometown of Adelaide, Australia. After relocating to Melbourne in the late '70s, he put together a series of backup bands and entered the studio. By the late 1980s, Kelly led a crack band, the Messengers (originally called the Coloured Girls in Australia), and garnered the attention of U.S. label A&M. Unfortunately, three critically hailed A&M titles—1987's *Gossip*, 1988's *Under the Sun*, and 1989's *So Much Water, So Close to Home*—stirred little commercial interest; none remain in print. After ties with A&M were severed, Kelly put out one CD, *Comedy*, on the Southern California rock indie label, Doctor Dream. It was his last recording featuring the Messengers. Now solo, Kelly has been affiliated with Vanguard since 1994. His profile, however, has never been lower since he first arrived on these shores.

what to buy: *Comedy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Doctor Dream, 1992, prod. Alan Thorne, Paul Kelly) is the best of Kelly's post-A&M efforts. He sounds most at home, bolstered by the soulful folk-rock backing of the since-disbanded Messengers. Expertly crafted songs such as "Wintercoat" and "Sydney from a 727" (an affectionate nod to Jimmie Dale Gilmore's "Dallas") come to life with support from Kelly's regular crew.

what to buy next: *Live at the Continental and the Esplanade* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1996) provides a useful overview of Kelly's career. With his A&M catalog relegated to the "used" bins, this 14-song collection provides a introduction to superior older material, including "Careless," "Dumb Things," and "To Her Door."

the rest:
Wanted Man ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1994)
Deeper Water ♪♪♪, (Vanguard, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Graham Parker, John Hiatt
▶▶ Dan Bern

Steven Stolder

Ken Keppeler

See: Bayou Seco

The Kennedys /Pete Kennedy /Pete & Maura Kennedy

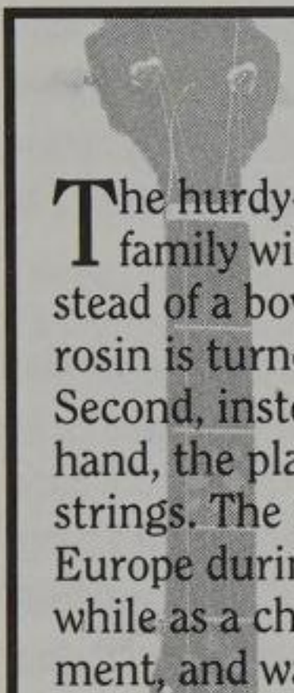
Formed 1992, in Austin, TX.

Pete Kennedy, guitar and vocals; Maura Kennedy, guitar and vocals.

Jangly, retro-'60s rock, guitar melodies, and warm, Everly Brothers-like vocal harmonies have made Fairfax, Virginia-based husband and wife duo, Pete and Maura Kennedy, one of contemporary folk music's most exciting acts. A former sideman for Kate Wolf, Mary Chapin Carpenter, and Nanci Griffith, Pete Kennedy met his future wife and musical collaborator, Maura, who had previously sung with the Delta Rays, at a picking party in Austin in 1992. Their first date was at Buddy Holly's

4/3/4 *the kentucky colonels*

hurdy-gurdy



The hurdy-gurdy is a member of the violin family with two unusual features. First, instead of a bow, a wooden wheel treated with rosin is turned by a crank to scrape the strings. Second, instead of using the fingers of the left hand, the player uses a keyboard to stop the strings. The instrument originated in Western Europe during the Middle Ages, was used for a while as a church instrument and a folk instrument, and was briefly taken up by the classical tradition. Currently it is used mostly in the folk revival, from Spain to Sweden, and is particularly popular in France. There are various kinds of hurdy-gurdies in use. Some have guitar-shaped bodies with flat backs and curved-in sides; others have lute bodies, bowl-backed with an oval cross-section. All have melody strings as well as drones that sound constantly while the instrument is played, producing a sound like the offspring of a bagpipe and a fiddle. By the way, the hurdy-gurdy is not the instrument popular among organ-grinders with monkeys. That instrument is a barrel-organ, but is often mistaken for a hurdy-gurdy because both are played by turning a crank.

Steve Winick

grave-site in Lubbock, Texas, while their first public appearance came during a Nanci Griffith concert in the Beatles' hometown of Liverpool, England. They've since performed and recorded as a duo.

what to buy: The folk-rock sounds of the Byrds and the Beatles are given a modern twist on the Kennedy's second album, *Life Is Large* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Pete Kennedy). With guest appearances by Roger McGuinn, Steve Earle, Charlie Sexton, Kelly Willis, Nils Lofgrin, the Dixie Hummingbirds, John Gorka, Peter Holsapple, and Susan Cowsill, the all-original album rocks with an infectious, pop-flavored, intensity.

what to buy next: Pete and Maura Kennedy's debut album, *River of Fallen Stars* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Pete Kennedy) is a more intimate recording with most songs flavored by Celtic and British influences. In addition to 11 original songs, the duo joins with bassist Stu Voorman and drummer Stumpy Joe Jr. on re-workings of Richard Thompson's "Wall of Death" and "House on Fire," co-written by Tom Kimmel and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers' Stan Lynch.

influences:

◀◀ Beatles, Byrds, Richard Thompson

▶▶ Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, Tim & Mollie O'Brien

see also: *Nanci Griffith, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Kate Wolf*

Craig Harris

The Kentucky Colonels /The Country Boys

Formed 1958 as the Country Boys; became the Kentucky Colonels in 1963. Disbanded 1965.

Roland White, mandolin, banjo, vocals (1958–65); Clarence White, guitar, vocals (1958–65); Eric White, bass (1958–1961); Billy Ray Lathum, banjo (1958–65); LeRoy Mack, Dobro (1959–65); Roger Bush, bass, (1961–65); Bobby Sloane, fiddle, (1963–65); Scott Stoneman, fiddle (1965).

One of the most storied bluegrass bands of all time, the Kentucky Colonels were build around three brothers, Roland, Clarence, and Eric White, who were born in Maine and raised in Los Angeles. With an average age of 18, the young group became a fixture on local L.A. television shows *Town Hall Party* and *Hometown Jamboree*. They also recorded four tracks on an Andy Williams album on Capitol and appeared on his television show. After changing their name in 1963 to avoid confusion with Mac Wiseman's band, the Colonels recorded their first album for Briar Records. During this time they made their name as regular performers at L.A.'s famed Ash Grove folk club and benefited from folk music's then-soaring popularity. Traditional songs like "Shady Grove" and "Sally Ann" and gospel numbers like "A Beautiful Life" made up the bulk of the group's repertoire. The years 1964–65 were the band's peak period; they appeared at folk clubs and bluegrass festivals all over the United States and Canada. In 1964 they recorded their best-known album, *Appalachian Swing!*, for the World Pacific label. Creative differences (primarily over electrification of the band's instruments), exacerbated by the onslaught of the Beatles, forced the group to break up in 1965. Several different pickup bands continued to use the name Kentucky Colonels through 1967. There were several reunions during the early 1970s but no serious reconciliation ever took place. After the Colonels, Roland White moved on, first to Bill Monroe's band in 1967, and two

years later to Lester Flatt's band. Today he plays with the Nashville Bluegrass Band and records solo for Sugar Hill Records. Lathum played with the Dillards throughout the 1970s before retiring. Bush became a mainstay in the group Country Gazette before he, too, retired.

The Colonels' greatest claim to fame lies in the brilliant guitar work of Clarence White, who left to join the Byrds in 1968. During the early 1970s White also became a much-sought-after session man contributing to a myriad of recordings, including Arlo Guthrie's *Last of the Brooklyn Cowboys*, Jackson Browne's *Late for the Sky*, and Randy Newman's *12 Songs*. Unfortunately, White was killed by a drunk driver in 1973 while loading out of a club.

what to buy: The Colonels' finest hour, the instrumental *Appalachian Swing!* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1964/1993, prod. Richard Bock, Ed Pearl) showcases Clarence White's increasingly inventive guitar work, which, while not always bluegrass, was always astonishing. The group's versions of "I Am a Pilgrim," "Nine-Pound Hammer," and "Sally Goodin" are near-definitive.

what to buy next: *Long Journey Home* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1991, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) is a live recording of the group's high water mark: their 1964 appearance at the Newport Folk Festival. Especially wonderful are four duets featuring Clarence White and Doc Watson.

the rest:
1965–1967 with R.& C. White ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1976)
The Kentucky Colonels Featuring Clarence White ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980)
On Stage ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
Livin' in the Past ♪♪♪ (Sierra, 1997)

solo outings:
Roland White:
Trying to Get to You ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, Doc Watson
▶▶ Nashville Bluegrass Band, Hot Rize

Robert Baird

Kentucky Standard Band

Formed in Balltown, near Bardstown, KY.

Nancy Johnson, fretted dulcimer, dulcimer, vocals; Ken Baldwin, guitar, vocals; Alice Burton, hammered dulcimer, vocals; David Wilson, violin, cello, mandolin, percussion; Jim Webb, guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, vocals.

The Kentucky Standard Band combines fretted dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, violin, and guitar into intricate patterns—much like snowflakes, their instrumental lines are similar, yet no two are alike. The band plays original music, grounded in traditional styles. It all started innocently enough with songwriter Nancy Johnson Barker asking guitarist Ken Baldwin and hammered dulcimer player Alice Burton to back her up during a studio session of a new tune she had just written. Caught in the magic that recording studios sometimes offer, the three musicians found themselves so pleased with the sound that the session became the official beginning of what was to become Kentucky Standard Band. The band has subsequently produced at least one tape a year and has played to thousands of people. Almost a decade later, the magic is still there. The band creates original, haunting melodies, sings in beautiful harmony, and builds its sound using intricate instrumentals. Barker, a musician and songwriter, was Kentucky's first artist-in-residence to be hired full time by a school district, and is the originator and coordinator of the region's largest folk festival, the Kentucky Music Weekend, and its related music camp—Kentucky Music Week music camp. Her primary instrument is fretted dulcimer (she hails from eastern Kentucky, and that instrument is part of her musical heritage), and her compositions are the driving force behind the band. Guitarist Ken Baldwin is well known for his humorous lyrics as well as intricate instrumental originals. He is the band's "rock," in terms of solid timing and precision, and his fingerstyle playing and rhythmic strumming patterns center its sound. Baldwin is also a visual artist, from graphics to portraits, and the cover artwork on *Angels of Mercy* is one of his pieces. Alice Burton plays a tantalizing hammered dulcimer, weaving the bell-like notes of her instrument into sweet accompaniments and harmonies. She is also a physical therapist, specializing in treating injuries specific to performing artists, and she takes care of the rest of the band. David Wilson is a multi-instrumentalist specializing in violin/fiddle but equally at home on mandolin, cello, guitar, and percussion. Barker describes Wilson as the "ribbon of feeling that ties us all together.... smoothing our separate sounds into one complete experience ... our conscience, our heart." He also plays regularly with the bluegrass band Radio Flyer, as well as the Gallier Brothers Band.

what to buy: *Angels of Mercy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Tree Frog Music, 1996, prod. Kentucky Standard Band) is an all-original, all-instrumental (with one exception) effort with country, folk, Celtic, and even New Age influences. It is an exquisite piece of work with a definite chamber music approach. The arrangements are tight and evocative and the production is first rate.

nancy kerr

what to buy next: *Alto Q* ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1995) also features all-original material, including "Pappa Smurf from Hell," "Pink Moon," "Sara Jean," "The Dancer," and "Dancin' with a Copperhead." For a more traditional approach, try Barker's solo outing, *Full Circle* ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1991), which provides a mixture of traditional and original material, including "Derby Waltz," "Sarvice Tree," "Redwing," and "Kitty Alone."

the rest:
Kentucky Standard Band ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1991)
Christmas Dulcimer Music ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1991)
New Pioneer ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1992)
Lighthouse Keeper of Kentucky ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1993)

solo outings:
Nancy Johnson Barker:
Full Circle ♪♪♪ (Tree Frog Music, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ David Schnaufer, Sam Bush, Pentangle, Trapezoid
▶▶ Gallier Brothers, Tom Espinola & Lorraine Duisit

Neal Walters

Nancy Kerr

See: Eliza Carthy

Doug Kershaw /Rusty & Doug

Born January 24, 1936, in Tiel Ridge, LA. Rusty & Doug formed 1954. Disbanded 1964.

Doug Kershaw, fiddle, vocals; Rusty Kershaw (born February 2, 1938, in Tiel Ridge, LA), guitar, vocals.

With his fancy fiddling and on-stage flamboyance, Doug Kershaw was the first major artist to provide Cajun music with exposure to a wide audience that included college students as well as mainstream country fans. In 1948 Doug and his younger brothers Rusty and Pee Wee became part of the Continental Playboys, and in 1953 they hosted their own regional TV show. Rusty and Doug had their first hit record in 1955 with "So Lovely Baby," and in 1957 they cracked the charts again with "Love Me to Pieces." Their watershed year was 1961, when Doug's composition "Louisiana Man" exploded onto the regional and national charts. To this day, the song remains a Cajun and country standard. The duo split up in 1964, and Doug recorded a few mildly interesting albums for Warner Bros.

what to buy: *The Best of Doug Kershaw & Rusty Kershaw* ♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1991) comes from the recordings the duo made for Roy Acuff's Hickory label during the 1950s and 1960s. The album contains the hit versions of "Louisiana Man" and "Diggy Liggy Lo," which Doug Kershaw would re-record throughout his career. There are also versions of Hank Williams's "Kaw-Liga" and "Why Don't You Love Me" that the sparse instrumentation, sibling harmonies, and heavy slapback turn into an odd Cajun hillbilly rock. Strangely, it doesn't contain two of the duet's biggest hits from that time, "So Lovely, Baby" and "Love Me to Pieces," but it's still a heck of a lot of fun.

what to buy next: *The Best of Doug Kershaw* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1989, prod. various) contains versions of Doug's breakthrough hits from the 1960s, including "Louisiana Man" and "Diggy Diggy Lo," as well as spicy remakes of Hank Williams's "Jambalaya (On the Bayou)" and Fats Domino's "I'm Walkin'."

the rest:
The Cajun Way ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1969)
Alive & Pickin' ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1975)
The Louisiana Man ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1978)
(With Rusty Kershaw) *Now and Then* ♪♪ (Domino, 1992)

worth searching for: *The Ragin' Cajun* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976) doesn't let up for a second. A great party album.

influences:
◀◀ Iry LeJeune
▶▶ Charlie Daniels, Beausoleil, Wayne Toups, Zachary Richard

Rick Petreycik and Brian Mansfield

Robin Kessinger

Born December 14, 1955, in WV.

Guitar virtuoso Robin Kessinger comes by it honestly—his father, Bob Kessinger, plays mandolin and Robin's the nephew of the legendary West Virginian Clark Kessinger. Robin was born in the Mountain State but moved around the Northeast all through childhood. He started playing guitar at age 12, influenced heavily by his uncle's music and that of Robert Rutland (Georgia Slim) and Chet Atkins. He earned the Best Overall Performer crown at the Old-Time Fiddler's Convention in Galax, Virginia, two years in a row, and has placed in the top five at the National Flatpick Guitar Festival in Winfield, Kansas. He won first place at Winfield in 1985. Robin has fans at home and abroad, having toured Japan and Ireland in recent years. He performs near home with other West Virginia musicians, occasionally with fellow flatpicker extraordinaire Wayne Henderson, and teaches guitar at various music camps.

what to buy: Kessinger's CD *Robin Kessinger* (JMP Records, 1996, prod. Jim Martin) is a compilation of the material from two previous cassettes, *The Third Eyebrow* and *Don't Try This at Home*, both also produced by Jim Martin. There are 24 tunes on this CD, many of which are Kessinger's specialty—hot flatpick guitar playing. But there's lots of slower, sweeter stuff to go with it. His rendition of the Benny Thomasson fiddle tune "Midnight on the Water" does justice to the original, not an easy task. There are several Celtic pieces, Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag," a beautiful selection called "African Guitar Melody," and a traditional tune called "Brilliancy" that is positively delightful. All in all, something for everyone. Kessinger is assisted at times by his son Luke on bass, by Joe Adkins on guitar, Al Prote on drums, and by Tiny Roland on tuba (yes, indeed; the tuba makes an appearance on "Alabama Jubilee"). There are several extremely well-done overdubs on this disc, and the recording quality is excellent throughout. While hard to find in record stores, it is available from JMP Productions, P.O. Box 152, St. Albans, West Virginia 25711.

influences:

Clark Kessinger, Chet Atkins, Robert Rutland

Wayne Henderson, Steve Kaufman

Dave Shombert

Barbara Kessler

Born in Long Island, NY.

Barbara Kessler may be the next Shawn Colvin. She writes crisp, insightful songs and delivers them in a fluid, vibrant voice. She stands with Kate MacLeod, Carrie Newcomer, Susan McKeown, and Sloan Wainwright as one of the most solid and original talents in contemporary folk. She also has a knack for being introspective without getting lost in her own navel. Kessler is a native of Long Island, New York, who learned about life as a world traveler and learned her craft in Boston. Among her many recent awards, she was the National Academy of Songwriters' 1995 Female Acoustic Artist of the Year and featured artist at the 1996 North American Folk Alliance Conference in Toronto, Canada.

what's available: Even in other performances, Kessler meets the standard she sets in *Stranger to This Land* ♪♪♪♪ (Eastern Front, 1994, prod. Barbara Kessler, Philip Antoniades), a live album with the slick finish of a studio album. Heavy percussion gives the work a rock spiciness that suits Kessler's energetic delivery. Most admirably, she takes two of the moldiest cover tunes—the Eagles' "Desperado" and Leonard Cohen's "Bird on a Wire"—and makes them her own. *Notion* ♪♪♪♪ (Eastern Front, 1996, prod. Jerry Marotta, Duncan Watt) is a rock album, and a damn good one. If Sarah McLachlan can be on rock radio, Kessler should be as well. "At My Age," reminiscent of "My Back Pages" and "Going Back," is one of the strongest tracks: "At my age I should know better/I should have a winter coat/I should have at least one kid by now."

influences:

Shawn Colvin, Suzanne Vega

Liz Phair

Pamela Murray Winters

Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar

Peter Kessler (born in Media, PA); Gail Fratar (born in Springfield, MA).

Gail Fratar (rhymes with "later") met Peter Kessler during the late 1970s after both had moved to the Bay Area and become involved in the San Francisco Folk Music Club. They began playing music together, and by the mid-1980s their partnership had become marital as well as musical; they remain a husband-and-wife team to this day. Although passionate about both classical music and '50s-vintage rock 'n' roll, Gail's love of old country music was fostered by her grandfather and uncle, both of whom were musicians, and her love of the old records by early *Grand Ole Opry* stars like Uncle Dave Macon and the great country brother duos: the Delmore Brothers, Louvin Brothers, Blue Sky Boys, and others. While living in the Philadelphia area, Kessler was exposed to a thriving folk scene that included, down the highway a few miles, the hotbed of country, bluegrass, and old time music that centered around the country music parks near the Mason-Dixon Line (Sunset Park, New River Ranch) and included musicians like Ola Belle Reed and Ted Lundy. Kessler is a long-time fan of the great founding bluegrass fathers like Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, Flatt and Scruggs, and Reno and Smiley, with banjo legends Earl Scruggs and Don Reno as special role models. Bluegrass banjo players in old-time music are sometimes likened to the proverbial bull in the china shop, but in teaming with Fratar, Kessler has shown a nice touch in merging his three-finger style into a distinctive brand of music that hearkens to the days when the labels "bluegrass" and "old time" didn't exist—it was all just "country" music. The couple's instrumental arrangements, while not flashy, are designed to support the music as a single, unified

will keys

whole rather to distract or draw attention from the songs themselves. Likewise, the vocals, mostly done in Fratar's warm, comfortable, unadorned singing style, work with the arrangements to produce a sound that will please not only country fans, but just about anyone with an ear for good folk music. Their repertoire reaches from the last century all the way up to modern songs, including many written by Fratar. Kessler and Fratar currently live and work in San Francisco, and are active in the folk music community there.

what's available: *Take Me Up* ♪♪♪♪ (Rolling Robin, 1997, prod. Peter Kessler, Gail Fratar) is their only generally available CD release, a pleasant and entertaining, yet eclectic collection that combines elements of folk, old time, and bluegrass into what might be called "acoustic country," with special attention to Fratar's singing and songwriting. Of course, among the album's 15 tracks there are also lovely treatments of songs, old and new, that were written by others, such as Uncle Dave Macon's "My Ollie Is Waiting for Me," the Civil War-era ballad "Lorena," and Hugh Moffatt's "Rose of My Heart." The instrumentation is essentially old-timey, but Kessler's understated three-finger banjo and Gene Tortora's Dobro playing add a nice, light bluegrass touch. The album's title cut also features a calliope.

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, Delmore Brothers, Flatt & Scruggs, Reno & Smiley

▶▶ Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss

John Lupton

Will Keys

Born in 1923.

Will Keys is the 16th of 17 children. He plays a unique two-finger banjo style where melody is the goal. Unlike other two-finger banjo players, Keys does not use his thumb for the bass notes and the forefinger for the melody. Instead, all of his down strokes are done with the thumb while the up strokes are relegated to the finger. Watching Keys play this way will seem strange to many people because at times he will be hitting the lowest string with his thumb while his index finger is reaching up to the highest (fifth) string. While it may look awkward, it doesn't sound awkward; the melody ends up being wrapped around a beautiful syncopation which, if you close your eyes, will make you think you are listening to the most beautiful clock there ever was. Keys hasn't spent much time playing outside of his region, although in 1993 and 1994 he participated in the Masters of Banjo tour put on by the National Council for the Traditional Arts. Then, in 1996, President Clinton honored him with the National Heritage Fellowship. Keys was only the fourth banjo player ever to receive this award, the others being Ralph Stanley, Earl Scruggs, and Wade Mainer.

what to buy: *A Banjo Original* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1997, prod. Joe Wilson) is a stunning compilation of some recent recordings by Keys backed by Barbara Kuhns on fiddle and Doug Smith on guitar, with guest appearances from Laurie Lewis, Dudley Connell, Wayne Henderson, Jimmy Trivette, Jeff Little, and Tony Testerman.

what to buy next: Hear some excerpts of Keys on *Masters of the Banjo* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Joe Wilson, Andy Wallace). This CD features selections from the national tour celebrating the masters of the banjo. Other banjo players featured include Seleshe Damessae, Kirk Sutphin, Tony Ellis, Seamus Egan, Carroll Best, and Ralph Stanley. Laurie Lewis and Dudley Connell guest as well.

influences:

◀◀ Urg Light, Dirk Powell, Art Stamper, Charlie Bowman

▶▶ Bill Keys

Steve Gardner

Greg Kihn /The Greg Kihn Band

Born 1952, in Baltimore, MD. Greg Kihn Band formed 1974.

The San Francisco-based Greg Kihn Band briefly became an album-oriented radio staple in the 1980s with power-pop hits including "The Breakup Song (They Don't Write 'Em)" in 1981, "Can't Stop Hurtin' Myself" in 1982, and "Jeopardy" in 1983. Their biggest hit, "Jeopardy" was so successful that it inspired a popular spoof by "Weird" Al Yankovic. Kihn was one of the first artists signed by post-punk label, Beserkley Records. His debut recordings were included on the influential compilation, *Beserkley Chartbusters*. Releasing an album a year in the late 1970s, Kihn and his band built a cult following on the West Coast, however, his days as a headliner were short lived. By the late 1980s, his music was becoming a parody of itself. Although Kihn's early albums reflected his wit in their titles—*Rockihnroll*, *Kihntinued*, *Kinhspiracy*, and *Citizen Kihn*—the novelty ran out in 1986 with the poorly selling *Love & Rock & Roll*. Kihn maintained a low profile until 1994, when he recorded the acoustic-rooted *Mutiny*. Although it took a much less commercially minded approach than Kihn's earlier recording, it signaled a re-

turn to the folk roots he tapped prior to moving to San Francisco and turning to electric music.

what to buy: *Mutiny* ♪♪♪♪ (Clean Cuts, 1994, prod. Jack Heyrman), Kihn's return to acoustic music, shows a true mastery of the musical form. With his Springsteen-like vocals and acoustic guitar rhythms accented by cellos, piano, Dobro, mandolin, steel guitar, accordion, and saxophone, Kihn celebrates the diversity of his influences with renditions of songs by singer-songwriters Richard Fariña, Eric Von Schmidt, and Bob Dylan and rock tunesmiths Lou Reed, Elliott Murphey, Buddy Holly, and Bo Diddley.

what to buy next: With Kihn's career seemingly over, Beserkley and Rhino Records combined to release the 18-track greatest hits collection *Kihnsolidation* ♪♪♪ (Rhino/Beserkley, 1989) and the live-in-concert album, *Unkihntrollable* ♪♪♪(Rhino/1989). While both albums showcase the hits, they're weakened by the inclusion of outdated and forgettable fillers.

what to avoid: Kihn's rock albums are weighed down by songs that fail to adapt to his commercially minded formula.

the rest:

Greg Kihn ♪♪♪ (Beserkley, 1976)
Again ♪♪½ (Beserkley, 1977)
Next of Kihn ♪♪½ (1978)
With the Naked Eye ♪♪½ (Beserkley, 1979)
Rockinhnroll ♪♪ (Beserkley, 1981)
Kihntinued ♪♪ (Beserkley, 1982)
Kinhspiracy ♪♪ (Beserkley, 1983)
Citizen Kihn ♪½ (Beserkley, 1985)
Love & Rock & Roll ♪♪ (Beserkley, 1986)
King Biscuit Flower Hour Presents ♪♪ (King Biscuit Flower Hour, 1996)

worth searching for: Kihn's background vocals helped make Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers' anthem, "Roadrunner" one of the most cherished tunes of the post-punk era.

influences:

⏪ Richard Fariña, Eric Von Schmidt, Bob Dylan, Lou Reed, Elliott Murphey, Buddy Holly, Bo Diddley, Graham Parker, Bruce Springsteen

⏩ Bruce Springsteen, Bruce Hornsby

Craig Harris

Albert King

Born April 25, 1923, in Indianola, MS. Died December 21, 1992, in Memphis, TN.

Never as well known as his like-named contemporary B.B. King, Albert King was nonetheless almost as big an influence. More rock guitarists—notably Jimi Hendrix, Cream-era Eric Clapton, and Stevie Ray Vaughan—have copped directly from Albert more than from any other bluesman. Standing an imposing 6' 5" and weighing in at 250 pounds, the left-handed former-bulldozer-driver played with brute force, bending the strings on his upside-down Gibson Flying V with a ferocity that could be downright frightening. King made his first recordings in the early 1950s and cut some fantastic sides for Bobbin and King from 1959–63, but he really hit his stride when he signed with Stax in 1966 and began working with Booker T. and the MGs and the Memphis Horns. His collaborations with them worked as well as they did because for all his toughness, King's music swung, a fact well-documented on the excellent live albums, where he recaptures the Stax albums' drive backed by a horn-less quartet. He was also a fantastic, if not particularly flexible singer.

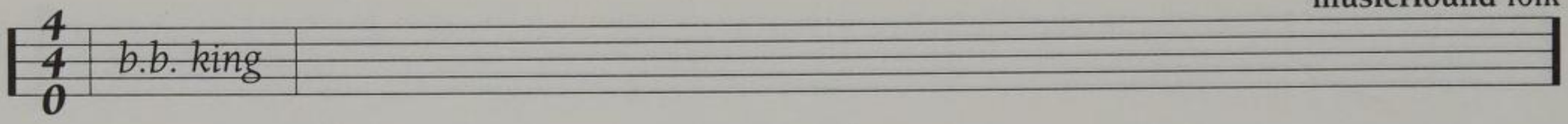
what to buy: King's Stax debut, *Born under a Bad Sign* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1967, prod. Al Jackson), is an undisputed classic. The two-disc compilation, *The Ultimate Collection* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1992) offers a fine career overview. Any of the three live albums recorded at San Francisco's Fillmore West Auditorium in 1968 captures the full power of King onstage: *Live Wire/Blues Power* ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1968, prod. Al Jackson); *Wednesday Night in San Francisco* ♪♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1990, prod. Al Jackson); and *Thursday Night in San Francisco* ♪♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1990, prod. Al Jackson).

what to buy next: *Let's Have a Natural Ball* ♪♪♪♪½ (Modern Blues, 1989) collects King's late-1950s/early-1960s sides backed by a hard-charging horn section. *I'll Play the Blues for You* ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1972, prod. Allen Jones, Henry Bush) includes the killer title track as well as "Little Brother," perhaps King's most tender moment. Soul-blues never got much better than this.

what to avoid: *Red House* ♪♪ (Castle, 1991, prod. Joe Walsh, Alan Douglas) is a misguided although probably well-intentioned attempt to help the great bluesman by modernizing his sound. Ugh. Somebody got really excited when they discovered long-missing tapes of King jamming with John Mayall. Then Fantasy released *The Lost Session* ♪♪ (Stax, 1986), and it became painfully clear why the tapes got shoved into the warehouse in the first place.

the rest:

Jammed Together: Albert King, Steve Cropper, Pops Staples ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1969)
Years Gone By ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1969)
Lovejoy ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1970)



I Wanna Get Funky ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1973)
The Pinch ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1977)
Montreux Festival ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1979)
New Orleans Heat ♪♪♪½ (Tomato, 1979)
Blues for Elvis ♪♪ (Stax, 1981)
Crosscut Saw: Albert King in San Francisco ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1983/1992)
I'm in a Phone Booth Baby ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1984)
The Best of Albert King ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1987)
Years Gone By ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1987)
Blues at Sunrise ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1988)
Lovejoy ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1987)
King of the Blues Guitar ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1989)
Roadhouse Blues ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1991)
Albert ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1992)
King Albert ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1992)
Truckload of Lovin' ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1992)
The Blues Don't Change ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1992)
Blues at Sunset (Live at Wattstax and Montreux) ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1993)
The Big Blues ♪♪♪½ (King, 1994)
Mean Mean Blues ♪♪♪ (King, 1994)
Chicago 1978 ♪♪♪½ (Charly, 1994)
Live ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)
The Tomato Years ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)
Funky London ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1994)
Hard Bargain ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1995)
Live on Memory Lane ♪♪♪ (Monad, 1995)

influences:

B.B. King, Jimmy Reed, T-Bone Walker

Otis Rush, Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Buddy Guy, Billy Gibbons, Joe Louis Walker, Kenny Wayne Shepherd

Alan Paul

B.B. King

Born September 16, 1925, near Itta Bena, MS.

No other blues artist has ever entered mainstream American culture quite like B.B. King. He is the only one to step inside from the commercial cold that has long been the bluesman's fate, to receive presidential citations and honorary degrees and star in commercials for the likes of Wendy's and Northwest Airlines. He has become so omnipresent that it's easy to forget *why* he's so revered: He fundamentally changed the way the electric guitar is played. The roots of any blues-based electric guitarist can be traced back to B.B. King, whether they know it or not. King took the single-string electric lead guitar playing pioneered by Charlie Christian and T-Bone Walker and coated it with Mississippi grit. The result was a highly personalized style marked by stinging finger vibrato, incredible economy, and uncanny vocal-like phrasing. King's style had tremendous impact on virtually every electric blues guitarist to follow, including Buddy Guy, Albert King, Freddie King, and Otis Rush. These players, in turn, inspired countless rock guitarists, notably Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

what to buy: The emergence of King's groundbreaking style can be heard on *The Best of B.B. King, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flair/Virgin, 1991), an essential collection of 1950s recordings that includes his original versions of standard-bearers like "Three O'Clock Blues," "You Upset Me Baby," and "Every Day I Have the Blues." B.B.'s vocal-like guitar playing is part and parcel of his rare ability to communicate intimately with an audience, a powerful rapport that is perfectly captured on *Live at the Regal* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1971, prod. Johnny Pate),, a 1964 performance considered by many to be not only his finest recording but the greatest album in all modern blues. This treasure-trove of sophisticated yet down-home music includes such staples as "It's My Own Fault," "Every Day I Have the Blues," and "Sweet Little Angel." *Completely Well* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1969, prod. Bill Szymczyk) contains King's only Top-20 hit, "The Thrill Is Gone," and is solid through and through.

what to buy next: Sooner or later, you'll probably want the four-CD box set, *King of the Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1992, prod. Andy McKaie), an excellent summary of King's career. *Live at San Quentin* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1990) and *Blues Summit* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1993), the latter which features a host of guest stars, are King's best recent efforts, both showing that he still has plenty of sting in his vibrato and ideas in his head.

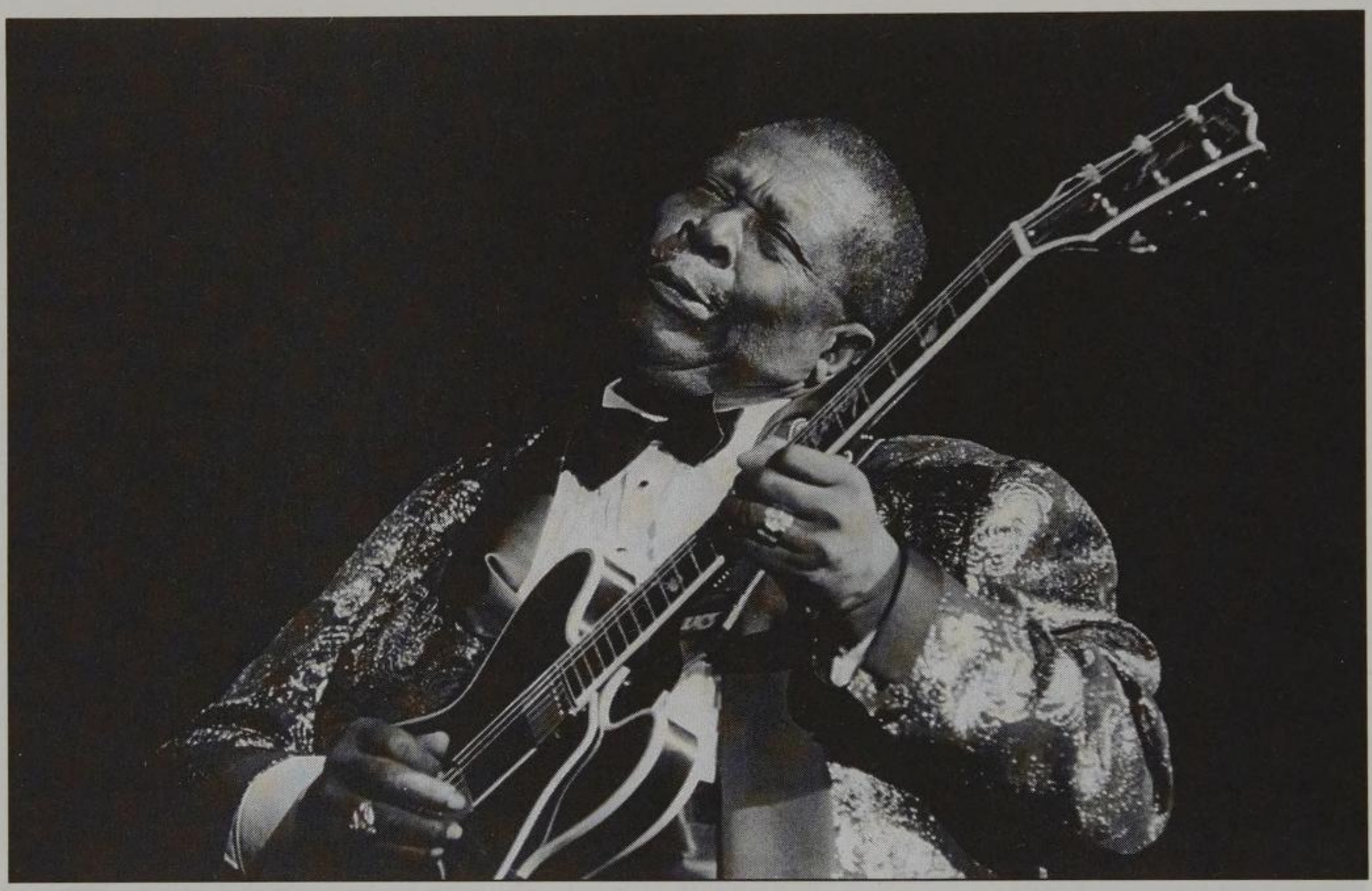
what to avoid: *B.B. King in London* ♪♪ (MCA, 1971) is the usual, pointless, hook-the-blues-guy-up-with-well-meaning-rockers-who-love-him-but-can't-play-his-stuff-half-as-well-as-his-own-band exercise. Also, the recordings he made in the '70s and '80s are virtually all burdened by over-production. Tread carefully.

the rest:
Blues Is King ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1967)
The Electric B.B. King—His Best ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1968)
Lucille ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1968)
Live & Well ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1969)
Incredible Soul of B.B. King ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1970)
Indianola Mississippi Seeds ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1970)
Live in Cook County Jail ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1970)

Albert King **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

b.b. king

carole king



B.B. King **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Back in the Alley: The Classic Blues of B.B. King ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
The Best of B.B. King ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
To Know You Is to Love You ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1973)
B.B. King and Bobby Bland: Together for the First Time, Live ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1974)
Friends ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1974)
Lucille Talks Back ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1975)
B.B. King & Bobby Bland: Together Again . . . Live ♪♪ (MCA, 1976)
King Size ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1977)
Midnight Believer ♪♪½ (MCA, 1978)
Take It Home ♪♪ (MCA, 1979)
Live at Ole Miss ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1980)
Great Moments with B.B. King ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1981)
There Must Be a Better World Somewhere ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1981)
Love Me Tender ♪♪½ (MCA, 1982)
Blues 'n' Jazz ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1983)
Six Silver Strings ♪♪ (MCA, 1985)
Do the Boogie: Early 50s Classics ♪♪♪♪½ (Flair/Virgin, 1988)
King of the Blues 1989 ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989)
The Fabulous B.B. King ♪♪♪♪ (Flair/Virgin, 1991)
Live at the Apollo ♪♪♪½ (GRP, 1991)
Singin' the Blues/The Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Flair/Virgin, 1991)
There Is Always One More Time ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991)
Sweet Little Angel ♪♪♪♪ (Flair/Virgin, 1992)
Dueces Wild ♪♪½ (MCA, 1997)

influences:

⏮ Blind Lemon Jefferson, T-Bone Walker, Django Reinhardt, Lonnie Johnson, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown

⏭ Buddy Guy, Eric Clapton, David Gilmour, Albert King, Otis Rush, Albert Collins

Alan Paul

Carole King

Born Carole Klein, February 9, 1942, in Brooklyn, NY.

From the early '60s to the mid-'70s, Carole King was the champion of making musical memories. Like some favorite scent long gone but easily remembered, King and her then-husband Gerry Goffin covered a wide territory, placing a permanent stake wher-

ever they went. Given pop music's far-flung scope and ever-changing tastes, King's accomplishments are extraordinary. From deft romantic ballads as realistic as they were heartfelt came such hits as "Take Good Care of My Baby," "Up on the Roof," "Crying in the Rain," and "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?" The British music invasion and a generation's mood swing didn't slow the tide. "Don't Bring Me Down," "I'm into Something Good," "I Wasn't Born to Follow," and "Pleasant Valley Sunday" circumnavigated a field of what were career-ending land mines for other songwriters. And to think that was only a hint of what was to come when King stepped out on her own.

what to buy: King's third release, *Tapestry* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Ode, 1971, prod. Lou Adler), is a benchmark recording for her and for pop music. With her earnest yet vulnerable vocals, a fluid backup band, and Adler's sure production, *Tapestry* combined a bit of classic King material ("You Make Me Feel like A Natural Woman," "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?") with new, self-assured songs such as "I Feel the Earth Move," "So Far Away," "It's Too Late," and "Home Again." The album was on the charts, deservedly, for more than five years. *A Natural Woman: The Ode Collection 1968–1976* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1994, prod. Lou Adler) is a two-disc set that surrounds *Tapestry* with her better solo work and a previously unreleased live duet with James Taylor on "You've Got a Friend."

what to buy next: *City Streets* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1989) is an unjustifiably overlooked effort, with King unhesitatingly delivering her most powerful and passionate vocals ever. Eric Clapton guests, and the title track is a killer.

what to avoid: *Fantasy* ♪♪ (Ode, 1973/Legacy, 1991) and *Rhymes and Reason* ♪♪ (Ode, 1972/Legacy 1991) go nowhere in the slow lane.

the rest:
Carole King: Writer ♪♪♪½ (Ode, 1970/Legacy, 1991)
Music ♪♪♪ (Ode, 1971/Legacy, 1991)
Wrap around Joy ♪♪ (Ode, 1974/Legacy, 1991)
Really Rosie ♪♪♪ (Ode, 1975/Columbia, 1986)
Thoroughbred ♪♪♪ (Ode/Legacy, 1976)
Her Greatest Hits (1972–1978) ♪♪♪½ (Ode/Columbia, 1978)
Colour of Your Dreams ♪♪♪ (Priority/Scarface, 1993)
Pearls ♪♪♪ (Priority/Scarface, 1994)
In Concert ♪♪♪½ (King's X/Rhythm Safari, 1994)
The Carnegie Hall Concert ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996)

worth searching for: King's first band, the City, stepped out front and center with her reflective debut *Now That Everything's Been Said* ♪♪♪½ (Ode, 1968). Overlooked but not forgotten, it was as careful as it was an appropriate first recording for King.

influences:
◀◀ Doc Pomus, Mort Shuman
▶▶ Carly Simon, Tori Amos, Bonnie Hayes

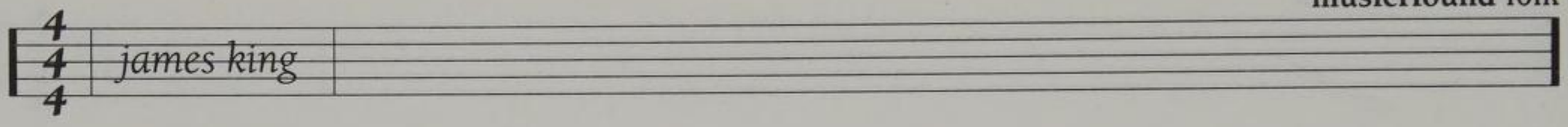
Patrick McCarty

Charlie King

Born in 1948, in CT.

The politics of the working class has been the major theme for singer-songwriter Charlie King. A conscientious objector, who worked in a Massachusetts hospital during the Vietnam War, King is a throwback to the Joe Hill and Woody Guthrie school of labor relations. Not only has he sung for rallies, fund raisers, and picket lines, but his songs have been covered by Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Holly Near. King's musical career was launched in 1971, shortly after he graduated from Connecticut's Stonehill College. Moving temporarily to New York, he worked in a soup kitchen each morning and with the United Farm Workers (UFW) every afternoon. When the agriculture-based union learned of his musical abilities, they began to use his services more and more. In addition to providing a soundtrack for a national grape and lettuce boycott, King has sung for striking clerical and technical workers at Harvard and Yale Universities, auto workers, coal miners, and meat packers. The secretary/treasurer of Local 1000 of the North American Traveling Musicians, King successfully lobbied for official recognition from the American Federation of Musicians. Although he performed and recorded with a short-lived group called Bright Morning Star during the early 1980s; with singer-songwriter Martha Leader; and with Missouri-based duo, Dave and Kay Gordon, King primarily tours as a soloist.

what to buy: *Food Phone Gas Lodging* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Dave Gordon) takes a cold, hard, look at modern America and leaves the listener chilled. King's baritone vocals and guitar strums are set to well-conceived acoustic arrangements featuring electric bass, drums, Dobro, percussion, and piano. A large chorus featuring Sally Rogers, Peter Alsop, Howard Bursen, and Bob Franke enhances the congregational roots of King's politically minded lyrics. King delivers dramatic interpretations of Pete Seeger's "Lisa Kalveledge," about an unsuspecting victim of Nazi Germany, Dave Gordon's "Hand on the Switch," about the death penalty, and Bob Franke's "A Still Small Voice," a tribute to the memory of Martin Luther King Jr.



Seven original songs are as potent. Although he occasionally shows a sense of humor, King means business—singing about the industrial complex ("Buy, Buy, This American Car"), alcoholism ("He Couldn't Let Go"), and the plight of the working class ("Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?").

what to buy next: King describes the mission of his album *Two Good Arms* ♪♪♪½ (Vaguely Reminiscent, 1992, prod. Darleen Wilson) by subtitling it, "Songs of the Hopes and Struggles of Working People." Accompanying himself on guitar and harmonica and joined by a six-piece band that includes Richard Gates (bass), Matt Levenworth (fiddle), and Mickey Bones (bones) and a chorus featuring Marcia Taylor, Ben Tousley, and Bob Franke, King offers a musical expose of the Reagan/Bush years with songs by Dave Gordon, Ewan MacColl, and Si Kahn, plus 10 originals. "Look into the Camera and Lie" looks at the Clarence Thomas hearings while the title track is a re-examination of Sacco and Vanzetti.

the rest:
My Heart Keeps Sneakin' up on My Mind ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Feelings of Fire ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
(With Martha Leader) *Steppin' Out* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)

worth searching for: King's long out-of-print debut album, *Old Dreams and New Nightmares* ♪♪♪ (CW, 1975, prod. Gerry Mooney), marked him as a successor to topical songwriter Tom Paxton. With guitar and vocal accompaniment by Paul Despinosa, King captured the post-Richard Nixon era of the mid-1970s. Songs reflect on inflation ("Talking Whip Inflation Now Blues"), the lower class ("The Rats Are Winning"), the loss of American prestige ("America, Where Did You Go?"), and Nixon's resignation ("I Don't Feel Sorry for You, Mr. Nixon").

influences:
◀◀ Joe Hill, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs
▶▶ Fred Small, Marcia Taylor

Craig Harris

James King

Born September 9, 1958, in Martinsville, VA.

One of the strongest bluegrass/country music vocalists to emerge from the fertile Virginia soil (he shares his hometown, for instance, with Clinton Gregory), James King is a singer whose deep blue and lonesome voice can tackle strident bluegrass and honky-tonk tunes with equal brilliance. He's not afraid, for instance, to attach an even greater sense of urgency and sadness to Vince Gill's "When I Call Your Name," from his most recent album. An ex-marine, King became engrossed in the bluegrass scene in Delaware during the late 1970s. Influenced by Ted Lundy, a banjo picker from Virginia who had moved to Delaware, King began recording after relocating to Virginia, in 1985. His partners on his first album were none other than his idol, Ralph Stanley, Stanley's band, and Johnson Mountain Boys fiddler Eddie Stubbs. In 1988 King formed the Misty Valley Boys and recorded for Webco. In 1993 he made his Rounder debut with the acclaimed *These Old Pictures*, followed up in 1995 by his award-winning *Lonesome & Then Some*, and the Longview bluegrass "super- pickers" project in 1997.

what to buy: *Lonesome & Then Some* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Ken Irwin) is hard to beat. Along with the Gill cover, there are songs written by Hank Cochran, Harlan Howard, *and* Ernest Tubb! And the true bluegrass tunes are kept strictly bluegrass. A pleasure from start to finish, King's voice is the star here.

what to buy next: *These Old Pictures* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993) is *Lonesome*'s worthy predecessor.

the rest:
Volume II, Webco Classic Series ♪♪♪♪ (Webco, 1990/1995)

influences:
◀◀ Stanley Brothers, Ted Lundy
▶▶ Dudley Connell, Del McCoury

see also: *Longview*

Stephen L. Betts

Kings of Calicutt

See: Eliza Carthy

The Kingston Trio

Formed 1957, in San Francisco, CA. Disbanded 1967.

Bob Shane, guitar, vocals; Nick Reynolds, guitar, vocals; Dave Guard, banjo, vocals (1957–61; died March 22, 1991); John Stewart, banjo, guitar, vocals (1961–67).

The Kingston Trio just made it look too darned easy; it's no wonder the group was reviled by folk-music colleagues who watched them leap to the top of the charts. The Trio—three glib, fun-loving West Coast guys with guitars, banjos, bongos, three-part harmonies, and matching striped shirts and chinos—became big stuff during the late 1950s and early 1960s, when five of its first six albums went to Number One on the *Billboard* charts, occupying the top spot for a total of 50 weeks.

The Trio's basic sound was deceptively simple and its albums—especially the choice of material—much better than its detractors were ready to admit. The group's this-business-is-easy attitude influenced many of its followers to pick up guitars and start groups of their own in country and rock. Dave Guard, the most gifted Trio member, left in 1961 and was replaced by John Stewart, who fit in perfectly before going on to a prolific solo career. Shane has continued to tour as part of the Kingston Trio into the '90s.

what to buy: The best short collection is *The Kingston Trio* ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol Collector's Series, 1990, prod. Voyle Gilmore), which includes 20 of their best-known tunes and all the Top 10 hit singles. If you're *really* interested, try *The Capitol Years* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995, prod. Voyle Gilmore), an extensive, fascinating four-CD collection that favors outtakes and unreleased tracks and offers a more sympathetic look at the Trio's place in history.

what to buy next: *Live at Newport* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1994, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) was recorded live at the 1959 Newport Folk Festival before a demanding East Coast audience. And if you can't get enough of the Trio, there's *The Guard Years* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1997), a 10-CD collection of the group's early albums.

what to avoid: *Once upon a Time* **woof!** (Tetragrammaton, 1969) was recorded live at Lake Tahoe in 1966; although the singing is fine, the jokes have gone flat and the song selection is questionable.

the rest:
Children of the Morning ♪♪ (Capitol, 1966/Folk Era, 1997)
Greatest Hits ♪♪ (Curb, 1991)
Stay Awhile ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1965/Folk Era, 1994)
Tom Dooley ♪♪½ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996)
Evening with the Kingston Trio ♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1997)

worth searching for: Capitol has released many of the early albums on compact disc, though they don't stay in print very long. You can sometimes find the occasional CD or vinyl LP. Worth the search is *New Frontier* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1962, prod. Voyle Gilmore), which centers around the enthusiasm over John F. Kennedy's presidency. *Live at the Hungry I* ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1959, prod. Voyle Gilmore) captures a hot club show with Guard's original stage patter. *At Large* ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1959, prod. Voyle Gilmore) features Bess Hawes's "M.T.A.," Guard's "Getaway John," "The Long Black Rifle," and Jane Bowers's "Remember the Alamo," and *String Along* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1960, prod. Voyle Gilmore) includes Tom Drake's "The Escape of Old John Webb," Cisco Hayes and Lee Hays's "Bad Man's Blunder," and Harlan Howard's "Everglades."

solo outings:
New Kingston Trio:
Lost Masters (1969–1972) ♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Weavers, Pete Seeger, Gateway Singers

▶▶ Peter, Paul & Mary, Brothers Four, Chad Mitchell Trio, Limeliters, Journeymen, Serendipity Singers, New Christy Minstrels, Roger McGuinn, Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel

see also: *John Stewart*

Leland Rucker

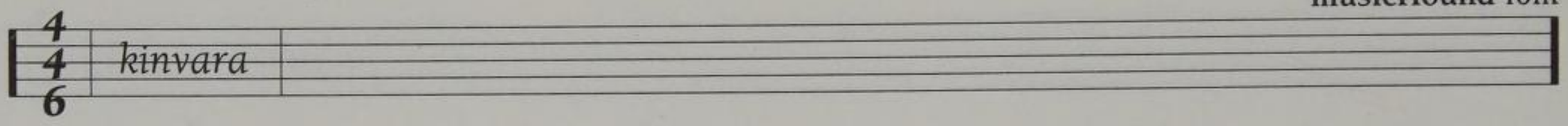
Alison Kinnaird

Born April 30, 1949, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Young Alison Kinnaird seemed on track to pursue a career as a cellist until, at age 14, she discovered the clàrsach—the small, diatonic, traditional knee-harp or folk harp of Scotland. A protégé of the late Jean Campbell, she learned enthusiastically and quickly, and played well enough to start winning competitions, including Scotland's National Mod and the first-ever Pan-Celtic Festival in Killarney, Ireland. But Kinnaird soon grew dissatisfied with what was then the standard repertoire. In the absence of a current tradition, much Scottish harp music was scavenged from the repertoires of other instruments or culled from printed collections, which were themselves often edited by pianists or concert harpists. She undertook the task that was to suffuse her musical career from then on: to resurrect (or, if necessary, reinvent) a truly traditional, Scottish repertoire and performance style for the Scottish harp; a process that was to culminate in the beginning of her recording career in 1978 with the release of her first LP, *The Harp Key*.

what to buy: If you're going to get just one, the obvious choice is *The Scottish Harp* ♪♪♪♪½ (Temple, 1988, prod. Robin Morton), which is a CD-only compendium of her first two solo albums, a splendid duet album with U.S.-born wire-strung harper Anne Heymann, a couple of National Trust folk archive projects she did with the Battlefield Band, and three newly recorded tracks. The 52-plus minutes herein represent the very best of an awfully good batch of recordings.

what to buy next: Kinnaird and Christine Primrose's *The Quiet Tradition* ♪♪♪½ (Temple, 1990, prod. Robin Morton) is a duet



album with one of Scotland's premier traditional singers and represents the culmination of many years of touring and making music together. Rarely do a singer and an instrumentalist seem so well matched; it's a tribute to Kinnaird's success in rekindling the clàrsach tradition that her playing blends so adeptly with a rigorous traditionalist like Primrose.

the rest:

The Harp Key ♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1978)
(With the Battlefield Band and Robin Morton) *Music in Trust* ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1986)
(With the Battlefield Band) *Music in Trust 2* ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1988)
(With Ann Heymann) *The Harper's Land* ♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1992)
The Harper's Gallery ♪♪ (Temple, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ Jean Campbell

▶▶ Wendy Stewart, Sileas, Cheryl Ann Fulton, Robin Williamson

Chris Rietz

Kinvara

See: Skylark

Kips Bay Ceili Band

See: John Whelan

John Kirkpatrick

Born August 8, 1947, in Chiswick, London, England.

A virtuoso at accordion, melodeon, and concertina, John Kirkpatrick is naturally linked to Morris dance music; he's even formed his own Morris team, the Shropshire Bedlams. He's been associated with traditionally based performers, including Steeleye Span and Ashley Hutchings, but he's also performed on such non-traditional projects as Gerry Rafferty's *Night Owl*, Pere Ubu's *The Tenement Year*, and several Richard Thompson albums and tours. He recorded several albums with Sue Harris (oboe and hammer dulcimer) in the 1970s and 1980s.

what to buy: *A Short History of John Kirkpatrick* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1994) is a compilation with excellent liner notes by David Suff that detail Kirkpatrick's career. The John Kirkpatrick Band's *Force of Habit* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Omnium, 1996, prod. John Kirkpatrick) is a fiery live album that contains many of the same songs as *A Short History*, including an even better version of "George's Son," undoubtedly the most delightful song ever written about a sheep dog.

best of the rest:

Plain Capers ♪♪♪♪♪ (Free Reed, 1976/Topic, 1996, prod. John Kirkpatrick, Neil Wayne)
(With the John Kirkpatrick Band) *Welcome to Hell* ♪♪♪♪ (Fledg'ling, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Ashley Hutchings

see also: *Steeleye Span, Ashley Hutchings*

Pamela Murray Winters

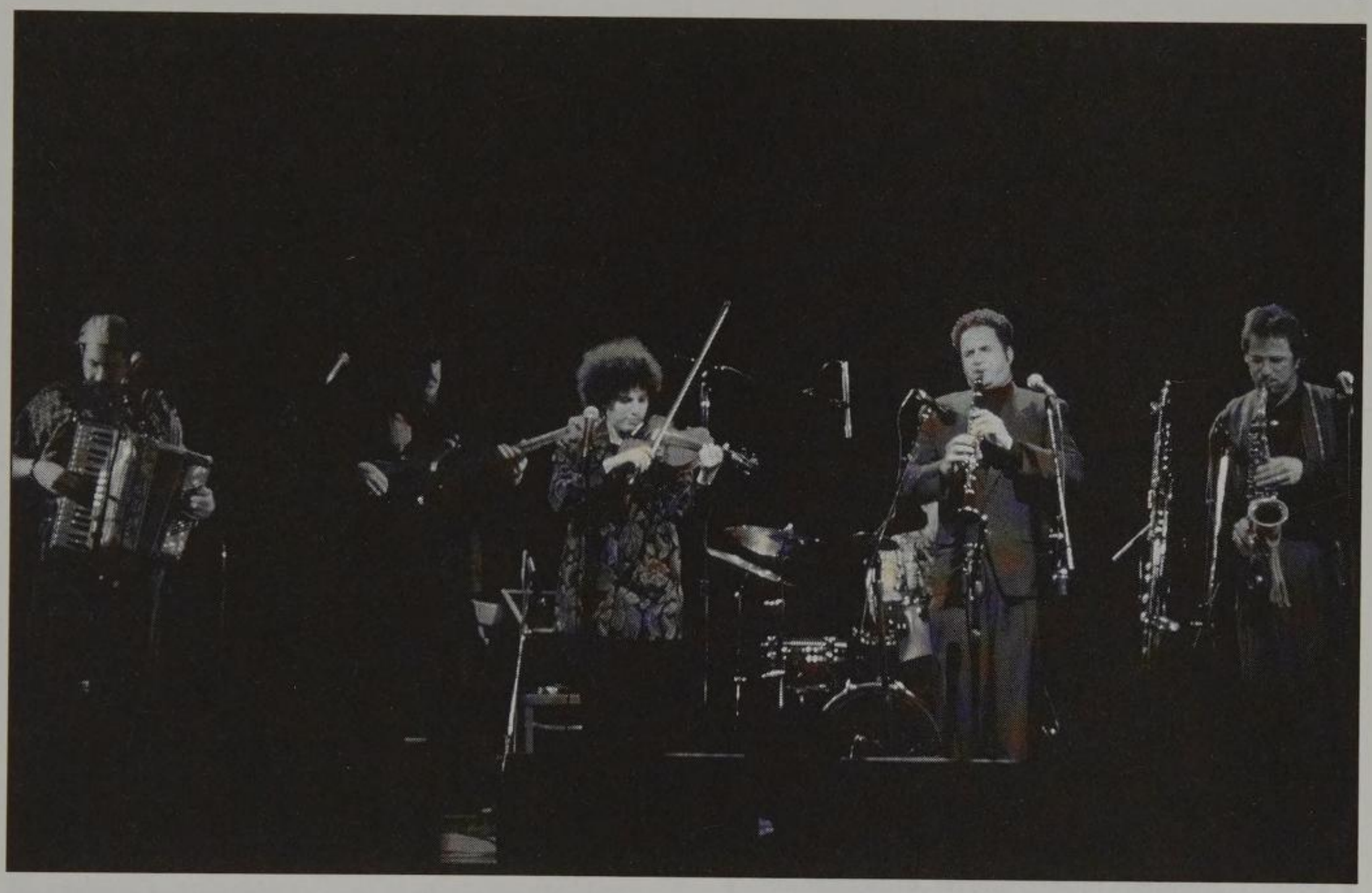
The Klezmatics

Formed 1986, in New York, NY.

Alicia Svigals, violin; Lorin Sklamberg, accordion, keyboards, vocals; Paul Morrissett, bass, tsimbl; Frank London, trumpet, keyboards; David Licht, drums; Matt Darriau, clarinet, saxophone. Other members have included: David Krakauer, clarinet.

The Klezmatics play radical Jewish roots music for the 21st century, combining their identity as Jews with a post-modern mysticism and progressive politics. This innovative ensemble has shared stage and studio with classical superstar Itzhak Perlman, avante garde dude John Zorn, the alternative rock band Ben Folds Five, transsexual cabaret singers, and the Moroccan Master Musicians of Jajouka. Their collaboration with Perlman, *In the Fiddler's House*, topped both World and Classical music charts internationally, becoming one of the top-selling folk albums of all time. Formed in 1986, the Klezmatics' music is by turns ecstatic, angry, elegiac, frenetic, and exquisite. Standout musicians in the group include violinist Alicia Svigals, whose mesmerizing fiddling swirls with echoes of ancient Greek and Turkish modes (combined with judicious use of MIDI, jazz stylings, and classical virtuosity) and the compelling vocalist Lorin Sklamberg, who infuses all his songs with intense emotion; but every musician in the Klezmatics is a technical wizard, able to switch gears instantly between a scholarly approach of re-creating an older, traditional sound, and their innovative modern perspective, which is often informed by jazz, rock, and avant-garde influences.

what to buy: *Possessed* ♪♪♪♪½ (Xenophile, 1997, prod. Robert Musso) reaffirms the Klezmatics' position as the premiere post-modern Klezmer band, as they march into the 21st century with a progressive agenda encompassing Jewish mysticism, gay rights, racial equality, and legalization of marijuana, all of which are given the celebratory treatment formerly reserved for such sacraments as weddings. The album starts in straightforward fashion, with Lorin Sklamberg's emotion-dripping vocals on the gypsy song "Shprayz Ikh Mir," lavishly backed by an expanded ensemble that includes the members of the Canadian group Moxy Früvous. The album soon veers from the traditional into the ex-



The Klezmatics **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

otic, with the clamorous "Moroccan Game," featuring a jazzy, skittering group improvisation. "Mizmor Shir Lehanef (Reefer Song)" reflects the Klezmatics' involvement in the struggle to create honest public discourse about drugs in the United States. Unlike their earlier work, *Possessed* includes numerous songs in English, drawn from the Klezmatics' score for playwright Tony Kushner's "A Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds" (an adaptation of the classic turn-of-the-century Yiddish drama "The Dybbuk").

the rest:
ShvaygnToyt (SilenceDeath) ♪♪♪♪ (Piranha, 1988)
Rhythm & Jews ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
(With Itzhak Perlman) *Live in the Fiddler's House* ♪♪♪♪ (EMI Classics/Angel, 1995)
Jews with Horns ♪♪♪♪ (Xenophile, 1995)

worth searching for: The Klezmatics appear on the following compilations: *Klezmer: A Marriage of Heaven & Earth* ♪♪♪ (Ellipsis Arts, 1996), *Festival of Light* ♪♪♪ (Six Degrees/Island, 1996), *Klezmania: Klezmer for the New Millennium* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997), and *A Tribute to the Skatalites* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

solo outings:
Alicia Sigals:
Fidl ♪♪♪♪½ (Traditional Crossroads, 1997)

influences:
⏪ Schloimke Beckerman, Naftuly Brandwein, Dave Tarras
⏩ Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, Brave Old World, Budowitz, Kapelye, Don Byron

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Klezmer Conservatory Band

Formed 1980, in Boston, MA.

Hankus Netsky, alto saxophone, accordion, piano; Judy Bressler, vocals, tambourine, poyk; Gary Bohan, cornet; James Guttmann, bass; Mark Hamilton, trombone; Robin Miller, flute, piccolo; Miriam Rab-

klezmorim

son, violin; Javier Perez Saco, piano; Grant Smith, drums, percussion; Ilene Stahl, clarinet; Jeff Warschauer, mandolin, guitar, tenor banjo, background vocals. Other members have included Don Byron, clarinet; David Brody, violin; Merryl Goldberg, soprano, alto, and baritone saxophones; Evan Harlan, piano, accordion; Frank London, cornet, alto horn; Ingrid Monson, cornet; Steve Netsky, tenor banjo, guitar, mandolin; Marvin Weinberger, violin.

Known for their shimmering performances of traditional and contemporary-tinged Yiddish music, the members of the Klezmer Conservatory Band have been international ambassadors of their high-spirited and infectious dance music since Hankus Netsky assembled the group in 1980. Multi-instrumentalist and composer Netsky, who is chairman of the jazz studies department at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, got his introduction to Yiddish music from an uncle and a grandfather who played in Philadelphia Klezmer bands during the '20s and '30s. Although Klezmer music, also dubbed "Jewish jazz," faded in popularity in the United States after the 1940s, when immigrant Jews tended to want to blend into American culture, recent years have seen a strong renaissance, thanks in part to the efforts of Netsky and the KCB. The 11-piece powerhouse breathes new life into this passionate music, which dates back to medieval Europe and incorporates a gumbo of Greek and Romanian dance rhythms, Dixieland swing, ragtime, and classical elements. The band was featured in 1988's *A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden*, a documentary about Yiddish music, and in the acclaimed film *Enemies, a Love Story.* The KCB, which now regularly tours Europe, made its debut abroad in the spring of 1990 when it played several concerts in Germany and brought down the house at the first International Yiddish Festival in Krakow, Poland. The group has also been featured in Joel Gray's Yiddish music revue, "Borschtcapades '94," and in the PBS special, *In the Fiddler's House*, with violinist Itzhak Perlman. Recorded in New York and Krakow, the latter traced the Klezmer roots of Perlman's brilliant career. Besides the ever-present high octane spirit in the songs, the KCB's album notes include translations and/or transliterations, giving an extra added dimension to this life-affirming, irresistible toe-tapping music.

what to buy: The band calls *Live! The 13th Anniversary Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Hankus Netsky, George B. Hicks) its Bar Mitzvah album, and like that joyous coming-of-age milestone, this record, recorded at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston on May 2, 1993, teems with celebration, energy, and excitement. Highlights include "Lena from Palesteena," an "early oriental fox-trot" first recorded by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in 1921, "The Epsteins," a raucous, cascading traditional New York-style wedding dance originally recorded by the Epstein Brothers Orchestra in the mid-'50s, and "Rumenye, Rumenye (Romania, Romania)," which shows off vocalist Judy Bressler's vocal gymnastics in a multilingual rendition of a song that's been sung by Billy Crystal and danced to by John Belushi. Throughout the album, the energy level is just short of delirious, and the concert setting notches things up even tighter than usual. With its songs and stories, *Oy Chanukah!* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Martin Miller) bristles with the spirit of Chanukah, one of the joyous celebrations of the Jewish year. The added "Oy" in the title (the liner notes describe this multipurpose exclamation as "a lament, a protest, a cry of dismay, a reflex of delight") is indicative of the band's omnipresent spunk and the record's historic reflections.

what to buy next: The group's *Dancing in the Aisles* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Hankus Netsky, George B. Hicks) is guaranteed to transport all but the most lead-footed on a tour of show tunes, swing tunes, wedding music, and more. In addition to the group's instrumental savvy, vocalist Bressler has never sounded better. One of the album's most unusual tracks is "Freylekh Fantastique," which excerpts from Beethoven, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, and Mendelssohn. Roll back the rug!

the rest:

Klez! ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1988)
A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
Old World Beat ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991)
Yiddishe Renaissance ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992)

influences:

- 1,000 years of Jewish culture, Seymour Rechtzeit, Miriam Kressyn
- Klezmatics, Brave Old World

David Sokol

Klezmorim

Formed 1975, in Berkeley, CA. Disbanded 1994.

David Julian Gray, clarinets, piano; Lev Liberman, flute, alto and soprano saxophones; Kevin Linscott, trombone; John Raskin, percussion, xylophone; Donald Thornton, tuba; Brian Wishnefsky, trumpet. Other members have included Ben Goldberg, clarinet; Christopher Leaf, trumpet; Ken Bergmann, percussion; Tom Stamper, drums, percussion; Steve Saxon, trumpet; David Skuse, violin; Greg Carageorge, double bass; Laurie Chastain, violin; Rick Elmore, bass trombone,

klezmorim

tuba, bass drum, cymbals; Nada Lewis, tsambal mik, baraban; Susie Rothfield, violin; Miriam Dvorin, violin, vocal.

The Klezmorim played a pivotal role in the evolution of Klezmer music; the group's first album ushered in the currently burgeoning Klezmer revival. The members of the Klezmorim described their music as "the rollicking, vodka-soaked sound of a steam calliope gone mad." They blended the group improvisation of Dixieland jazz with the rougher sounds of the unschooled ensembles which once roamed the villages of Eastern Europe, and added a good measure of New Vaudeville theatrics. The result was a loose, roaring, funky brass sound, different from the more classical approach of the Klezmer Conservatory Band or the modern technical virtuosity of the Klezmatics. Today Klezmer music is in the midst of a renaissance, with active ensembles in every city.

Sometimes dubbed "Jewish jazz," Klezmer music first became popular during the 1920s, when musicians were in the midst of merging the Russian and Romanian dance music of their homeland with the newer sounds of early jazz. However, by the mid-1970s, Klezmer music had been practically defunct for decades, a casualty of immigrant Jews' desires to assimilate into U.S. mainstream culture. The resurrection of Klezmer music began in 1975 in an unlikely spot: Berkeley, California, where flutist Lev Liberman had unearthed a cache of 78-rpm discs in a Jewish museum, fell in love with this Yiddish soul music, and plunged into an exhaustive study of Klezmer (a mind-boggling task at this time, since none of the source material was readily available). Clearly the next step was to form a band in order to revive this all-but-moribund musical genre. At first, the band was string-based, with violinist David Skuse playing a key role in choosing repertoire and arrangements. By 1978 the string players had dropped out, and the Klezmorim became a horn ensemble, which they remained until disbanding in 1994. Encouraged by new Klezmorim member Rick Elmore (a member of the Cheap Suit Serenaders, and a seasoned street musician in his alter ego, one-man-band, Professor Gizmo), the Klezmorim began to move away from their previous scholarly approach, incorporating elements from the New Vaudeville movement into their stage show. The Klezmorim toured incessantly, both nationally and internationally, and its success inspired other musicians in other cities to take up the banner of Klezmer, with bands first emerging in Boston (the Klezmer Conservatory Band) and New York (Kapelye). In 1983–84, the Klezmorim collaborated on a theatrical production with the juggling supergroup the Flying Karamazov Brothers, whose bizarre humor left a permanent mark; the band went on to develop their own theatrical presentation combining slapstick comedy, melodrama, and Klezmer music, which became very successful, especially in Europe, where *Jazz Babies of the Ukraine* was recorded.

what to buy: Recorded live at the Great American Music Hall, *Metropolis* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1981/1993, prod. Stuart Brotman) captures the stirring, celebratory and occasionally maniacal energy of the Klezmorim at their peak. "Constantinople," "Hot Dishes," and "The Good Soldier" showcase the Klezmorim's evocative recreation of a Russian military marching band from the turn of the century; the band is rhythmically relaxed yet cohesive, sounding as if they have been playing together for

editor's choice
15 unjustly overlooked gems

Stompin' Tom Connors, *A Proud Canadian* (EMI Music Canada)

Donovan, *HMS Donovan* (Dawn)

Arlo Guthrie, *Arlo* (Reprise/Rising Son)

John Hartford, *Aereo-Plain* (Warner Bros./Rounder)

Incredible String Band, *Earthspan* (Reprise/Edsel)

Mendelson Joe, *Mr. Middle of the Road* (Nobody)

David Lannan, *Street Singer* (San Francisco)

Phil Ochs, *Interviews with Phil Ochs* (Folkways)

Patrick Sky, *Songs That Made AMERICA Famous* (Adelphi)

Mason Williams, *Listening Matter* (Everest)

Duf Davis & the Book Club, *Endless-Mindless Violence* (Galactic)

Johnny Dowd, *Wrong Side of Memphis* (Johnny Dowd)

Hammell on Trial, *Big As Life* (Mercury)

Ashley MacIsaac, *hi how are you today?* (Ancient Music/A&M)

One Riot One Ranger, *Faces Made for Radio* (Fundamental)

decades. David Julian Gray's frenzied clarinet solos on "Kramtweiss Steps Out" and "Heyser Bulgar" feature the laughs, whoops, and swoops associated with Klezmer, giving the piece an authentic village flavor. Not all the tunes are as frenzied; the sinuous "Moldovanke" is more contemplative, and the beautiful "Tuba Doina" creates a unique texture, combining a slow, Middle Eastern-sounding tuba solo by Donald Thornton with the tinkling delicacy of the xylophone.

what to buy next: For a look at the very first stirrings of the Klezmer revival, *First Recordings 1976–78* ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1977–78/1989, prod. Chris Strachwitz, Klezmorim) contains highlights of the Klezmorim's first two albums, including gems from their short-lived early era as a string-based ensemble. "Fidl Volach," featuring Skuse's exotic violin, and "Cintec De Dragoste/Hora Lui Damian," with Liberman's lovely flute playing, both serve as reminders of the connection between Balkan folk dance music and Klezmer. Another highlight is what the liner notes dub the "Turkey in the Straw" of Eastern Europe, "Yoshke Yoshke." From the Klezmorim's second album come the sprightly "Firen Di Mekhutonim Aheym" and one of the band's greatest hits, "Di Zilberne Khasene." *First Recordings* also boasts a charming cover (originally from the second album, *Streets of Gold*) by the comic-book genius Robert Crumb that pictures the band on the deck of a ship, with the Statue of Liberty in the background. *Jazz Babies of the Ukraine* ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. Gilles Hugo) gives a sampling of the music from the stage show for which the Klezmorim became best known. It is unfortunately incomplete without the visuals: picture six dark-haired, bearded men performing in fezzes, tossing rubber chickens into the crowd, leaping about like circus acrobats, conducting a mock Socialist rally, a holy-roller revivalist meeting, and kabuki drama onstage. Liberman sums it up by saying "It's true that Ken Bergmann used plastic Halloween bones as drumsticks. Yes, I did solo on the HarpoMarxophone. And it is indisputable that we stole our moves from Betty Boop."

worth searching for: *Notes from the Underground* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984, prod Bernie Krause) is a clear evolutionary step toward *Jazz Babies of the Ukraine*, and a precursor to such later modern Klezmer groups as The Klezmatics, Flying Bulgars, and New Orleans Klezmer All Stars. This excellent incarnation of the Klezmorim includes Tom Stamper on drums/percussion and Steve Saxon on trumpet, both experienced jazz musicians who bumped the general musicianship of the group up considerably. Highlights include Duke Ellington's "The Mooche" and the "oriental fox-trot" "Egyptian Ella" based on a late-'20s Ted Lewis recording with a teenaged Benny Goodman on clarinet. Another standout is the brilliant tuba solo on "Stambul Tants," originally recorded by the Ukrainian accordion player and bandleader Kornienko.

influences:

- Naftuly Brandwein, Abe Schwartz Orchestra, Dave Tarras, Danny Elfman's "Mystic Knights of the Oingo Boingo," Duke Ellington, Fleischman Brothers' cartoon music
- Kapelye, Klezmatics, Brave Old World

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Cheri Knight

See: Blood Oranges

Koerner, Ray & Glover

Formed early 1960s, in Minneapolis, MN.

"Spider" John Koerner, vocals; "Snaker" Dave Ray, vocals, guitar; Tony "Little Sun" Glover, harmonica.

Like Dave Van Ronk and Keith Richards, these three white University of Minneapolis college students fell in love with the blues and set out to stamp their slightly fun-loving take on traditional music. But instead of hopping up the old styles into rock 'n' roll, they stuck to the folk crowds, becoming a popular festival act and releasing a string of well-written, respectful albums throughout the 1960s. They have much more in common with the Kingston Trio than the Rolling Stones, or even Howlin' Wolf, but Koerner's impeccable songwriting (including "I Ain't Blue" and "Boys Were Shooting It Out"), Ray's warm guitar licks, and Glover's "Blues Harp" instructional book and liner notes for John Lee Hooker and Jayhawks albums have had lasting influence. Koerner and Ray continue to perform regularly, but the full trio gets together only on special occasions.

what to buy: *Blues, Rags, and Hollers* ♪♪♪♪ (Audiophile/Elektra, 1963/Red House, 1995) and *Lots More Blues, Rags, and Hollers* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1964/1988) are similar to Peter, Paul and Mary's material from that era; but this trio is more talented and understands and uses the soul and blues idioms better than their more hit-loving counterparts.

what to buy next: *Good Old Koerner, Ray & Glover* ♪♪½ (Mill City, 1972) is a nice comeback record, although the trio's time had clearly come and gone. The live reunion album, *One Foot in the Groove* ♪♪♪½ (Tim Kerr, 1996, prod. Mark Trehus), is an even better one, with fun songs like the traditional "Dodger" and more solemn takes on Bill Monroe's "With Body and Soul" and the classics "Black Jack Davy" and "Deliah's Gone."

the rest:
Return of Koerner, Ray & Glover ♪♪ (Elektra, 1966)

worth searching for: They're out of print, but Glover and Ray's two duet albums *Ashes in My Whiskey* ♪♪♪♪ (Rough Trade, 1990) and *Picture Has Faded* ♪♪♪½ (Tim Kerr, 1992) are powerful, often harrowing, mostly blues sets. Glover's career as a producer and music writer has been occasionally more interesting than his career as a performer: He has worked on albums by punk singer Patti Smith and an excellent documentary film, *Blues, Rags, and Hollers: The Koerner, Ray & Glover Story* (Latch Lake, 1996).

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Dave Van Ronk, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Son House, Skip James, Doc Watson, Big Joe Williams, James Cotton

▶▶ Taj Mahal, Ry Cooder, John Hammond Jr., Keb' Mo'

see also: *"Spider" John Koerner*

Steve Knopper

"Spider" John Koerner

Born August 31, 1938, in Rochester, NY.

At the peak of the early-1960s collegiate folk era, guitarist and vocalist Spider John Koerner and his Minnesota-based trio—Koerner, Glover and Ray—reached back to earlier roots and produced a series of albums of traditional folk, country blues, and ragtime that influenced everyone from Bob Dylan and the Doors to John Lennon and Bonnie Raitt. During the decades since, Koerner has continued his explorations into the raw, gutsy, side of acoustic music. As a youngster, Koerner had little interest in music. Although he entered the University of Minnesota to study aeronautic engineering, he veered from his course after a dormitory mate introduced him to the songs of Josh White and the Weavers. Teaching himself to play from a Burl Ives songbook, he eventually left school to travel around the country playing music. After serving a stint in the Marine Corps and living for a while in San Francisco, he returned, in 1959, to Minnesota. In his absence, a folk music scene had been launched and there were scores of coffeehouses near the university. In addition to performing as a soloist, Koerner played with a duo that sometimes included a very young Bob Dylan. Meeting and playing with Tony "Little Sun" Glover and Dave "Snaker" Ray at after-hours rent parties, Koerner agreed to join resources. During a marathon recording session, the three musicians recorded an album *Blues, Rags, and Hollers* in 1963. Although initially released on the ultra-small Audiophile record label, the trio moved into national prominence after Elektra bought out the trio's contract with Audiophile later that year. In addition to re-releasing the album, the label produced the trio's second recording, *Lots More Blues, Rags, and Hollers.* The 25th anniversary of the album's release was marked by its reissue in 1988. Although he continued to occasionally perform reunite concerts with the trio, Koerner launched his solo recording career with *Spider Blues* in 1965. *Running, Jumping, Standing Still*, released in 1969, was his first collaboration with pianist and bass player Willie Murphy and showcased his skills as a songwriter with 10 original songs. After recording two albums during the early 1970s—*Some American Folk Songs like They Used To* and *Music Is Just a Bunch of Notes*—Koerner stopped writing songs and retreated from music in 1972, seeming to fade into obscurity. During his self-imposed absence from music, he moved to Denmark for a couple of years and focused his attention on other interests, including experimental film making and amateur astronomy. Koerner's resurrection was sparked by a copy of Alan Lomax's book, *American Folk Songs* that he found in a book store in Copenhagen. Forsaking his original songs, he became absorbed by traditional folk songs. During the mid-1980s, Red House Records re-released *Running, Jumping, Standing Still*, which included a collection of unreleased cuts that Koerner had recorded in 1980 with stellar musicians including Peter Ostroushko, Butch Thompson, Tony Glover, Dakota Dave Hull, and pianist Murphy. Koerner's return was solidified by a live album, *Legends of Folk Music*, recorded with Ramblin' Jack Elliott and Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips.

what to buy: *Raised by Humans* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996, prod. Eric Bain Peltoniemi) captures Koerner's earthy tones in their most ambitious setting. Evenly split between songs written or adopted during the 1970s and new compositions, the album showcases Koerner's mastery of the 12-string acoustic guitar and his soulful singing. Although only two songs are original—"Summer of '88" and "Everybody's Going for the Money"—Koerner successfully resurrects traditional songs including "The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe Corn," "Boll Weevil," "The Farmer's Curst Wife," and "The Water Is Wide." An array of top-notch musicians, including Dakota Dave Hull, Dean McGraw, Peter Ostroushko, and Willie Murphy, help to make this a memorable recording.

what to buy next: *Running, Jumping, Standing Still* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1969/Red House, 1994, prod. Frazier Mohawk) captures Koerner at his most eclectic. A collaboration with Willie

Murphy, who later produced, co-arranged, and played bass on his 1996 album *Stargeezer*, the album remains a treasured celebration of late-60s folk-rock.

the rest:
Spider Blues ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1965)
(With Willie & the Bees) *Music Is Just a Bunch of Notes* ♪♪♪½ (Sweet Jane, 1972)
Some American Folk Songs like They Used To ♪♪♪ (Sweet Jane, 1972)
Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Been ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1986)
(With Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips and Ramblin' Jack Elliott) *Legends* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1990)
Stargeezer ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996)

worth searching for: The multi-artist anthology, *Blues with a Feeling, Part Two* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1997) features a live recording of Spider John Koerner's performance of the original tune, "Traveling Blues" at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965.

influences:
◀◀ Sam Charters, Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Skip James, Mississippi John Hurt
▶▶ Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Jim Morrison, Bonnie Raitt, Chris Smither

see also: *Koerner, Ray & Glover*

Craig Harris

Walt Koken

Walt Koken was a banjo player in the Highwoods String Band, an influential group during the old-time music revival of the 1960s. After playing with that group, he entered a self-imposed playing hiatus, re-emerging in 1994 with the album *Banjonique* on Rounder.

what's available: Both of Koken's recent albums, *Banjonique* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Walt Koken) and *Hei-wa Hoedown* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Walt Koken), are fine examples of old-time solo banjo. Playing in a clawhammer style, Koken breathes fresh life into traditional tunes as well as adding some songs of his own to the canon. The songs are mostly instrumental, but Koken occasionally sings as well. Also recommended listening is *Feed Your Babies Onions: Fat City Favorites* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994) by the Highwoods String Band.

influences:
◀◀ Mac Benford, Bob Carlin
▶▶ Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole

Brian Mansfield

Fred Koller

Born c. 1950, in Chicago, IL.

There's a gruff sweetness to his voice that falls somewhere between Louis Armstrong and John Hiatt, but Fred Koller writes tight, folky songs perfectly suited for the smart, friendly coffeehouse environment. With pen pals like John Hiatt, John Prine, John Gorka, Pat Alger, and Shel Silverstein, the Nashville songwriter has also written some classic country-radio friendly songs, including the big Kathy Mattea hits "Goin' Gone," "She Came from Fort Worth," and "Life as We Knew It" (all Top Five); "Lone Star State of Mind," one of Nanci Griffith's best known tracks; and "Angel Eyes," the gorgeous pop hit for the bluesy Jeff Healey Band. The industry vet is also the author of the book *How to Pitch and Promote Your Songs.*

what to buy: *Where the Fast Lane Ends* ♪♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1990, prod. Fred Koller, Steve O'Brien) has a cozy, living-room vibe. Koller's songs are provocative, even chilling sometimes, and his voice is warm and inviting on this set of originals (including "Goin' Gone" and "Lone Star State of Mind") written with luminaries including Al Anderson, Pat Alger, John Hiatt, and Sonny Throckmorton.

what to buy next: *Songs from the Night Before* ♪♪♪½ (Alcazar, 1989, prod. Fred Koller, Steve O'Brien) contains another generous helping of the songwriter's economic, off-color musical observations, including an otherworldly Presley invocation, "King and I," a frightening "Dentist Blues," and a hilariously goofy Prine co-write, "Let's Talk Dirty" (as in "Let's talk dirty in Hawaiian").

the rest:
Night of the Living Fred ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1989)

influences:
◀◀ Tom Waits, Bruce Springsteen
▶▶ Randy Newman, John Hiatt

David Sokol

Ken Kolodner

Born September 24, 1954, in Baltimore, MD.

Though he also plays a respectable fiddle, Ken Kolodner is best known as a leading figure of the hammer-dulcimer revival in America. This instrument, which has little in common with the mountain or lap dulcimer other than half its name, has been around for several thousand years, known by such names as timpan, hackbrett, cimbolam, yang chin, santouri, and the lumberjack's piano. In Anglo-American circles, it languished in ob-

scurity until 1975 when the West Virginia group Trapezoid named itself after the hammer dulcimer's shape and built its arrangements around the instrument's percussive, music-box sound. Like such fellow travelers as John McCutcheon, Malcolm Dalglish, and Walt Michael, Kolodner was captivated by the ringing tones of the hammer dulcimer and taught himself how to handle the wooden mallets. Though he eventually formed a duo with flutist Chris Norman, and a trio called Helicon with Norman and guitarist Robin Bullock, he also maintained an active solo career. He appeared at nearly every hammer-dulcimer festival in the United States and became the first American to play at the International Hackbrett Festival in Germany. Born and raised in Baltimore, Kolodner holds a Ph.D. in public health from Johns Hopkins University and works as a consultant in the field.

what's available: Kolodner's debut solo album, *Walking Stones* ♪♪♪½ (Dorian Recordings, 1997, prod. David H. Walters), features the leader solely on hammer dulcimer with accompaniment by guitarist Bullock of Helicon and fiddler Laura Risk of Cordelia's Dad. The all-instrumental project features 31 tunes, presented as 10 medleys and four individual selections. The slow, evocative title selection, which refers to the Neolithic stone markers scattered across the British Isles, was written by Kolodner, as were three other numbers. The balance of the melodies are traditional and neo-traditional tunes from Irish, Scottish, Quebecois, and Celtic-American sources. Kolodner is careful to sustain the ringing sustain of his instrument to gain more precision within his chamber-music-like arrangements of the tunes, and his accompanists follow his lead. The result is less emphasis on new-age atmosphere and more on musicianship.

worth searching for: Before they formed Helicon, Kolodner and Norman released a duo album called *Daybreak* ♪♪♪ (Jeb Records, 1985, prod. Ken Kolodner, Chris Norman). They were still trying to get a handle on their musical personalities, but the interplay between Kolodner's self-taught Appalachiana and Norman's classical training, between Kolodner's piercing hammer dulcimer and Norman's fluttering flute, pointed toward the distinguished careers to come. In addition to the Celtic and Appalachian tunes, the album includes two Mozart pieces that boast a folksy warmth, even as the folk tunes benefit from a classical discipline.

influences:

◀◀ Derek Bell, Trapezoid

▶▶ John McCutcheon, Malcolm Dalglish, Walt Michael

see also: *Helicon*

Geoffrey Himes

leo kottke

4/5/3

Ozzie Kotani

Born 1956, in Honolulu, HI.

One of the many Hawaiian slack-key guitarists who began playing during the 1970s, sometimes called the "era of the Hawaiian Renaissance," Ozzie Kotani has developed one of the more singular styles of playing. He began teaching himself from a Keola Beamer record and developed a unique four-finger playing style; his playing style is also characterized by rolling notes and the bass patterns he plays on his guitar's low strings. A one-time student of the late Sonny Chillingworth, he now teaches in Hawaii and has published an instructional book-and-cassette package called *Guitar Playing Hawaiian Style*, written with Dennis Ladd. He began recording in 1988.

what's available: The all-instrumental *Kani Ki Ho'alu ("The Sound of Slack Key")* ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat, 1995, prod. George Winston) is more harmonically adventurous than most slack-key albums. The album features Kotani playing solo, though he is occasionally overdubbed, as on "Ione's Theme."

influences:

◀◀ Keola Beamer, Sonny Chillingworth

Brian Mansfield

Leo Kottke

Born September 11, 1945, in Athens, GA.

Acoustic fingerpickers across the land are perpetually awed by the super-nimble guitar work of Leo Kottke. An eclectic guitar wiz, he has developed a cult following not only for his musicianship but also for his dark humor and deadpan vocal delivery. Labeling him a folkie is too limiting a term, as he prefers to jump all over the map without adhering to any one style. He made an auspicious debut in 1969 as a dazzlingly percussive folk/bluegrass based instrumentalist. He soon incorporated a rhythm section and occasional and gradually softened his whirlwind style. He abandoned the fingerpicks and heavy rhythms altogether near the end of the 1970s, when he developed tendonitis. Kottke had to virtually inhabit another approach to his guitar work, a softer, more muted tone. After concentrating more on live performance during the '80s, Kottke has successfully returned to regular album releases.

what to buy: Recorded in three hours, *Six and Twelve-String Guitar* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1969/Rhino 1994 is a ripping ride that has Kottke literally bursting at every seam. A must-have for anyone who takes traditional acoustic music seriously. *Guitar Music* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1981, prod. Leo Kottke) is his cele-

jake krack

brated return to solo acoustic music, with a fine turn on the Everly Brother's "All I Have to Do Is Dream" and the otherworldly "Sleepwalk."

what to buy next: For a thorough, but not complete, sampler, *The Leo Kottke Anthology* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1997, comp. prod. James Austin, Rick Clark) covers Kottke's debut through 1983. Most of his more celebrated material is from this period. They're all here as well as choice album cuts and self-penned liner notes. His later period work is more diverse, as is the case with *Great Big Boy* ♪♪♪½ (Private Music, 1991, prod. Steve Berlin). Kottke traipses between funkified folk and Mexican-flavored fare with guests Margo Timmins of the Cowboy Junkies and Lyle Lovett.

what to avoid: *That's What* ♪♪½ (Private Music, 1990) is too muted to appeal to all but the most devoted listener. It makes for a dull spin that strays too close to New Age.

the rest:
Mudlark ♪♪♪♪ (One Way, 1971/1995)
Greenhouse ♪♪♪♪ (One Way, 1972/1995)
My Feet Are Smiling ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1973/1995)
Ice Water ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1974/1995)
Time Step ♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1983)
A Shout toward Noon ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1986)
Regards from Chuck Pink ♪♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1988)
My Father's Face ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1989)
The Essential Leo Kottke ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1991)
Peculiaroso ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1993)
Live ♪♪♪½ (Private Music, 1995)
Dreams and All That Stuff ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1996)
Essential (Collection) ♪♪♪♪ (Alliance, 1997)

worth searching for: *Chewing Pine* ♪♪♪½ (Beat Goes On, 1975/1994) is an apt title for this rootsy import collection.

influences:
◀◀ Igor Stravinsky, Chet Atkins, Carl Perkins, Rev. Gary Davis, Roy Clark

▶▶ Jorma Kaukonen, Edward Wright, Ry Cooder, Chris Whitley

Allan Orski

Jake Krack

Born 1985, in IN.

Jake Krack began classical violin training at age six. With the help of both parents, his interest quickly turned to old-time fiddling. By age nine he had connected with renowned fiddler Brad Leftwich, whose influence shows strongly in Krack's steady, forceful playing. He has studied extensively with Melvin Wine and Glen Smith, both elder statesmen of West Virginia traditional fiddle music. Krack is a regular at old-time music festivals and contests throughout the Appalachian states and enjoys jamming with friends and strangers alike.

what's available: *How 'bout That* ♪♪♪♪ (Wisekrack Records, 1996, prod. Grey Larsen, Reed Krack) is Krack's first recording. It includes such old-time standards as "John Brown's Dream" and "Sweet Sunny South," as well as many of the tunes he has learned from Wine and other West Virginia sources. Several of the latter have not been recorded elsewhere. Krack is accompanied by Leftwich on banjo, Bob Herring on guitar, and his mother, Dara Krack, on guitar. Jake plays in standard tuning and several different cross tunings, all of which are given in the liner notes. Hopefully, this is just the first of many recordings from this up-and-coming young artist.

influences:
◀◀ Brad Leftwich, Melvin Wine, Glen Smith, Jimmy Triplett

Dave Shombert

Alison Krauss /Alison Krauss & Union Station

Born July 23, 1971, in Champaign, IL.

No one will ever be more important to bluegrass music than its progenitor, Bill Monroe. But it took Alison Krauss, a preteenager when she started her stellar career, to bring it to the masses. And the way she did it involved no gimmickry, but merely being herself—a fiddle champ who could share the stage with Monroe and hold her own, but also a young woman who's been exposed to pop culture and wants to reflect it in her own music. Thus the covers of rock and pop tunes, and guesting on albums by former Doobie Brother Michael McDonald and neo-hippie rock group Phish. In addition to being a world-class instrumentalist, Krauss possesses an angelic voice that recalls Dolly Parton and Emmylou Harris and is an accomplished bandleader and record producer. There may be no stopping her—nor should there be.

what to buy: Krauss is known for flouting stogy bluegrass conventions, but she shows just how far she's willing to go on *Now That I've Found You: A Collection* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995,

Alison Krauss **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

alison krauss

kris kristofferson

prod. various), which collects tracks from her five albums plus songs from other projects and previously unreleased material. Among the latter, there are covers of Sidney and Suzanne Cox, as well as the Foundations. No problem there. But what's this? "Oh Atlanta" by . . . Bad Company? Indeed, and Krauss pulls it off with aplomb. There's also a version of John Lennon & Paul McCartney's "I Will," recorded for Tony Furtado's album *Within Reach*, and "When You Say Nothing at All," from a 1994 Keith Whitley tribute album. Krauss's collaboration with the gospel/bluegrass unit the Cox Family, *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Alison Krauss) is nearly perfect. The arrangements are both traditional ("Will There Be Any Stars?") and innovative ("Walk over God's Heaven"), and Krauss and the Coxes turn in lively performances on Loretta Lynn's "Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven" and Paul Simon's "Loves Me like a Rock."

what to buy next: Krauss's confidence as a bandleader and producer really shows on *Every Time You Say Goodbye* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Alison Krauss & Union Station). Every move seems assured, and her relationship with her band, Union Station, is symbiotic. The traditional material is fine, particularly the instrumental "Cluck Old Hen," and Krauss steps out with a pair of pop tunes, Shawn Colvin's "I Don't Know Why" and Karla Bonoff's "Lose Again."

the rest:
Too Late to Cry ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
(With Union Station) *Two Highways* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989)
I've Got That Old Feeling ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
So Long So Wrong ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)

worth searching for: Krauss contributes vocals to "If I Could" from rock band Phish's album *Hoist* ♪½ (Elektra, 1994). She's guested on dozens of Nashville albums as well. Just turn a recent country album over, and you'll likely find Krauss's name on it somewhere.

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris
▶▶ Alison Brown, Laurie Lewis, Cox Family

see also: *The Cox Family*

Daniel Durchholz

Kris Kristofferson

Born June 22, 1936, in Brownsville, TX.

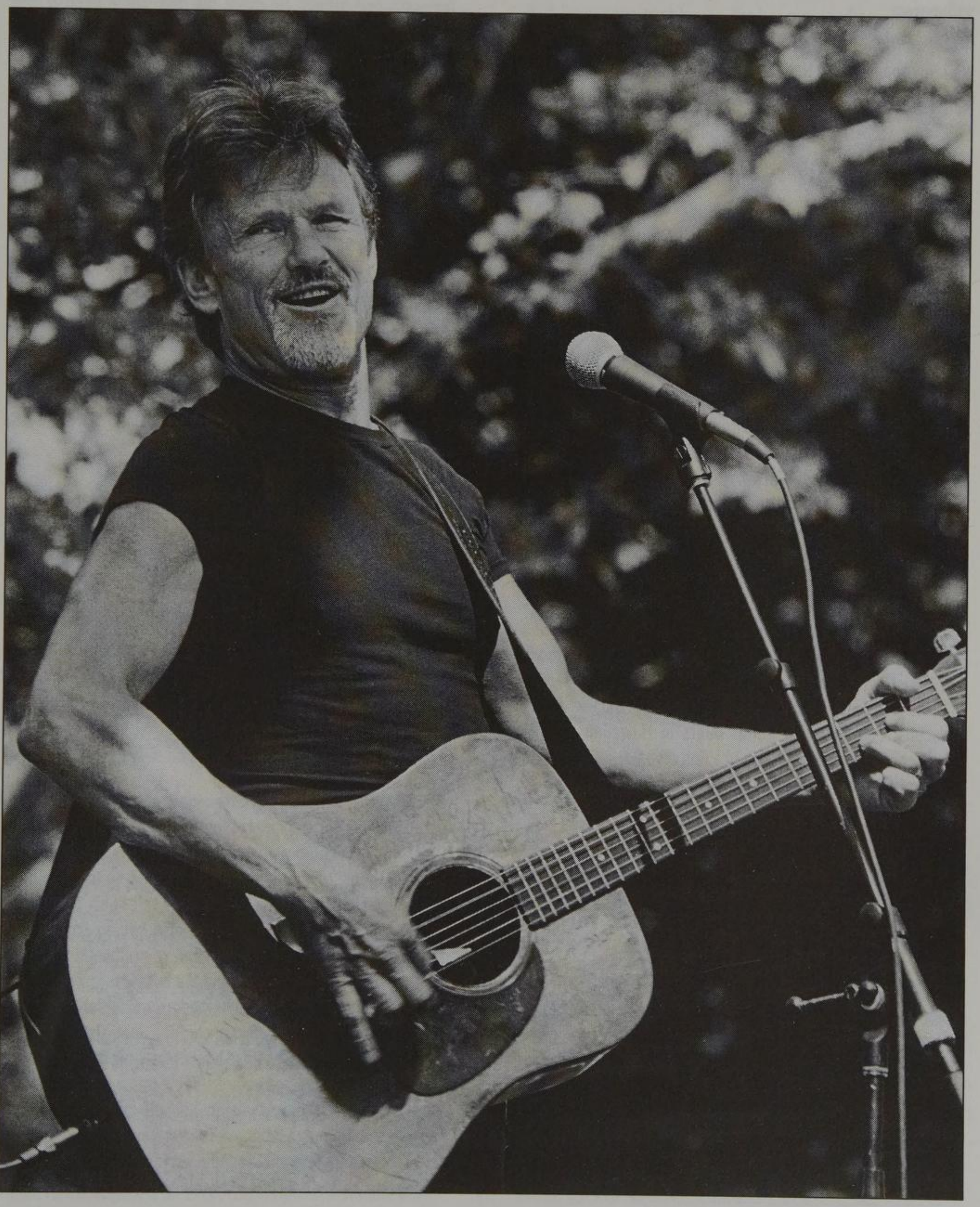
This former Army man and Rhodes scholar tried nearly everything to break into the country-music business during the late 1960s, including hanging out as a recording-studio janitor and, armed with a demo tape, piloting a borrowed helicopter onto Johnny Cash's estate. When he finally did break through in 1970, the waters ran mighty deep—Cash relented and scored big with "Sunday Morning Coming Down," Ray Price hit with "For the Good Times," Janis Joplin posthumously reached the top with "Me and Bobby McGee," and Sammi Smith recorded "Help Me Make It through the Night." That quartet of songs was enough to make Kristofferson an instant star, and though he never again equaled the enormity of those classics, he's continued to write, act, and perform up to the present day. His own versions of his work are limited by his rudimentary vocal ability, and the left-wing musings of the latter portion of his career turned off more than a few country listeners. Still, his importance as an insightful, sexual, rebellious songwriter at a time when country had grown staid can never be underestimated.

what to buy: The most obvious collection of Kristofferson in print is the comprehensive *Singer/Songwriter* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia Legacy, 1991), in which the compelling deliveries of Joplin, Price, et al. are juxtaposed with the writer's ragged approach on "Why Me" and "Loving Her Was Easier."

what to buy next: *Me and Bobby McGee* ♪♪♪♪ (Monument, 1971/1988, prod. Fred Foster), Kristofferson's recording debut, is essential for the inclusion of "Law Is for Protection of the People" and one of his early greats, "To Beat the Devil."

the rest:
The Silver-Tongued Devil and I ♪♪♪♪ (Monument, 1971)
Border Lord ♪♪½ (One Way, 1972/1995)
Jesus Was a Capricorn ♪♪½ (Monument, 1972)
Spooky Lady's Sideshow ♪♪½ (Monument, 1974/One Way, 1995)
(With Rita Coolidge) *Breakaway* ♪♪ (Monument 1974/1988)
Who's to Bless and Who's to Blame ♪♪½ (One Way, 1976/1996)
Surreal Thing ♪♪ (One Way, 1976/1996)
Songs of Kristofferson ♪♪ (Monument, 1977/1988)
Easter Island ♪♪½ (One Way, 1977/1995)
To the Bone ♪♪½ (One Way, 1981/1996)
Live at the Philharmonic ♪♪ (Sony, 1992)
Shake Hands with the Devil ♪♪ (One Way, 1995)
A Moment of Forever ♪♪ (Justice, 1995)
The Best of Kris Kristofferson ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)

Kris Kristofferson **(© Jack Vartoogian)**



george kuo

influences:

Bob Dylan, Hank Williams

Any songwriter in Nashville alive today

David Simons

George Kuo

Born November 17, 1955, in HI.

Like many of Hawaii's slack-key guitarists, George Kuo comes from a family of players. For example, his granduncle, Albert Kawelo, taught slack-key great Ray Kane during the 1930s. With all that history in his family, Kuo developed a very traditional style of playing. He has recorded on his own, with steel-guitar player Barney Isaacs, and as a member of the Kipapa Rush Band and Eddie Kamae's Sons of Hawaii, a group he joined in 1986.

what's available: *Aloha No Na Kupuna–"Love for the Elders"* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1996, prod. George Winston) is a beautiful example of traditional slack-key playing. The influence of Sonny Chillingworth and the Sons of Hawaii is readily heard here: two of the songs Kuo plays here appeared on a 1971 Sons of Hawaii album. *Aloha No Na Kupuna* won Kuo a Nâ Hôkû Hanohano Award for Instrumental Album of the Year from the Hawaiian Academy of Recordings Arts in 1997. Barney Isaacs's masterful steel-guitar playing gives Isaacs and Kuo's *Hawaiian Touch* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1995, prod. George Winston) a more easily distinguishable Hawaiian sound (for mainlanders). The album's liner notes claim that *Hawaiian Touch* is the first album of acoustic guitar/steel guitar duets in Hawaiian history. Whether or not that's true, this is a fine album for aficionados of the music or the instruments.

influences:

Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, Ray Kane, Gabby Pahinui

Brian Mansfield

Leonard Kwan

Born 1931 in Honolulu, HI.

Along with Sonny Chillingworth and Gabby Pahinui, Honolulu's Leonard Kwan is considered by most to be one of the three most influential slack-key guitarists in history. He began playing guitar around age 10, and by the end of the 1940s, he was playing the Hawaiian style of *ki ho'alu* (or slack key) on the mainland. A talented musician who could play a bit of piano, ukulele, bass, and saxophone as well as guitar, Kwan played in dance and big bands as well as in Hawaiian combos with Chillingworth and others. He made his first single in 1957 and recorded occasionally for the next two decades, retiring temporarily from public life during the '80s. Shortly before his return to recording with George Winston's Dancing Cat label, Kwan was given the Bank of Hawai'i Ki Ho'alu Award from the Hawai'i Academy of Recordings Arts and named a Living Treasure of Honolulu.

what's available: Kwan hadn't recorded in 20 years when he made *Ke'ala's Mele* ♪♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1995, prod. George Winston), but he obviously hadn't lost any of his touch. Kwan's goal with Dancing Cat was to document the music of his career, so *Ke'ala's Mele* contains many Kwan originals, including "Ki Ho'alu Chimes," a song he recorded on his first single. Recorded acoustic and solo (Kwan's only such recording), this album of instrumentals reveals a player with a confident style and deep, resonant sound.

influences:

Sonny Chillingworth

Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, Ledward Kaapana, George Kuo

Brian Mansfield

Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Formed 1963, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Disbanded 1967.

Jim Kweskin, guitar, vocals, comb; Mel Lyman, harmonica, banjo; Geoffrey Muldaur, guitar, vocal, kazoo, washboard; Maria D'Amato (Muldaur), vocal, fiddle, kazoo; Bill Keith, banjo; Fritz Richmond, jug, washtub bass; Bruno Wolfe, vocal, harmonica; Bob Siggins, banjo, vocal.

Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band managed to be ahead of its time, behind the times, and quintessentially of its time. Led by guitarist/vocalist/comb player Kweskin, the group was fleshed out with a cast of characters who would go on to make their marks after the group fell apart in the late '60s. Harmonica player Mel Lyman was the subject of a *Rolling Stone* cover story exposing his bizarre cult organization (Kweskin was one his followers); Geoff Muldaur and Maria D'Amato, the group's two best singers, married and formed a duo after splitting from the Jug Band, then split from one another, Geoff signing on with Paul Butterfield's Better Days while Maria hit the charts as a solo artist in the mid-70s before settling into a cozy career that continues to this day. Kweskin himself later recorded for Reprise and Mountain Railroad. The Jug Band had a unique antique aesthetic that transformed everything from Peggy Lee to Chuck Berry standards into lively old-timey exercises. It didn't

hurt that they were fine singers and players, and displayed impeccable taste in tunes.

what's available: *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970, prod. Maynard Solomon), a 1988 reissue, is all that remains of the original Kweskin ensemble except for the odd slice of vinyl you may come across in used record racks. Its 24 tracks, however, suffice nicely in summing up the full Vanguard oeuvre. One complaint: The quickie packaging offers minimal credits and no liner notes.

influences:

◀◀ Cannon Jug Stompers, Washboard Sam

▶▶ Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks

Steven Stolder

[redacted]

Lá Lugh

Formed 1991, in Dublin, Ireland.

Gerry O'Connor, fiddle; Eithne Ní Uallacháin, voice, flute and whistle.

Historically, County Louth took its name from the pre-Christian god, Lugh Lámfhada or Long-handed Lugh. Lugh was the grandson of Balor of the Evil Eye from Tory Island, Country Donegal, and father of Cúchulainn, the central figure in the great Ulster epic, *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (The Cattle Raid of Cooley), the setting for which was the Cooley Mountains of north County Louth where Gerry O'Connor and Eithne Ní Uallacháin live. O'Connor was born in Dundalk, the principal town in County Louth while Ní Uallacháin moved there as a child. Historically, most of the county was part of Old Ulster. North Louth and the adjacent parts of South Armagh and County Monaghan were Irish-speaking areas within living memory. Ní Uallacháin, whose first language is Irish, draws her singing from that tradition. O'Connor's people have been fiddle players for generations and he first made his mark as the fiddler in the group Skylark who released two fine albums on the Claddagh label that were released on Green Linnet and Shanachie in the United States. He was also part of the band Kinvara. He was taught by his mother, Rose, and was fortunate to be in close contact with many of the older generation of traditional fiddlers still alive during the 1960s, notably the great Sligo fiddler, John Joe Gardiner. Ní Uallacháin is an exceptional flute and whistle player but is perhaps best known for her outstanding voice, which London's *Time Out* magazine described as "clear and brittle as hand-blown crystal."

what to buy: *La Lugh* ♪♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1991, prod. Eithne Ní Uallacháin, Gerry O'Connor, others) is a stunning debut album filled primarily with sparkling instrumentals, although Ní Uallacháin's singing stands out. "The Emmigrant's Song" is the most beautiful and haunting and is alone worth the price of the CD.

what to buy next: *Brighid's Kiss* ♪♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1996, prod. Eithne Ní Uallacháin, Gerry O'Connor, Shaun Wallace) is dedicated to Brighid, whose name mean "high or exalted one," and who was the most powerful female religious figure in Irish history. She was a triple goddess—a virgin mother, a lawmaker, a saint—and a folk image whose shadows still move over Ireland. On Brighid's Day, February 1, she is said to breathe life into the mouth of the dead winter. Lá Lugh celebrates this folk tale with another solid album of hot fiddle and flute tunes and songs. The only thing wrong with this one is that it doesn't have "The Emmigrant's Song" on it.

worth searching for: *Cosa Gan Bhróga* ♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1987) is the earliest recorded effort by the duo along with Belfast flute player Dessie Wilkinson, but it's long out of print and exceptionally hard to find.

influences:

◀◀ Altan, Arcady

▶▶ John Joe Gardiner, Kevin Burke

see also: *Skylark*

Neal Walters

Jimmy LaFave

Born July 12, 1955, in Wills Point, TX.

Rising to the top of the always competitive Austin singer/songwriter scene, Jimmy LaFave began his musical career as a drummer. During his teens, LaFave switched to guitar and began singing and writing songs. Moving with his family to Stillwater, Oklahoma, the budding musical talent took inspiration from a wide variety of Okie musical forbears, such as J.J. Cale, Chet Baker, Leon Russell and, of course, Woody Guthrie. Mixing blues, jazz, and country influences with the lessons learned from his musical hero, Bob Dylan, LaFave is both a perceptive songwriter and an appealing singer. Slowly but surely he was drawn back to his home state and the bustling music scene in

4
6
0 *tim lake*

sean-nós singing

Sean-nós, or old-style, singing refers to a specifically Irish singing tradition, generally of songs in the Irish language, performed solo and without accompaniment and in a rhythmically free and melodically decorated style. Not surprisingly, sean-nós singing has survived mainly in those areas of Ireland, known as "Gaeltacht," where Irish Gaelic is still spoken, the principal centers being Donegal, Connemara (Co. Galway), and the Southwest (Kerry and Cork). Although the singing of each region exhibits subtle stylistic differences, particularly in the manner of ornamentation, one main characteristic remains: sean-nós singing is about telling a story, often one that has special significance for the singer's audience, as it may relate actual events that may have affected persons present or their relatives. Therefore, the melodic material is typically altered, through the introduction of ornaments or the use of elongated notes, to express the story as it unfolds verse after verse and as each singer sees fit to "tell" it. Sean-nós singing has an instrumental parallel in slow airs, i.e., melodies borrowed from the sean-nós repertoire and performed on traditional instruments like the uilleann pipes, the fiddle, or the flute, in a style consistent with the vocal tradition.

Philippe Varlet

Austin. In 1992 he signed with Colorado-based (and Rounder-distributed) Bohemia Beat Records, LaFave formed the first edition of his ever-changing backup band Night Tribe and recorded his debut, *Austin Skyline*. That album featured four Dylan covers, including "Shelter from the Storm" and "Girl from the North Country." Two more Bohemia Beat albums followed: *Highway Trance* (1994) and *Buffalo Return to the Plains* (1995). In December 1995 LaFave won the Songwriter of the Year Award at the Kerrville Music Awards. In March 1996 he won the same award at the annual Austin Music Awards.

what to buy: *Buffalo Return to the Plains* ♪♪♪♪ (Bohemia Beat, 1995, prod. Jimmy LaFave) is his most distinguished collection of originals. Highlights include the title tune, "Foolish Pride," and the exquisitely sad "Never Be Mine." The obligatory Dylan cover is "Sweetheart like You."

what to buy next: On his second album, *Highway Trance* ♪♪♪½ (Bohemia Beat, 1994, prod. Jimmy LaFave), LaFave mixes it up more, blending more rockin' numbers like "Shakin' Your Hips" and "Austin after Midnight" with gentle ballads like "Dark Dancing Eyes."

the rest:
Austin Skyline ♪♪♪½ (Bohemia Beat, 1992)
Road Novel ♪♪♪½ (Bohemia Beat, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Butch Hancock, Townes Van Zandt

Robert Baird

Tim Lake

Born 1955, in New York, NY.

Don't pigeonhole Tim Lake just because he's a banjo player. Although a former protégé of legendary bluegrass banjo master J.D. Crowe, the Lexington, Kentucky singer/picker/songwriter/composer has invested considerable time and effort in convincing and demonstrating to the world that the five-string banjo does indeed have a life outside the realm of bluegrass and old-time music. While not venturing as far afield as players of the Béla Fleck and Tony Trischka ilk, Lake has released two recordings on his own Padraig label that contain an entertaining mixture of blues, jazz, and, yes, bluegrass, as well as doses of sly humor, pointed commentary, and imaginative lyricism via several of his own songs. And what album would be complete without a stirring bluegrass rendition of the University of Kentucky Fight Song? Following the release of his early Rounder album *Same Old Roadside Inn* (Rounder, 1978), Lake was engaged in writing the score for a film documentary, and feeling pleased to think of himself as a professional musician. In talking to a pair of horn players with whom he was collaborating, however, he was struck with the realization of how little he actually truly knew about music, and this led him to enroll as a graduate music student at the University of Kentucky. As his doctoral dissertation, he composed "An American Concerto for 5-String Banjo & Orchestra," and on the evening of April 27, 1993, he performed the concerto on stage with the Atlanta-Emory Orchestra. A recording of that event on CD is also available as the title selection on a Padraig release. Backed by his Little Big Band, Lake continues to challenge the preconceived

notions and expectations people fall back on that limit their openness to new and different sounds. In Lake's musical world, there are no limits and no boundaries.

what to buy: *Jazz with Bluegrass & Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Padraig, 1995, prod. Tim Lake) is his most recent recording, and probably his most mature and accomplished all-around effort, particularly as a songwriter. Look for "Everybody Walks with Jesus," "conservative clothes," and "If It Weren't for Growing Up." He also demonstrates that classical music doesn't always have to be totally serious with "Handel's Dueling Banjos con Alleluia y Sarabande."

what to buy next: *Only in the Movies* ♪♪♪ (Padraig, 1992, prod. Tim Lake) is a little more experimental/conceptual than *Jazz with Bluegrass and Blues*, but still entertaining. Standout tracks include "A Prophet in Your Own Hometown" and a reworked version of a Woody Guthrie standard, here titled "This World Is Your World."

what to avoid: *An American Concerto for Five-String Banjo & Orchestra* ♪♪½ (Padraig, 1993) is a classical composition evoking the struggles and tribulations of the American immigration experience, good music that showcases Lake's talents as a composer and arranger, and an interesting experiment at placing the banjo in a symphonic setting, but not exactly what's usually thought of as "folk music."

worth searching for: *Same Old Roadside Inn* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978, prod. Hugh Sturgill) is his debut recording, all original tunes by Lake with the exception of the traditional "Devil's Dream." Instead of the banjo, on most of the cuts Lake plays guitar in support of his vocals, but his singing is expressive and effective. Foreshadowing his more recent efforts, this album is more "country" than straight-ahead bluegrass, but bluegrass aficionados will be interested in the early supporting appearances of modern-day veterans Jerry Douglas, Jimmy Gaudreau, and Bobby Slone.

influences:
◀◀ Earl Scruggs, J.D. Crowe
▶▶ Mike Cross, Tony Trischka, Alison Brown

John Lupton

Barbara Lamb

See: Ranch Romance, Asleep at the Wheel

Mary Jane Lamond

Born c. 1961, in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

Nova Scotia's Mary Jane Lamond is one of the young artists turning traditional music on its head. On *Suas e!* her vocals are layered over rhythms and electric guitar samples, backing tracks and synth effects. None of these detract from the essential purity of her songs or voice, and she sings in a pretty traditional style; it's the settings that are shaking traditionalists. Fellow northern renegade Ashley MacIsaac (who's called her "Cape Breton's disco diva") guests on both of her albums; Lamond returned the favor by providing vocals on "Sleepy Maggie" on MacIsaac's superhit *Hi How Are You Today?*

Lamond grew up in Quebec and Ontario but traveled often to Cape Breton to visit her grandparents. The teenage punk fan ultimately became a student in the Celtic studies program at Saint Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. She sings exclusively in Gaelic these days and is one of only 500 people who can speak the language.

what's available: *From the Land of the Trees (Bho Thír Nan Craobh)* ♪♪♪♪ (B&R, 1994, prod. Al Bennett) reveals a sweet-voiced young woman singing traditional Gaelic songs from Canada. The emphasis on rhythm in the milling songs might have prepared listeners for what to follow, but her next album is still surprising. *Suas e!* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1997, prod. Philip Strong, Laurel MacDonald) slips across centuries on fleet and graceful feet. One minute Lamond is singing against synthesizers; the next, she's duetting with the craggy voice of an elderly woman, Margaret Maclean. "Suas e!" roughly translates as "Go for it!"

influences:
◀◀ Ashley MacIsaac, Mouth Music, Sex Pistols

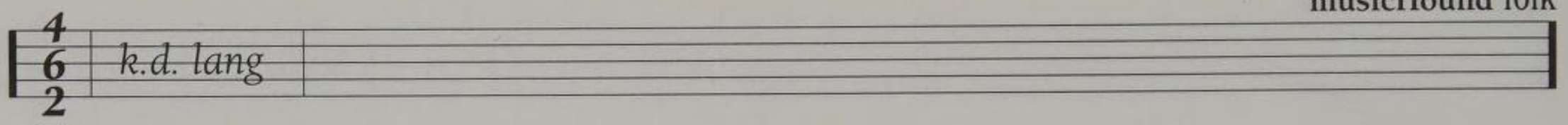
see also: *Ashley MacIsaac*

Pamela Murray Winters

Hollis Landrum

Born August 14, 1945, in Vicksburg, MS.

Born and raised in Mississippi, Hollis Landrum specializes in traditional American music and he plays banjo and mountain and hammered dulcimers with amazing skill. He won the National Dulcimer Championship in Winfield, Kansas in 1997. During the 1980s, he was a founding member of the four-piece group Irish Blend, featuring Irish and American Civil War music. Music from their cassette release, *Songs of the Vicksburg Siege* was used on the Arts and Entertainment (A&E) network's Civil War series, *The Divided Union*, in 1987. Although he remains devoutly traditional in sensibility, Landrum has changed focus recently to showcase an exciting and unique four-string fingerpicking dulcimer style on swing music of the 1940s.



what to buy: *Swing Dulcimer* ♪♪♪ (Hollis Landrum Productions, 1997, prod. Hollis Landrum) is a dulcimer tour-de-force covering 15 swing standards. Ranging from "Ain't Misbehavin'" to "Sentimental Journey," Landrum coaxes some remarkable sounds out of his solo baritone lap dulcimer made by Ohio luthier, Jerry Rockwell. This is certainly not the most traditional of Landrum's recordings but it is the only one on CD and it is exceptional.

what to buy next: The cassette-only *Some Enchanted Evening* ♪♪½ (Hollis Landrum Productions, 1995, prod. Hollis Landrum) is a nice set of solo dulcimer versions of Christmas material. The cassette-only *Songs of the Vicksburg Siege* ♪♪½ (Irish Catfish, 1986, prod. Hollis Landrum) is Landrum's most traditional recording and features music and narration of the 1863 Vicksburg siege, providing and preserving the musical backdrop against which the battle was waged. All recordings are available from Hollis Landrum, 407 Lake Forest, Vicksburg, Mississippi 39180.

influences:

◀◀ Janita Baker, Mark Tindle, Les Gallier

▶▶ Tull Glazener, Neil Gaston

Neal Walters

k.d. lang

Born Kathryn Dawn Lang, November 2, 1961, in Consort, Alberta, Canada.

The question facing k.d. lang at the beginning of her career was a sticky one: Can a vegetarian lesbian from north of the border make it in Music City? The answer seems so obvious that it's a measure of k.d. lang's moxie that she even bothered to ask. But lang—who, in campy garb and rhinestone spectacles, initially approached crooning "countrypolitan" tunes as performance art, and for a time even claimed to be the reincarnation of Patsy Cline (thus, the name of her band, the reclines)—is a singer/songwriter of rare talent and determination who eventually won the war, even if she lost the battle. After her U.S. debut mistakenly cast lang as a Canadian cowpunk, she brought legendary Cline producer Owen Bradley out of retirement for *Shadowland*, a triumphant album that proved lang could take Nashville on its own terms and succeed. After her next album took lang's torch-and-twang sound to its logical conclusion, she progressed to a more expansive pop sound, a move that coincided with lang declaring her lesbianism in the *Advocate* during 1992. Her continuing interest in other types of performance led her to a bold starring role in Percy Aldon's 1991 film *Salmonberries*, and she co-composed and performed the soundtrack to Gus Van Sant's 1993 film *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*. Her political and social views—notably her 1990 "Meat Stinks" ads for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)—often draw more attention than her music, but they're part and parcel of lang's iconoclastic personality. And besides, her music continues to speak for itself.

what to buy: On *Absolute Torch and Twang* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sire, 1989, prod. Greg Penny, Ben Mink, k.d. lang) lang and her backup band the reclines invented the perfect tag for her particular brand of music. lang also made her best album by internalizing her influences enough to come up with a sound all her own. Such songs as "Luck in My Eyes," "Big Boned Gal," and "Big Big Love" derive their energetic spunk from the raucous cowpunk of *Angel with a Lariat*, while "Three Days," "Wallflower Waltz," and especially the transcendent "Pullin' Back the Reins" reveal how much she'd learned from her sophisticated crooning on *Shadowland*. Speaking of which, *Shadowland* ♪♪♪♪ (Sire, 1988, prod. Owen Bradley) is the album on which lang realized the full range of her powerful voice, but also learned to sing with restraint and nuance. Bradley's careful production returns countrypolitan to its former luster, and the material is first rate, particularly the aching "Western Skies" and the weary, after-hours "Black Coffee." The "Honky-Tonk Angel" medley is something of an event, matching lang with three of Bradley's former charges: Loretta Lynn, Kitty Wells, and Brenda Lee.

what to buy next: lang jokingly called *Ingenue* ♪♪♪♪ (Sire, 1992, prod. Greg Penny, Ben Mink, k.d. lang) her "stalker" album, for it is full of songs about desire and obsession. Despite such onerous implications, the album is a charmer, thanks to her sincerity and passion and the (forgive me) languorous arrangements of such songs as "Constant Craving," "The Mind of Love," and even the campy "Miss Chatelaine." Switching genres is no small thing. On *Ingenue* lang moves from country to adult-contemporary pop with admirable élan.

what to avoid: There's nothing really wrong with lang's U.S. debut, *Angel with a Lariat* ♪♪½ (Sire, 1987, prod. Dave Edmunds). It's just that lang and the reclines never really click with producer Edmunds, and with the exception of the opening track, "Turn Me 'Round," nothing ever really takes off. And who needs a remake of Lynn Anderson's hit "Rose Garden"?

k.d. lang **(© Ken Settle)**

k.d. lang

the rest:
Even Cowgirls Get the Blues: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack ♪♪♪ (Sire/Warner Bros.)
All You Can Eat ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1995)
Drag ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1997)

worth searching for: lang's Canadian debut *a truly western experience* ♪♪ (Bumstead, 1984, prod. Jamie Kidd, k.d. lang, Gary Delorme) is an interesting look at lang and the reclines before k.d. truly hit her stride. The high-stepping "Bopalena" and "Hanky Panky" are standouts.

influences:
◀◀ Patsy Cline, Marshall Chapman, Roy Orbison, Gertrude Stein
▶▶ Shelby Lynne, Murmurs, Mrs. Fun

Daniel Durchholz

Patty Larkin

Born in Milwaukee, WI.

Patty Larkin's music feels like a wind across the water, holding both a chill and a promise. Her voice is breathy, with a little bit of grit in the lower register and almost pristine purity on the high end. She's at once sensual and intellectual with more than a touch of sardonic wit. Larkin grew up in Wisconsin and earned a degree in English literature at the University of Oregon. During the early '70s, she moved to Boston for post-graduate study in jazz guitar and music theory at the Berklee College of Music. She has been a fixture of the Boston scene ever since. Her training is clear both in the skill and accuracy of her singing and guitar playing and in the broad range of musical styles—folk, Celtic, jazz, rock, pop, Latin, country—that spices her acoustic-music brew. Larkin released her first album *Step into the Light* on the regional Philo label in 1985. In 1991 she jumped to Windham Hill's High Street subsidiary, and her exposure on "adult alternative" radio has been growing ever since, bolstered by a performance schedule of at least 150 shows a year.

what to buy: On *Tango* ♪♪♪♪ (High Street, 1991, prod. Will Ackerman, Patty Larkin), Larkin's third studio album, she set the bar for all her subsequent work. The lyrics are mature but not doddering. The music is diverse but unified by her sensibility. The atmosphere is introspective but anything but somnambulant. From the romance of "Tango" through the social criticism of "Metal Drums" to the light quirkiness of "Dave's Holiday," this is a fine collection of songs. *I'm Fine* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1988, prod. Darleen Wilson, Patty Larkin) lives up to its title and is almost as good as *Tango*.

what to buy next: Although no song on *Perishable Fruit* ♪♪♪½ (High Street, 1997, prod. Patty Larkin) seems quite as affecting as her earlier material, the pleasure on this album is in the musical details. Except for the vocals, the music is performed on nothing but stringed instruments, producing a gorgeous field of sounds to get lost in. *Strangers World* ♪♪♪½ (High Street, 1995, prod. John Leventhal, Patty Larkin) is an oddly downcast and philosophical collection. Still, a light beams through such songs as "Italy" and "Me and That Train," while a song like "Johnny Was a Pyro" shows up all the young grrrls with its smoldering resentment.

the rest:
Step into the Light ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1985)
In the Square ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1990)
Angels Running ♪♪♪ (High Street, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Paul Simon, Bob Dylan
▶▶ Jane Siberry, Shawn Colvin

Salvatore Caputo

Grit Laskin

Called one of the most astonishing inlay artists in North America, Grit Laskin is a luthier who's got orders for guitars to fill through the year 2001. He also plays numerous instruments, including concertina, Northumbrian smallpipes, fiddle, mandolin, dulcimer, and banjo. As if he's not busy enough with all that, he sings, writes songs, runs a dance camp, and published his first novel in 1996! Laskin's first two albums were released on Stan Rogers's Fogarty's Cove label. (Laskin used to play backup to Rogers as well.) His songs have been recorded by Pete Seeger and the Tannahill Weavers as well as by many Canadian artists. He's worked extensively with children's artist Raffi. Take a bow, Laskin, and a breath!

what's available: *A Few Simple Words* ♪♪♪ (Borealis, 1995, prod. Ken Whiteley, Grit Laskin), Laskin's third album, tackles issues like AIDS and homelessness with sincerity. Laskin also offers a calypso-flavored look at his own profession, "Guitarmaker."

worth searching for: *Unmasked* ♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove, 1979, prod. Valerie Rogers), now out of print, shows Laskin at his folk best. Highlights include a moving tribute to the athletes assassinated at the 1972 Munich Olympics, "The End of a Pointed Gun," and a playful take on bawdy ballads, "The Photographers" (with Laskin on vocals and concertina).

influences:

⏪ Gordon Lightfoot, Pete Seeger, Stan Rogers

⏩ Cindy Kallett, David Wilcox

Pamela Murray Winters

The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Formed 1994, in Los Angeles, CA.

Herb Pedersen, banjo, vocals; Bill Bryson, bass, vocals; Kenny Blackwell, mandolin; Billy Ray Lathum, guitar (1994–96); Roger Reed, guitar, vocals (1996–present); Gabe Whitaker, fiddle (1996–present).

In 1993, when the country-chart-topping Desert Rose Band formally disbanded, members Herb Pedersen and Billy Bryson got the bluegrass fever again. They hooked up with Kentucky Colonels/Dillards alumnus Billy Ray Lathum and mandolinist Kenny Blackwell to form the Laurel Canyon Ramblers. Rather than focus on grand flourishes and extended jams, the band hones in on tight harmonizing, crisp solos, and complementary instrumental accompaniment. Many of their arrangements follow in the Desert Rose Band style.

what's available: *Rambler's Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Herb Pedersen) contains the hot instrumental "Yellowhead" and the gorgeous bluegrass gospel "He Said If I Be Lifted Up." A bluegrass reworking of "Love Reunited," a Top 40 country hit for the Desert Rose Band, is also worth checking out; fiddler Byron Berline and LeRoy McNees guest. The somewhat more traditional *Blue Rambler 2* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Herb Pedersen) features a blistering bluegrass mix of Ralph Stanley's "Bad Case of the Blues" and Pedersen's achingly beautiful "Wait a Minute."

influences:

⏪ Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, Flatt & Scruggs, Kentucky Colonels, Dillards, Desert Rose Band, Country Gazette

⏩ Blue Highway, IIIrd Tyme Out, Unlimited Tradition, Fox Family

see also: *Chris Hillman, Dillards, Kentucky Colonels*

Douglas Fulmer and Rick Petreycik

Christine Lavin

Born January 2, 1952, in Peekskill, NY.

Having learned to play guitar from a public TV program while growing up, Christine Lavin quit her day job at a hospital in 1984 to pursue music full-time. She has gone on to become the doyen of the Manhattan folk scene, promoting the talents of many others in various ways, including a local weekly radio program. Four Bitchin' Babes, a female singer/songwriters roundtable that she organized, has proven to have a long life—practically a career unto itself—with regulars Sally Fingerett and Megon McDonough and a rotating fourth chair that's been filled by Patty Larkin, Julie Gold, and Debi Smith; temporary "guest Babes" have included Cheryl Wheeler, Kristina Olsen, Janis Ian, and Mary Travers. Lavin recorded three albums with the Babes, but in late 1997 she departed and Camille West has now taken her place on both new recording project and in the Babes' club appearances. Though Lavin's many humorous songs have typecast her as a comic singer, she also writes about relationships with an acute observatory eye and can be as deep and sincere as any other songwriter—she just doesn't take herself as seriously.

what to buy: *Attainable Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1990, prod. Christine Lavin) contains two of Lavin's most lasting humorous songs, "Sensitive New Age Guys" and "Shopping Cart of Love: The Play," and one of her most heart-rending plaints, "The Kind of Love You Never Recover From."

what to buy next: *Good Thing He Can't Read My Mind* ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1988, prod. Bill Kollar) features "Mysterious Woman," which simultaneously laments Lavin's failure to be Suzanne Vega and lampoons Vega's willful obscurantism. Four Bitchin' Babes' *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume II* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1993, prod. Four Bitchin' Babes, Steve Rosenthal) offers the opportunity to hear the massively successful ballad "From a Distance" performed by its writer, Julie Gold, in a spare setting that doesn't overstate its pieties. Among Lavin's tracks is a charming cover of "Sealed with a Kiss."

what to avoid: *Please Don't Make Me Too Happy* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995, prod. Steve Rosenthal), while not a bad record, is flawed. The humor is more shaggy-dog than quirky observation and doesn't wear well on repeated listenings. But those who wish Lavin would lean more toward rock on occasion will like the denser production.

the rest:

Future Fossils ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1986)

Beau Woes and Other Problems of Modern Life ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1987)

(With Four Bitchin' Babes) *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume I* ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1990)

Compass ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1991)
Live at Cactus Cafe ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1993)
Shining My Flashlight on the Moon ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)
(With Four Bitchin' Babes) *Fax it! Charge it! Don't Ask Me What's for Dinner!* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1995)

worth searching for: *Another Woman's Man* ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1987/92, prod. Christine Lavin) is a seven-song EP that at one time was available on LP but is now only on cassette. Formerly called *Husbands and Wives*, it contains 1983 recordings ranging from the bitter/funny "If You Want Space, Go to Utah" to "If I Could Be Sonja Henie," an obsession Lavin retains to this day. With a couple of exceptions, the arrangements are pleasingly spare.

influences:

◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Peter Paul & Mary, Loudon Wainwright III, Dave Van Ronk

▶▶ Debi Smith, Cheryl Wheeler, Shawn Colvin

see also: *Four Bitchin' Babes*

Steve Holtje

Doyle Lawson /Quicksilver

Born April 20, 1944, in Kingsport, TN. Quicksilver formed 1979.

Mandolinist and bandleader Doyle Lawson is considered one of the most influential forces in modern bluegrass; his bands are marked by their extremely well-honed vocal harmonies and bright, powerful renditions, especially of gospel material. Trained as a member of Jimmy Martin's Sunny Mountain Boys, Lawson also worked in groundbreaking bluegrass bands with J.D. Crowe and Red Allen and spent seven years as part of the Country Gentlemen making classic bluegrass recordings. In 1979 he formed his band, Quicksilver, with banjoist Terry Baucom, guitarist Jimmy Haley, and Lou Reid on bass. Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver quickly established themselves as among the most innovative vocal bands in bluegrass and became particularly well known for their gospel efforts, including an increasing number of a cappella efforts. The turnover in Quicksilver has been frequent and rapid—on at least three occasions, versions of the band have left virtually en masse to form new bands (The New Quicksilver, Lou Reid, Terry Baucom & Carolina, and IIIrd Tyme Out)—but Lawson inevitably finds replacements who are wonderful musicians and continues to make great and influential recordings.

what to buy: Quicksilver's breakthrough album and still one of the finest and most influential modern bluegrass albums, *Rock My Soul* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1981, prod. Doyle Lawson) features inventive arrangements, inspired harmony singing, and a far-reaching and adventurous repertoire. A classic.

what to buy next: *There's a Light Guiding Me* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Doyle Lawson) is an outstanding all-gospel effort. *Heaven's Joy Awaits (A Cappella Quartets)* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987, prod. Doyle Lawson) includes one of Lawson's finest vocal aggregations; Russell Moore, Scott Vestal, and Ray Deaton have all since gone on to success in other bands. *I'll Wonder Back Someday* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988, prod. Doyle Lawson) is a recording of mostly traditional secular numbers that showcases that side of Quicksilver. *Never Walk Away* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Doyle Lawson) is a good secular effort with a young band; it includes a superior version of the soon-to-be-classic "In the Gravel Yard."

the rest:

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1980)
Quicksilver Rides Again ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1981)
Heavenly Treasures ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1981)
Once and for Always ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1985)
Beyond the Shadows ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1986)
The News Is Out ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987)
Hymn Time in the Country ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
I Heard the Angels Singing ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
My Heart Is Yours ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Treasures Money Can't Buy ♪♪♪♪ (Brentwood, 1990)
Pressing on Regardless ♪♪♪ (Brentwood, 1990)
Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver Gospel Collection, Volume I ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Jimmy Martin, Country Gentlemen

▶▶ J.D. Crowe & the New South, Ricky Skaggs

Randy Pitts

The Leaves

Formed 1966, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1968.

Jim Pons, bass, vocals; John Beck, guitar, vocals; Bobby Arlin, guitar, vocals; Robert Reiner, drums.

This was one of the first L.A. folk-rock bands, and it was influenced as much by the British as by the burgeoning West Coast rock scene. The Leaves' strength was its harmony vocals and an alternating jangling and minor-key tone. Not remembered for penning memorable material, the group was good at emulating

others' styles, culling inspiration from the Beatles, the Byrds, the Rolling Stones, and Bob Dylan. Second only to Jimi Hendrix's rendition, the Leaves' folk-rock arrangement of "Hey Joe" hit the Top 40 in 1966.

what's available: *All the Good That's Happening* (Capitol, 1967/One Way, 1994) ♫♫ is the only Leaves album in print today.

worth searching for: *Hey Joe* (MIRA, 1966/One Way, 1993, prod. Norm Ratner) ♫♫ is worth having just for the fine title track. Unfortunately, the rest of the material is pretty weak.

influences:
The Beatles, the Byrds, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan

Patrick McCarty

editor's choice
12 old time banjo albums

Various Artists, *Diller Collection, Vol. 2* (Augusta Heritage)
Various Artists, *High Atmosphere* (Rounder)
Various Artists, *Banjo Anthology, Vol. 1* (Marimac/Augusta Heritage)
Various Artists, *Banjo Anthology, Vol. 2* (Marimac/Augusta Heritage)
Dwight Diller, *Harvest*
Will Keys, *Evergreen* (Cloudlands)
Morgan Sexton, *Shady Grove* (June Appal)
Various Artists, *Old 5-String* (Heritage)
Roscoe Holcomb & Wade Ward, *Them* (Folkways)
Various Artists, *Library of Congress Banjo Collection* (Rounder)
Walt Koken, *Banjonique* (Rounder)
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole, *5 Strings Attached* (Merriwether)

Leadbelly /Huddie Ledbetter

Born Huddie Ledbetter, January 15, 1888, in Mooringsport, LA. Died December 6, 1949, in New York, NY.

While he is recognized as a seminal blues artist, Leadbelly was also one of the greatest repositories of American folk music. Many of his trademark songs—"Goodnight Irene," "Rock Island Line," "Take This Hammer," and "The Midnight Special"—are considered classics in any genre. Proficient on several instruments, he is generally associated with the 12-string guitar. Leadbelly grew up a farmer and a songster, playing reels and traditional songs at country suppers. He didn't add blues to his repertoire until he visited Shreveport in 1906. In 1912, Leadbelly moved to Dallas and befriended Blind Lemon Jefferson, who taught the twenty-something musician more about the blues and the bottleneck guitar technique. Leadbelly was imprisoned three times during his life, which actually helped his career as a musician. In 1934, while at the Louisiana State Prison, he recorded for folklorist Alan Lomax, who was collecting songs for the Library of Congress. After his parole, Leadbelly (who was also known as Walter Boyd) helped Lomax search for blues and folk singers to record, and accompanied the folklorist on a lecture tour. While in New York on the tour, Leadbelly performed over national radio and soon became popular within Manhattan society. His commercial recordings on Arc sold poorly, but Lomax continued to record him for the Library of Congress. In the 1940s, Leadbelly recorded prolifically for RCA and Folkways. When folk music became popular later in the decade, the demand for Leadbelly recordings and appearances soared. Unfortunately during a 1949 tour of France, the musician was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis—Lou Gehrig's disease. He died before the year was out, but not before leaving an important body of American blues and folk music.

what to buy: The selection of Leadbelly's CDs is daunting. A good start is choosing at least one of six *The Library of Congress Recordings* ♫♫♫♫½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Alan Lomax). All are filled with timeless music and stories. *The Original Asch Recordings* ♫♫♫♫½ (Folkways, 1993, prod. Moses Asch) is just as enjoyable and important as *Last Sessions* ♫♫♫♫½ (Folkways, 1994, prod. Anthony Seeger, Matt Walters).

best of the rest:
Alabama Bound ♫♫♫♫½ (RCA Bluebird, 1989)
Sings Folk Songs ♫♫♫♫ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1989)
Storyteller Blues ♫♫♫♫ (Drive Archive, 1994)
Goodnight Irene ♫♫♫♫ (Tradition/Rykodisc, 1996)
In the Shadow of the Gallows Pole ♫♫♫♫ (Tradition/Rykodisc, 1996)
Where Did You Sleep Last Night? ♫♫♫♫ (Smithsonian Collection, 1996)
Bourgeois Blues: Leadbelly Legacy Vol. II ♫♫♫♫ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1997)

arthur lee

worth searching for: The excellent book *The Life and Legacy of Leadbelly,* by Charles Wolfe and Kip Lornell, is a great read. So, too, is the *Lead Belly Letter* (PO Box 6678, Ithaca, New York, 14851).

influences:

- Blind Lemon Jefferson
- Lightnin' Hopkins, Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Burl Ives, Josh White

Jeff Hannusch

Arthur Lee

See: Love

Lorraine Lee

See: Lorraine (Lee) Hammond

Rick Lee

See: Lorraine (Lee) Hammond

Brad Leftwich /Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham

Born in OK.

Known for the purity of his sound and his devotion to tradition, Brad Leftwich has been sharing his love of old-time music with audiences for more than 25 years. Brad's grandfather, a banjo player, and his great-uncle, a fiddler, came from the Blue Ridge mountain community of Fancy Gap in Carroll County, Virginia, near the towns of Galax and Mount Airy—an area noted for the abundance and quality of its traditional music—and was a major influence on his musical development. Leftwich has also learned from the legendary Tommy Jarrell of Mount Airy, North Carolina, as well as other musicians in his native Oklahoma and throughout the Ozark and southern Appalachian regions. Today, Leftwich is among the foremost old-time musicians of his generation. Known best for his fiddling, he is also an accomplished banjo player and singer. He won the prestigious fiddle contest at the 1990 Appalachian String Band Music Festival in Clifftop, West Virginia, and his band, the Humdingers, won the band contest the same year. His previous bands, Plank Road and Leftwich & Higginbotham, recorded several albums and performed at venues from the White House to the Philadelphia Folk Festival during the 1970s and '80s.

what to buy: *Say, Old Man* ♪♪♪♪½ (County, 1996, prod. Gary B. Reid) is a fabulous recording made by Leftwich and his wife, Linda Higginbotham. With this recording you will get to hear everything from full string-band dance tunes to some of the best solo, old-time fiddle that you will ever hear. This is one fabulous CD, from start to finish.

worth searching for: Leftwich has a substantial back catalog that has yet to make it to CD. Among the best are *A Moment in Time* ♪♪♪♪½ (Marimac) with Dan Gellert (cassette only), and Leftwich and Higginbotham's now out-of-print LP *No One to Bring Home Tonight* ♪♪♪♪½ (County, 1984, prod. Brad Leftwich, Linda Higginbotham).

influences:

- Tommy Jarrell, Rush Leftwich, Tom Fuller
- Jake Krack, Dirk Powell, Rhythm Rats

Steve Gardner

Adrian Legg

Born May 16, 1948, in Hackney, London, England.

Acoustic guitarist Adrian Legg broke into the world at large in 1991 with the release of *Guitars and Other Cathedrals*, an album whose bounding technical flourish, broad sense of style, and bone-deep lyricism immediately perked up the ears of guitar fans everywhere. Since then, Legg's career has amounted to a tidy whirlwind of activity, producing the award-winning albums *Guitar for Mortals* and *Mrs. Crowe's Blue Waltz* and the seasonally flavored album *Wine, Women, and Waltz*, touring extensively, and picking up a growing legion of fans along the way. His original compositions are performed with precision and dexterity. Legg is a unique and engaging artist who has steadily built a solid reputation among musicians, fans, and the press as one of Britain's most talented guitar instrumentalists, as well as one of its wittiest exports.

what to buy: *Waiting for a Dancer* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House Records, 1997, prod. Bobby Cochran) marks Legg's move from Relativity Records, a company best known for hard-rock guitarists like Steve Vai and Joe Satriani, to Red House, a subsidiary label of the well-known Windham Hill Records.

what to buy next: *High Strung Tall Tales* ♪♪♪½ (Relativity, 1994) features Legg's dry wit as much as it does his flawless technique. The man is an inhuman guitar player but, as this album shows, he doubles as a British Garrison Keillor as well, intro-

ducing nine tracks with a humorous warmth that rivals anything that goes on in Lake Wobegon.

the rest:
Requiem for a Hick ♪♪♪½ (Westwood, 1977)
Techno Picker ♪♪♪ (Spindrift, 1983)
Fretmelt ♪♪♪ (Spindrift, 1984)
Lost for Words ♪♪♪ (Making Waves, 1986)
Guitars and Other Cathedrals ♪♪♪½ (Relativity, 1990)
Guitars for Mortals ♪♪♪½ (Relativity, 1992)
Mrs. Crowe's Blue Waltz ♪♪♪½ (Relativity, 1993)
Wine, Women & Waltz ♪♪♪½ (Relativity, 1993)

influences:
Michael Hedges

Tuck Andress, Dan Ar Braz

Neal Walters

Eddie LeJeune

Born August 20, 1951, in Lacassine, LA.

Although Iry LeJeune died much too young to have much direct influence on his son's music, the music of Eddie LeJeune deeply echoes that of his father. The younger LeJeune has the same virtuoso quality about his accordion playing and the high lonesome LeJeune tinge in his singing. You can hear it the most when he launches into tunes associated with his father, like "Lacassine Special." The accordion runs spill over the bar lines, almost capsizing the band, and the vocals make you imagine the singer with tears streaming down his face. LeJeune is an ardent traditionalist and records with all acoustical instruments and no drums. Not that the loss of a drum matters much; there is plenty of rhythm in his singing and playing.

what to buy: *It's in the Blood* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Ken Irwin) may be the most traditional Cajun album recorded in the last 20 years. LeJeune's deeply traditional singing and playing is accompanied by the late great Cajun fiddler Lionel Leleux, who started playing with Nathan Abshire in the early 1930s! They are accompanied by the "freight train" guitar playing of Hubert Maitre and the steady triangle of Eddie LeJeune Jr. Beautifully recorded and beautifully played.

what to buy next: *Cajun Soul* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Ken Irwin) is LeJeune in the stellar company of D.L. Menard on guitar and the great Ken Smith on fiddle. This was Eddie's first recording and he squeezes every ounce of soul out of his old accordions that he can get. As beautiful and sincere an acoustical music experience as you can find anywhere.

worth searching for: *Le Trio Cadien* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Ken Irwin) finds the same three musicians who played on *Cajun Soul* brought together as equals. With the singing split up between D.L. and Eddie, the result is two great Cajun singers and instrumentalists accompanied by the most tasteful Cajun fiddler around.

influences:
Nathan Abshire, Amédée Ardoin, Iry LeJeune

Steve Riley, Tasso, Balfa Toujours, Horace Trahan

see also: *Iry LeJeune*

Jared Snyder

Iry LeJeune

Born October 28, 1928, in Church Point, LA. Died October 8, 1955, near Eunice, LA.

Young Cajuns had pretty much lost interest in the old-fashioned accordion-based music by the time World War II rolled around. The airwaves were dominated by the Western Swing–influenced sounds of Harry Choates and Leo Soileau. But when the G.I.s returned after the war they wanted the comfort of those good old-fashioned tunes, and they found it in a nearly blind farm boy who sang his heart out. Iry LeJeune was too sight impaired to work and spent much of his youth hanging out at his uncle, Angelas LeJeune's, home. The older LeJeune was a superb accordionist who let his nephew listen and learn from his recordings of the great Amédée Ardoin. Iry was greatly influenced by Ardoin's virtuoso accordion and high, passionate singing. He would eventually record his interpretations of many of Ardoin's songs, as well as those of his uncle. He in turn would have enormous influence on a whole generation of Cajun musicians who would learn Ardoin's songs from LeJeune's recordings.

what to buy: *Cajun's Greatest: The Definitive Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Ace, 1994, prod. Eddie Shuler, John Broven) is the one and only record to get. The people at Ace have tried valiantly to clean up the sound as much as possible. LeJeune was often recorded at home on a primitive portable recorder, and the studio mixing techniques of the originals did little to enhance these recordings and much to muddle them. But it is all here: the heartbreaking vocals, the breathtaking fast accordion runs overwhelming the music. If they listen to Cajun music in heaven, this is it.

what to avoid: *The Legendary Iry LeJeune* ♪♪ (Goldband, 1991, prod. Eddie Shuler) is much of the same music as the Ace CD

except that there is an electric bass dubbed onto the original recordings that is mixed so that it sounds as if the bass player is playing along with a record player in the recording studio. At least it is a step up on the LPs that looked like they were pressed on recycled tires at a plant in the Dominican Republic.

influences:

◀◀ Nathan Abshire, Amédée Ardoin

▶▶ Steve Riley, Marc & Ann Savoy

see also: *Eddie LeJeune*

Jared Snyder

James Leva & Carol Elizabeth Jones

See: Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Dan Levenson

See: Boiled Buzzards

The Lewis Family

Formed 1951, in Lincolnton, GA.

James Roy "Pop" Lewis, vocals; Pauline "Mom" Lewis, vocals; Roy "Little Roy" Lewis Jr., banjo, vocals; Wallace Lewis, guitar, vocals; Miggie Lewis, vocals; Polly Lewis Williams, vocals; Janis Lewis Phillips, vocals; Travis Lewis, bass; Lewis Phillips, guitar, banjo, mandolin.

Known as the First Family of Bluegrass Gospel, the Lewis clan has been keeping the flame alive for three generations, adding new members whenever an interested family member was old enough to pick or sing. Pop Lewis was a singer and musician who recruited his three oldest sons to perform with him during the 1940s. They brought along little Roy Jr. and called themselves the Lewis Brothers for awhile before their sisters joined in 1951. They initially performed at churches, school houses and community functions in the Georgia/North Carolina area before they got their own radio show and, eventually, a TV show in the region. Though their membership has changed, their woodsy sound hasn't. Known for soaring female harmonies and Little Roy's virtuoso musicianship and screwball stage antics, the Lewises have made their name primarily on the busy bluegrass festival circuit.

Eddie LeJeune **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what's available: Although the Lewises have cut more than 45 albums over the years, most are out of print and hard to find—though some are usually on sale at their shows. The family still records periodically, but its new album, *Bluegrass Country Club* 𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯 (Thoroughbred, 1997) is the only one you're likely to find at a record store (and even then you'll probably have to order it). Their records, this one included, seldom do justice to the family group's tight harmonies and southern-fried playing. They have to be seen to be appreciated.

influences:

◀◀ Flatt & Scruggs

▶▶ Cox Family, Alison Krauss

Doug Pullen

Furry Lewis

Born Walter Lewis, March 6, 1893, in Greenwood, MS. Died September 14, 1981, in Memphis, TN.

Although his recorded legacy lacks quantity, Furry Lewis has had a major impact on the Memphis blues scene and the rest of the blues world that is still felt today. An original in the way he improvised his own lyrics in traditional songs, as well as showing an incredible sense of humor about human relationships, Lewis, who was also a presence playing slide guitar, should be best remembered for linking nineteenth-century traditional and ragtime pieces to the world of blues. One of the early country blues artists to garner attention for his fiery interpretations of traditional and ragtime works, Lewis got his first opportunity to record in 1927. Most of his reputation is built on this early period's recordings for Vocalion and Victor, which followed years of traveling in medicine and minstrel shows, where he developed a knack for showmanship such as tossing his guitar in the air and playing while holding his guitar behind his head. During this early period he performed for a time with the W.C. Handy Orchestra. Lewis was a storyteller, and his wit is yet another facet of his performance that helped sustain his popularity with audiences. Never able to fully support himself by his music, Lewis took a job with the city of Memphis in the 1920s, staying employed for more than 40 years as a way to protect himself financially because he had lost a leg in a train accident sometime in 1917. However, it was not until the middle of the Depression that Lewis abandoned music as a profession, playing primarily for friends at parties and other social functions. In 1959, Samuel Charters, having rediscovered him as part of the blues revival of that period, got Lewis back in the studio again, first for Folkways and then for Prestige. Lewis found even

laurie lewis

greater popularity in the 1970s as a result of an appearance on *The Tonight Show*, a *Playboy* magazine interview, and a small role playing himself in a Burt Reynolds movie, *W.W. and the Dixie Dance Kings*. In 1976 Joni Mitchell recorded "Furry Sings the Blues," a song that characterized the aging bluesman as cantankerous, living in poverty, and surrounded by people fascinated by the blues. Even though he had little activity after this period, he still played blues until the end of his life. He left behind a humble but significant body of work.

what to buy: The single best collection of Lewis's early period, *Complete Recorded Works (1927–29)* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1990, prod. Johnny Parth) shows off his wit for lyrics that bemoan relationships, as in "Mr. Furry's Blues," and some great slide work on "Falling down Blues," and it contains both versions of "Kassie Jones." It also offers an alternate take for "I Will Make Your Money Green," showing off how Lewis would often alternate the pattern for singing lines and change his playing patterns.

what to buy next: *Shake 'Em on Down* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1972, prod. Samuel Charters) is a compilation of two albums from 1961, *Back on My Feet Again* and *Done Changed My Mind*. These 20 tracks find Lewis in good playing form, showing off his improvisational skills, slipping in lines like "I will turn your money green" into "John Henry" and telling a story about his showmanship in the medicine shows during "Old Blue." "Baby You Don't Want Me" and "Goin' to Kansas City" are another couple of cuts that return to his popular themes of failed relationships and moving on. *In His Prime, 1927–28* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1991) has some cleaner sounding tracks than the Document collection, but at 14 cuts, it misses such significant sides as "Mr. Furry's Blues" and "John Henry," one of his performance staples. While it does include both parts of "Kassie Jones," it only offers one take of "Judge Harsh Blues." *Mississippi Delta Blues Jam, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1981, prod. Chris Strachwitz) includes three cuts that last 20 minutes and captures Lewis on "Furry's Blues" and a great version of "Judge Bushay Blues" performed during the Memphis Blues Festival in June 1969. His singing and playing are coherent compared to a session recorded a few months earlier. *When I Lay My Burden Down* ♪♪♪½ (Biograph, 1994, prod. Arnold S. Caplin) contains sets by Fred McDowell and Robert Wilkins, but clocks in 18 minutes of Lewis's music. The six songs show how easily Lewis was able to blend a variety of styles—traditional, gospel, and his original lyrics. "When I Lay My Burden Down" stands out, as well as a modified "Casey Jones (Ramblin' Mind)."

what to avoid: *Fourth and Beale* ♪♪♪ (Lucky Seven, 1992, prod. Terry Manning) is worth hearing, but it has much sloppier playing and singing. The liner notes state that the tracks were recorded in Lewis's home while he was "in bed, with his leg off." For whatever reason, they lack the fire that sets apart his early work, as well as the level of playing that other sessions from the same period in the late 1960s exhibit.

the rest:
Canned Heat Masters ♪♪♪ (BMG, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ W.C. Handy, Gus Cannon
▶▶ John Fahey, Stefan Grossman

John Koetzner

Laurie Lewis /Grant Street

Laurie Lewis born in 1950. Grant Street formed 1979.

Laurie Lewis grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, where she gained valuable exposure at area folk music festivals to the likes of Doc Watson and the Greenbriar Boys. Performing in fiddle contests, she was a two-time winner of the California State Women's Championship. Her involvement in the predominantly female groups Blue Rose and Good Ol' Persons were helpful in expanding women's roles in bluegrass music, but it's her stylistic diversity that has kept Lewis an interesting and vital artist to watch, especially in the last decade. Her recording career took off in 1986, when her Flying Fish debut won the National Association of Independent Record Distributors (NAIRD) Album of the Year award. The 1987 addition of mandolin player Tom Rozum to her Grant Street String Band was a turning point; in 1995 the pair released a highly acclaimed duet album. A year before that, Lewis was named the International Bluegrass Music Association's Female Vocalist of the Year. A gifted songwriter, Nashville producers and artists would do well to comb through her albums for material.

what to buy: *Earth & Sky: Songs of Laurie Lewis* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. various) collects some of the best tracks from her three Flying Fish releases, adding four previously unreleased tracks. It's wonderful but don't miss out on *True Stories* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Mike Marshall, Laurie Lewis). Highlighted by IBMA Song of the Year "Who Will Watch the Home Place?" it also includes Lewis's beautiful "Knocking on Your Door Again."

what to buy next: Lewis and Tom Rozum collaborated on *The Oak & the Laurel* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Laurie Lewis, Tom Rozum), a nice duet album with some great original songs alongside well-chosen covers. A high point is Rozum's vocal on Dave Olney's "Millionaire."

the rest:
Restless Rambling Heart ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1986)
Love Chooses You ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
(With Grant Street) *Singin' My Troubles Away* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990)
(With Kathy Kallick) *Together* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ Good Ole Persons, Blue Rose
▶▶ Kate MacKenzie, Mollie O'Brien

see also: *Scott Nygaard, Good Ol' Persons, Kathy Kallick*

Stephen L. Betts

Tom Lewis

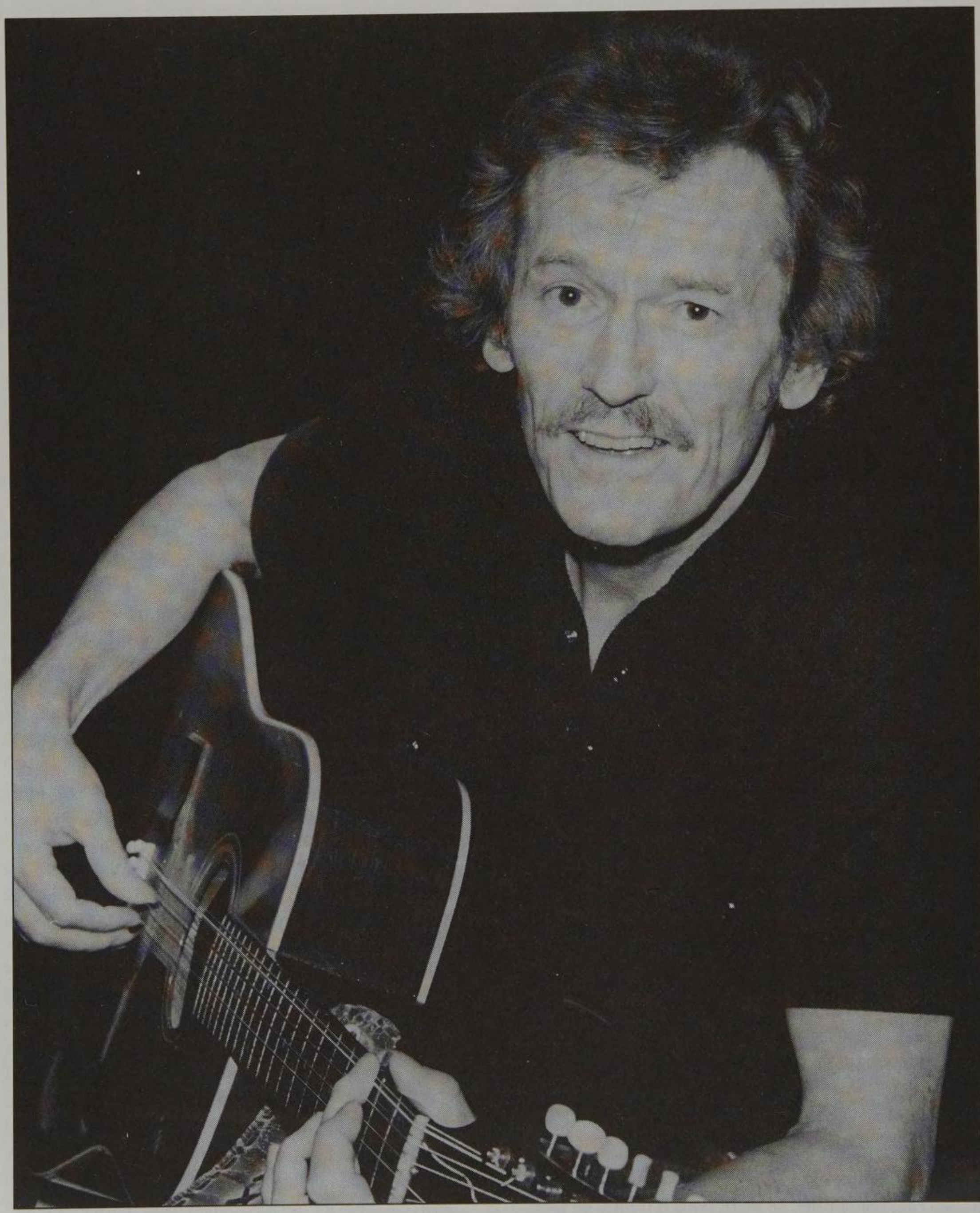
Born April 16, 1943, in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

One of North America's finest exponents of contemporary nautical songs, Tom Lewis came to a career of singing and playing button accordion and ukulele after more than 30 years bridging the sea-going and folk-singing communities. Born in Northern Ireland and raised in England, Lewis joined the Royal Navy as an engineering apprentice in 1959, at age 16. Posted to a naval training establishment in Scotland in 1960, he soon started frequenting the Howff Folk Club in nearby Dunfermline, where he was exposed to such luminaries as Willie Scott, Alex Glasgow, Ewan McColl, Archie Fisher, Tom Paxton, and Louis Killen. Although Lewis was not exposed at that time to Cyril Tawney's music, Tawney eventually came to have an enormous influence on his own musical development. During a 24-year naval career (mainly in diesel submarines) Lewis managed to balance the requirements of the service with a growing commitment to participating in folk clubs, concerts, and festivals. On completion of naval service in 1983, Lewis and his wife Lyn immigrated to the mountains of British Columbia, Canada. Within a short time his work was being interrupted by calls from fans who wanted him to keep performing. Eventually, in 1987, Lewis decided to begin performing and recording seriously. In the decade since then, he has recorded four albums, and he and Lyn have traveled hundreds of thousands of miles in cars and motor homes, touring in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States.

what to buy: *Making Waves* ♪♪♪♪ (Self-Propelled, 1992, prod. William Pint, Felicia Dale), on which Lewis is teamed up with Washingtonians William Pint and Felicia Dale, is particularly compelling due to the combination of Pint and Dale's flair for unusual and energetic arrangements and Lewis's equally developed ability as a songwriter. Together, they add up to some of the best newly composed sea songs. "The African Trade," for instance, is one of Lewis's songs that deals with the uncomfortable issue of slavery, reminding us that Liverpool became what it is today only through the barbarism of times gone by. "An Ex-Sailor's Life," on the other hand, is one of his humorous songs, explaining why he prefers life ashore to life at sea, in the most graphic terms: "I'd rather drink m'tea in bed," he explains, "than leave m'breakfast in the head!" And who can blame him? The album casts a wider net to find most of its other songs. Two are the late Peter Bellamy's adaptations of Kipling's songs of the sea. One is a beautiful setting by Pint of a poem called "Sou' Spain," by C. Fox-Smith. Several are traditional, including "Congo River," sung unaccompanied, and "La Pampolaise," a French-language shanty from Brittany, sung by Dale with an arrangement that includes her fine hurdy-gurdy playing. All the songs are given bright, modern arrangements and are performed with gusto and emotion.

what to buy next: *Tinker Tailor Soldier Singer* ♪♪♪♪ (Self-Propelled, 1995, prod. Ken Whiteley) contains 14 songs, most of which are about seafaring. Shanties on the album include "New York Girls," (in a catchy, older version than the more common "Barrack Street" clone) and "Bully in the Alley." Two songs composed by C. Fox-Smith, one by Tom Waits, and "The Widowmaker" by John Conolly (who also wrote "Fiddler's Green" and "Dublin Lady") round out the covers. The other eight tracks were written by Lewis, and most of them are also nautical. He reprises "The African Trade," with its "Congo River" intro, from the album he made with Pint and Dale. Other nautical originals include "Sirensong," about the attraction of the sea, and "Swallow the Anchor" about the attraction of the land. All of them are compelling songs, and Lewis's direct delivery makes them ring absolutely true. The exceptions to the seafaring theme are equally good songs, and equally born of experience. The album features the Friends of Fiddler's Green, a well-known Canadian folk group, adding choruses, harmony vocals, and instrumental arrangements; Grit Laskin's smallpipes area particularly nice addition, but the whole band does a good job, putting the finishing touches on a fine album. *Surfacing* ♪♪♪½ (Self-Propelled, 1987, prod. William Pint, Felicia Dale) was Lewis's debut solo recording. Composed almost entirely of a capella renderings of Lewis's own songs, it nevertheless maintains strong links to the nautical tradition. "A Sailor Ain't a Sailor" compares the real life of sailors today with the romantic

tom lewis



notions of seafaring life in the past, while "Watches" explains the unusual sense of time developed by seamen. There are odes to fellow submariner/songwriter Cyril Tawney ("Cyril Said It All Before") and to the last of the great shantymen, Stan Hugill ("Recall"), as well as whimsical songs about Lewis's decision to swap the sea for the shore. Perhaps the best of the lot is "Sailor's Prayer," in which a somewhat bloodthirsty sentiment is coupled with the all-too familiar plot of a merchant sailor's days ashore between trips around the Horn. The spare sound might put off those used to big arrangements, but they're bread and butter to sea shanty fans. *Sea-Dog, See Dog!* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989, prod. William Pint, Tom Lewis) is Lewis's second album, on which he branches out and performs songs by various other seafarers, including Ken Graydon, Rod Shearman, and Cyril Tawney, as well as his own songs. Most of the songs are excellent; the only misstep is a humorous monologue that's fine to hear a few times but gets to be a bit of a bore after a while. Fuller arrangements, including guitar, accordion, and other instruments, make this a bit more accessible than *Surfacing*, and there is a wider range of experiences discussed in the songs, from whaling to log-salvaging. Still, it falls slightly short of its predecessor in charm.

influences:

◀◀ Cyril Tawney, Peter Bellamy, Ewan MacColl, Louis Killen

▶▶ William Pint & Felicia Dale

Steve Winick

Gordon Lightfoot

Born November 17, 1938, in Orillia, Ontario, Canada.

Lightfoot is one of the few singer-songwriters who emerged during the folk music revival of the early '60s to achieve and retain recognition as a distinctive, enduring talent. Strongly influenced by Bob Dylan, Lightfoot specializes in simple yet compelling melodies and evocative lyrics about bittersweet love, the history and natural splendor of rural Canada, maritime adventures (and disasters), wanderlust, and memories of happier times—all sung in his rich baritone voice and accompanied by expert guitar arrangements. As a songwriter, his work has been recorded by Marty Robbins ("Ribbon of Darkness"), Ian and Sylvia ("Early Morning Rain"), and Peter, Paul, and Mary ("For Lovin' Me"). His own hit list included 1970's "If You Could Read My Mind"—since covered by more than five dozen other artists—1974's "Sundown," and the epic ballad of "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald."

Gordon Lightfoot **(AP/Wide World Photos)**

what to buy: *Gord's Gold* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1975, prod. various) is a terrific collection for which Lightfoot even re-recorded some of his pre-1970 material to good effect.

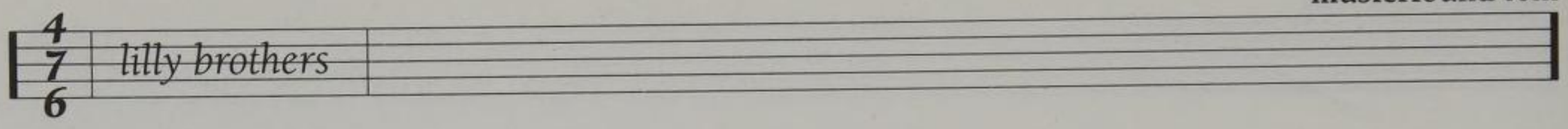
what to buy next: *Don Quixote* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1972, prod. Lenny Waronker) showcases Lightfoot at the height of his musical powers, from the show-stopping country stomper "Alberta Bound" (featuring superb bottleneck guitar licks by Ry Cooder) to the spare, energetic title cut and such mellow pieces as "Beautiful" and "Christian Island (Georgian Bay)." *Summertime Dream* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1976, prod. Lenny Waronker, Gordon Lightfoot) has "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" and a wide variety of song styles. *If You Could Read My Mind* ♪♪♪½ (Warner/Reprise, 1970, prod. Joe Wissert, Lenny Waronker) is Lightfoot's breakthrough album, marked mostly by its gentle, celestial melodies.

what to avoid: On *Endless Wire* ♪♪ (Reprise, 1978, prod. Lenny Waronker, Gordon Lightfoot), Lightfoot's images are muddy, while the songs lack the strength of his earlier work.

the rest:

Lightfoot! ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1965)
The Way I Feel ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1967)
Did She Mention My Name ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1968)
Back Here on Earth ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1968)
Sunday Concert ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1969)
Sundown ♪♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1974)
Cold on the Shoulder ♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1975)
East of Midnight ♪♪½ (Warner/Reprise, 1986)
Gord's Gold II ♪♪♪½ (Warner/Reprise, 1988)
Best of Gordon Lightfoot ♪♪½ (Curb, 1991)
Waiting for You ♪♪♪ (Warner/Reprise, 1993)
Gordon Lightfoot: The United Artists Collection ♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1993)
Summer Side of Life ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1994)
Early Morning Rain ♪♪♪ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
Live ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996)

worth searching for: The bootleg *If You Could Read My Mind: Live in Montreux 1977* ♪♪♪½ (Trade Service, 1977) includes "Edmund Fitzgerald" and others purported to be from the Montreux '77 concert. Others worth scouring used record stores for include the four albums not re-released on CD and deserving of at least ♪♪♪ apiece—*Old Dan's Records* (Warner/Reprise, 1972), *Dream Street Rose* (Warner/Reprise, 1980), *Shadows* (Warner/Reprise, 1982), and *Salute* (Warner/Reprise).



influences:

Woody Guthrie

Nanci Griffith, James Taylor, Harry Chapin, Tracy Chapman, Janis Ian

James Person

Lilly Brothers /Lilly Brothers & Don Stover

Formed 1952, in Boston, MA.

Everett Lilly (born July 1, 1924, in WV), mandolin, fiddle; Michell Burt "Bea" Lilly (born December 15, 1921, in WV), guitar.

Everett and Bea Lilly were West Virginia natives with a long history of performing live and on radio when, in 1952, fiddler Tex Logan talked them into joining him in Boston; there, with the addition of fellow West Virginian Don Stover on banjo, the brothers became for a time the Confederate Mountaineers and began a regular live gig at Boston's famed Hillbilly Ranch. They were one of the few true bluegrass bands in New England during that period, and as such were immensely important to the growth of bluegrass in the Northeast, exposing such future stars of the genre as Bill Keith, Jim Rooney, Joe Val, Peter Rowan, and members of the Charles River Valley Boys to the real stuff. The death of Everett's son in an auto accident prompted the return of the brothers to West Virginia; they performed sporadically with Stover and/or Logan at festivals throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. Stover, an outstanding old time, or clawhammer, banjo player as well as one of the best bluegrass pickers, died November 11, 1996. Their early recordings continue to exert an influence through reissues.

what to buy: *Live at Hillbilly Ranch* ♪♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Kerry Hay), made at the Lilly's famous gig alongside Don Stover, features 23 tracks of traditional bluegrass. The trio (accompanied by an unknown bassist) are in fine fettle throughout. *Early Recordings* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel Records, 1991, prod. Dave Freeman), a reissue of recordings from 1956 and 1957 that also feature Stover, present the trio performing 11 examples of the finest traditional bluegrass imaginable.

worth searching for: *Folk Songs from the Southern Mountains* ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1962, prod. Mike Seeger) was highly influential to roots-seeking folkies of the 1960s.

solo outings:

Don Stover:

Things in Life ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1972)

influences:

Monroe Brothers, Blue Sky Boys

Joe Val, Charles River Valley Boys

Randy Pitts

The Limeliters

Formed in Hollywood in 1959. Disbanded, 1963.

Lou Gottlieb (born 1924 in Los Angeles, CA; died July 11, 1996, in Sebastopol, CA), bass, vocals; Alex Hassilev (born July 11, 1932, in Paris, France), guitar, banjo, vocals; Glenn Yarbrough (born January 15, 1930, in Milwaukee, WI) vocals, guitar.

This literate musical/comedy folk trio was in business two months after they first met in 1959 in a Hollywood coffeehouse. Lou Gottlieb had come down from San Francisco to write arrangements for the Kingston Trio. With an irrepressible wit and sophistication (he had a doctorate in music from U. California-Berkeley) and using his huge acoustic bass as a prop, Gottlieb was the perfect front man, and his voice found harmonic sympathy with Yarbrough's smooth tenor (his whistle was as slick as his voice) and Hassilev's baritone. The group's biggest hit was 1961's "A Dollar Down," and they remained very popular through the early '60s, especially after signing with RCA Records, for whom they recorded a series of albums, before going their separate ways: Gottlieb founded Morning Star, an infamous commune near San Francisco; Hassilev became a writer and producer; Yarbrough pursued a solo career. He worked with Rod McKuen, and between 1963–65 recorded 14 albums for RCA, with the biggest hit of his career coming with "Baby the Rain Must Fall" in 1965. The Limeliters reunited in the 1970s and again in the 1980s, with Red Grammer, and later, Rick Dougherty in Yarbrough's spot. Yarbrough continues to perform and record as a solo, while Hassilev occasionally performs as part of the Limeliters.

what to buy: Recorded at Hollywood's Ash Grove, *Tonight: In Person* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1961, BMG/RCA, 1989, prod. Neely Plumb) is the best showcase of the trio's individual talents, including Gottlieb's outrageous seduction song, "Madeira, M'Dear," and the lovely closer, "Proschai."

what to buy next: *Two Classic Albums from the Limeliters* ♪♪♪♪ (Collector's Choice, 1996, prod. Neely Plumb) is the best way to still hear the group's topical, if dated, humor, and nice examples of their delicate harmonies. It packages *The Slightly Fabulous Limeliters* from 1961, a live recording with plenty of the wise-cracking Gottlieb's between-song patter, and *Sing Out!*,

another nifty balance of over-the-top humor and harmony. Gottlieb's "Vikki Dougan," about a woman "whose dress was cut so low in the back/that it revealed a new cleavage," sounds pretty tame almost four decades later, but it's still funny, while "Harry Pollitt" pokes gentle fun at communist fears of the early 1960s.

the rest:
Folk Matinee ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1962)
Makin' a Joyful Noise ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1963)
Alive in Concert ♪♪♪½ (GNP-Crescendo, 1985)
Alive Volume II ♪♪♪ (GNP-Crescendo, 1986)
Singin' for the Fun ♪♪♪ (GNP-Crescendo, 1992)
Joy across the Land ♪♪♪½ (GNP-Crescendo, 1993)
Through Children's Eyes ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1962/Folk Era, 1995)

worth searching for: The Limeliters find their place alongside their peers on *Troubadours of the Folk Era Volume III* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1992, prod. Bill Inglot). Though it might not seem the label for the Limes, *Reunion Volume I* ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1976), recorded during their first extended reunion, includes "Acres of Limeliters," their own often very funny tale of their on-again-off-again career, recorded with a small band.

solo outings:
Glenn Yarbrough:
Baby the Rain Must Fall ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1965/Folk Era, 1997)
Glenn Yarbrough Sings Rod McKuen/I Think of You ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1994)
(With Holly Yarbrough) *Family Portrait* ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1994)
Divine Love ♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1995)
Live at the Troubadour ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1995)
I Could Have Been a Sailor (Folk Era, 1995)
All-Time Favorites ♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1997)

influences:
⏪ Kingston Trio, Weavers, Brothers Four
⏩ Peter, Paul & Mary, Rod McKuen

Leland Rucker

Colin Linden

Born April 16, 1960, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Blues singer-guitarist Colin Linden is probably best known as a producer; his work includes albums for Stephen Fearing, Hans Theessink, and Brooks Williams. He's also played guitar on albums by fellow Canadian, Bruce Cockburn, and he sang background vocals on the Band's 1993 release *Jericho*. That same year, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, and Garth Hudson returned the favor with guest appearances on Linden's *South at Eight North at Nine*. In 1996 Linden teamed with Stephen Fearing and Tom Wilson to record an album of songs by their mutual hero Willie P. Bennett, who now tours with Fred Eaglesmith's band. Linden, as composer and selector of songs, has a positivity that elevates his songs above the mass of artists in the genre; his blues imply a happy ending.

what's available: *South at Eight North at Nine* ♪♪♪♪ (Deluge, 1993, prod. Colin Linden) is a fiery, earnest blues recording with a strong, spiritual edge evident in the two concluding tracks, "Keep Your Lamp Trimmed and Burning" and "The Leap o' Faith." *Through the Storm through the Night* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1997) is another of Linden's blues contributions, while he can also be heard as part of Blackie and the Rodeo Kings (with Fearing and Wilson, and Colin Linden) on *High or Hurtin': The Songs of Willie P. Bennett* ♪♪♪♪ (True North, 1996).

influences:
⏪ Band, Willie Dixon
⏩ Stephen Fearing, Fred Eaglesmith

Pamela Murray Winters

David Lindley

Born 1944, in San Marino, CA.

Winner of banjo and fiddle contests as a teenager, a long-time sideman to Jackson Browne through the '70s, a scraggly-haired solo artist during the '80s, and a world music collaborator during the '90s, Lindley has never met a stringed instrument he didn't like. His fiddle and explosive lap steel leads ignited Browne's concerts and songs (listen to "Redneck Friend" or "Running on Empty"), and his work livened albums by James Taylor (*In the Pocket*), Linda Ronstadt (*Heart like a Wheel*), Graham Nash (*Wild Tales* and *Songs for Beginners*), and Warren Zevon (*Warren Zevon*), among others. Lindley's solo career offers a different perspective: many of his songs are familiar, but laced with a whimsical sense of humor that matched his rayon/polyester attire and eccentric faux dub reggae/chunk/Tex-Mex/pop/rock/dance style. Lindley has spent the '90s recording with Henry Kaiser in Madagascar and Norway and touring with percussionist Hani Naser. Like Ry Cooder, the L.A. guitarist with whom he collaborates occasionally, Lindley is a musician for all seasons.

what to buy: *El Rayo-X* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1981, prod. Jackson Browne, Greg Ladanyi) is an album no discriminating rock lover should be without—particularly because of such tunes as "Mercury Blues" and "She Took off My Romeos." *Win This*

mance lipscomb

Record ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1982, prod. David Lindley, Greg Ladanyi) is almost as good, especially the strangely prophetic "Talk to the Lawyer." *Very Greasy* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1988, prod. Linda Ronstadt) offers the tackiest ("Tiki Torches at Twilight") and funkiest ("Papa Was a Rolling Stone") tunes in the Lindley canon. And *World out of Time: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Birger Gesthuisen, Henry Kaiser) presents a gorgeous romp, with the cream of Malagasy musicians topped off with an improbably wonderful "I Fought the Law."

what to buy next: *World out of Time Volume II: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. Birger Gesthuisen, Henry Kaiser) offers more cross-cultural tomfoolery. *Mr. Dave* ♪♪♪½ (WEA International, 1985, prod. David Lindley, Greg Ladanyi, Danny Kortchmar) is only slightly less fun than his other solo records.

what to avoid: Steer clear of Lindley's early trippy albums with the late '60s psychedelic folk group Kaleidoscope; they have all the direction of a bad acid trip.

the rest:

The Sweet Sunny North: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Norway ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1994)

worth searching for: *David Lindley and Hani Naser Live in Tokyo Playing Real Good* ♪♪♪♪½ and *David Lindley and Hani Naser Live All over the Place Playing Even Better!! Official Bootleg* ♪♪♪♪, both self-produced with no official imprint, are available only at the duo's live shows.

influences:

- Clifton Chenier, Gabby Pahinui, Pioneers, Yellow Magic Orchestra, Ry Cooder, Duane Eddy, Ventures, Fendermen, James Burton, Huey "Piano" Smith, King Curtis, Sam the Sham and the Pharoahs

» Black Crowes, Bottle Rockets, Hooters, Chris Whitley

Leland Rucker

Mance Lipscomb

Born April 9, 1895, in Navasota, TX. Died January 30, 1976, in Navasota.

When researchers Chris Strachwitz and Mack McCormick came upon Mance Lipscomb in 1960, they found a man who had spent most of his life as a sharecropper, working a plot of land in Brazos County, Texas. But they heard much more when he picked up a guitar and began to sing; Strachwitz began Arhoolie Records around recording the then-65-year-old farmer and laborer. They knew they had something special. Lipscomb was hardly another blues musician—the closest anyone has come to describing his work is as a "songster." His somewhat limited guitar skills and commanding voice interpreted a repertoire that was a virtual catalog of early twentieth-century Americana: children's ditties, country blues, reels, folk ballads, chanteys, poems, popular tunes of the day, gospel tunes, and spirituals. For Lipscomb, anything was fair game, and his material and performances have an earthiness and simple humanity that comes only from someone who worked as hard as Lipscomb had. Fortunately, there are plenty of records and films that capture Lipscomb's particular and unique skills.

what to buy: Recorded in 1960 and 1964, *Texas Songster* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) captures the essence of Lipscomb in his early recordings, including "Sugar Babe," "Jack O' Diamonds," "Baby Please Don't Go," "Mama Don't Allow," "Bout a Spoonful," and "Motherless Children." Songs about life. Recorded in Berkley, California live in 1964, *Texas Songster Volume II: You Got to Reap What You Sow* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1964, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) includes "Charlie James," "Cocaine Done Killed My Baby," "Joe Turner Killed a Man," and "The Titantic" and the marvelous stories he wove around them.

what to buy next: You can't go wrong with any Arhoolie Lipscomb album, but *Texas Blues Guitar* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz) is another down-to-earth delight.

best of the rest:

Texas Songster Volume II ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994)
Texas Songster Volume III ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1994)
Texas Songster Volume IV ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994)
Texas Songster Volume V ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994)
Texas Songster Volume VI ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994)
Mama Don't Allow ♪♪♪ (Magnum America, 1996)

- Blind Lemon Jefferson, Memphis Minnie

» Bob Dylan, Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin

Leland Rucker

A.L. Lloyd

Born February 29, 1908, in London, England. Died in 1982.

Albert Lancaster Lloyd was born into a working-class London family. By the time he was 15, most of his family had died of tuberculosis and he was unable to find work. He therefore arranged to ship to Australia to work on sheep stations. It was during his nine years in Australia that Lloyd first became inter-

ested in traditional songs. He began to sing, and he kept the words of the songs he knew in composition books; unfortunately, he lost the books, which would have been an invaluable document of Australian song in the 1920s. During these years, Lloyd also began a program of self-education that would last the rest of his life; he discovered a system whereby bush workers could borrow library books by mail, and devoured as many as he could. When he returned to England in the early 1930s, he was a budding intellectual and a confirmed Marxist. He had several jobs, but he also spent part of the 1930s unemployed. Rather than remain idle, he visited the British Museum reading room where he began to study folk music seriously. Finally, his financial situation became so bad that he signed onto the factory ship *Southern Empress*, and spent a season as a whaler. As always, he took the opportunity to learn whatever songs he could, and he later traced some of his seafaring songs to his season at sea. Upon returning to land, Lloyd had the idea of writing a radio documentary about sailors' lives. The piece, which made Lloyd's Marxist beliefs obvious, was well received. He followed it with several more radio programs for the BBC, including their first folk-song field recordings, but was ultimately let go because of his communist beliefs; ironically, it was an anti-Hitler documentary, broadcast in 1938, that probably did him in. After leaving the BBC, he was employed as a journalist for a number of years, but by 1950, the Cold War had made self-avowed communists into pariahs in the journalism trade. Lloyd decided to become a freelance folklorist.

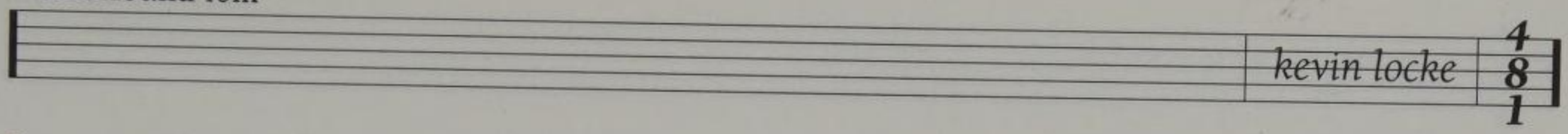
Lloyd's activities in the 1950s were diverse, but always came back to folk songs. He became one of the editors of the *Folk Music Journal*, joined the English Folk Dance and Song Society, and founded a band called the Ramblers with Ewan MacColl and Alan Lomax. He compiled a book of coal-mining songs, founded folk clubs, collaborated with singer/activist MacColl on recording and performing projects, and generally established himself as Britain's leading expert on folk songs. He appeared in John Huston's 1956 film *Moby Dick*, playing the part of the ship's singer or shantyman. Most importantly, he was appointed artistic director of Topic Records, a record company dedicated to folklore and to Marxist causes. Although he had already recorded for many labels in Britain and Australia, most of Lloyd's recording projects from that time on would be for Topic. During the 1960s and 1970s, politics were less of a problem for him, and his status as an authority on folk music made him once again desirable to the BBC. He continued making radio documentaries on folk music, and later made the transition to television. At the same time he was in demand as a scholar. He toured many of the world's universities as a visiting lecturer, and wrote folk music articles for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. He published his most important book, *Folk Song in England*, in 1967. During the folk boom, when many younger singers and groups began performing professionally, Lloyd became an elder statesman and teacher, providing advice, encouragement, and songs to all the important singers of the younger generation. More than anything else, that influence has been his legacy.

what to buy: Although he never considered himself a performer, Lloyd did leave behind many recordings. A few compilations have been released on CD. *Classic A.L. Lloyd* ♪♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1994, prod. Paul Adams) was compiled from 11 records in the Topic catalog, as well as several unreleased tapes. It includes 24 songs that represent a cross-section of Lloyd's recorded work. From Lloyd's several albums of Australian songs, the compilation includes "The Cockies of Bungaree" and "Flash Jack from Gundagai," the latter of which features the well-known Fairport Convention/Fotheringay/Redgum singer Trevor Lucas playing the concertina. From Lloyd's forays into maritime songs, *Classic A.L. Lloyd* features several fine sea shanties and foc'sle songs. The rest of the songs on *Classic A.L. Lloyd* were selected from some of his general albums of English folk songs. It is here that his influence on the folk revival is most apparent. If you want to hear versions of "The Weaver and the Factory Maid," "John Barleycorn," "Skewball," "Jack Orion," "Byker Hill," "The Widow of Westmoreland's Daughter," "Two Magicians," and "Reynardine" that are curiously reminiscent of those recorded by such groups as Steeleye Span and Fairport Convention, this is the place. It's particularly interesting to hear Dave Swarbrick's fiddle accompanying Lloyd on "Jack Orion," a song that Swarbrick would later sing and play with Fairport Convention. For the most part, though, it's simply enjoyable to hear Lloyd's voice, once described as "unmistakably creaky," interpreting a slew of magnificent songs. Although Lloyd was not gifted with a strong, clear voice, he had an unaffected, often tender style of singing that makes each song delightful, each ballad an instance of masterful storytelling. Lloyd's voice is accompanied on some tracks by Swarbrick on fiddle, Alf Edwards on concertina, Steve Benbow on guitar, and several other musicians and singers. The recording quality is inconsistent, due to the different sources used, but the singer and the songs are uniformly excellent.

what to buy next: *The Bird in the Bush* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1996, prod. Tony Engle) is a reissue of a 1966 compilation LP that focused on the theme of "erotic songs." The performers on the original

a.l. lloyd

LP included Lloyd, Anne Briggs, and Frankie Armstrong; the CD reissue contains several cuts by Armstrong that were not on the original LP as well as material from Louis Killen and Norman Kennedy. First and foremost, this is an excellent recording of brilliant singers and great songs. Armstrong and Briggs were two of the revival's most sublime voices and their contributions are outstanding. In particular, Armstrong's rendition of the title song is a masterful performance of a rarely heard song with a haunting and unusual tune, and Briggs's version of the comic song "The Stonecutter Boy" is a gentle tale of seduction sung to a richly ornamented tune. Killen sings three songs, including a beautiful version of "The Cock" and a lively jocular piece called "One May Morning." Kennedy's one song is the well-known Scottish "Night Visiting Song" that begins, "I must away, love, I can no longer tarry." Almost half of the songs are sung by Lloyd. On some tracks he is accompanied by Swarbrick on fiddle and Alf Edwards on concertina, but several are unaccompanied. Due to his influence on a whole generation of English singers, many of Lloyd's versions were featured on well-known albums by other singers; his "Widow of Westmoreland's Daughter" and "Bonny Black Hare," both featured on this disc, made it into Fairport Convention's repertoire via Swarbrick. Listening to Lloyd will therefore be interesting to anyone with an interest in the English folksong revival. The intellectual impetus for the recording also came from Lloyd, and he edited the original album. In the liner notes, he disguises his personal preferences as academic judgments, justifying his own choice of tender, loving erotic songs over bawdy or sexually explicit material by the principle that "downright pornographic song with its proliferation of gross sexual detail is very rare in folk tradition proper." His reasoning here is unsound, based first and foremost on a romantic idea of "the folk," as happy peasants busy communing with nature and with the delights and fruitfulness of their own bodies; in the notes to individual songs, he makes facile arguments connecting sexual lyrics to ancient fertility rituals. But despite the romantic liner notes (which he himself came to view as outdated and naive by the time he died), *The Bird in the Bush* remains a seminal album. *English and Scottish Folk Ballads* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1996, prod. Tony Engle) is also a classic that deserved its CD release. Like *The Bird in the Bush*, this 1964 LP was beefed up with new tracks for its digital debut. The new version features many of the same performers as *The Bird in the Bush*, including Lloyd, Briggs, Killen, and Kennedy. In addition, it includes tracks by Mike Waterson and the great Ewan MacColl. The accompanists are also mostly the same as on Bird: Edwards on concertina and Swarbrick on fiddle, with the addition of Anne Briggs and Johnny Moynihan, who both play bouzouki on one track. The Scottish material, sung by MacColl and Kennedy, includes stories of warfare among clans ("The Baron o' Brackley" and "Hughie Graeme," both sung by MacColl) and bothy songs (Kennedy's "Drumdelgie"), as well as various broadside ballads and the great old song "Lord Randall," delivered superbly by MacColl. Once again, Lloyd's distinctive voice dominates the English material, providing a third of the CD's tracks. Among them is the classic "Jack Orion," which Lloyd re-wrote from the Child ballad "Glasgerion." Once again, this would later be performed, much as Lloyd wrote it, by Fairport Convention, the link again being Swarbrick, who accompanies Lloyd on the track. "The Bitter Withy," another of Lloyd's ballads, could potentially offend Christians (which was why it was left out of Child's canon of ballads); it's about the child Jesus causing serious mischief and getting punished with a serious spanking. More English ballad material is provided by Briggs ("Reynardine," "Willy O' Winsbury"), Waterson ("The Cruel Ship's Carpenter"), and Killen ("The Bramble Briar," "Young Edwin in the Lowlands"). *The Old Bush Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Larrikin, 1994, prod. Warren Fahey) is a compilation of Lloyd's Australian songs and the only CD besides *Classic A.L. Lloyd* filled entirely with Lloyd's charmingly tentative singing. On it, Lloyd treats a variety of songs, from the quintessentially Australian "Waltzing Matilda," "Bold Jack Donahue," and "The Kelly Gang" to Australian versions of older British folk songs like "Rocking the Cradle" and "The Derby Ram." Accompanists vary; on some tracks Edwards's concertina and Swarbrick's fiddle are the main instruments, while others feature Peggy Seeger's guitar and Ralph Rinzler's mandolin. In general, the experienced and professional musicians who back Lloyd do a fine job of providing the mostly upbeat and light and environments in which his singing flourishes. Unfortunately, at 48 minutes, the CD is too short; it could easily have held five or six more songs. Lloyd did record a number of other fascinating and funny bush ballads, notably an outback version of "Seven Drunken Nights." For the sake of both interest and posterity, more of Lloyd's recordings could have been included. *Blow Boys Blow* ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1996, prod. Patrick Clancy) is a reissue of an old LP of sea shanties recorded by Lloyd and MacColl. The dramatic interpretations of seafaring material provided are stirring, and backing is once again provided by Edwards, Rinzler, and other instrumentalists. The only drawback is the length; since this was a single LP now made available on CD, it clocks in at only 35 minutes. Still, it's priced low, so it's definitely worth the purchase. Interestingly, Frank Zappa once commented on how much he liked this album; unfortunately, he loaned it to Captain Beefheart, who never returned it!



influences:

Ernest Lloyd, Harry Cook, Phil Lumpkin

Sandy Denny, Dave Swarbrick, Trevor Lucas, Martyn Wyndham-Read, Warren Fahey, Martin Carthy, Maddy Prior, Roy Harris, Frankie Armstrong, Ashley Hutchings, John Kirkpatrick, Louis Killen, Anne Briggs, Watersons, Shirley Collins, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Albion Band, New St. George

Stephen Winick

Kevin Locke

Born 1954, in SD.

Among Native American Indian artists, none is more acclaimed than Kevin Locke, a Lakota dancer and indigenous flute player. A member of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation (Hunkpapa Band of Lakotas) and resident of the sovereign Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota, he spent his teen years with an elderly uncle whose first language was Lakota. It was from this uncle, Abraham End of Horn, that Kevin received his initial training in the traditions of his culture, though he is quick to point out that he learned much from many others in the community. Among those teachers are Arlo Good Bear, Ben Black Bear Sr., Charles Wise Spirit, William Horn Cloud, and Margaret One Bull. Locke's Lakota name is *Tokeya Inajin,* which means "The First to Arise." He holds a M.A. in educational administration from the University of South Dakota, where he was admitted to law school before realizing that music and dance are his destiny. Locke is an exquisite player of the indigenous cedarwood flute. Many older Lakota say he is even better than those they remember from long ago. He is certainly a musical hero and role model to many American Indian youth across all of North America, and younger players are frequently waiting backstage, eager to ask questions.

That a musician of his skills could also be a famous dancer may seem improbable, but it is so. Locke came to national attention first as a hoop dancer, a brilliant performer in another ancient and honorable Lakota tradition. In this amazingly complex and acrobatic dance, the dancer whirls within twirling hoops, explicating the native view of the world as hoops intersect and grow into ever more revealing designs that show the way of life. He was awarded a National Heritage fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1990. His performances draw from a rich repertoire of story, song, flute music, and dance. Prominent are his songs and stories of the eagle because of the qualities it possesses: nobility, loftiness, and serenity. In Locke's words, "These are qualities that each one of us has by our birthright. The power we have, on our wings, is much more powerful than that of the eagle. We have the wings of our minds and thoughts. We have the wings of our heart. As we exercise them, they will carry us upward. How often do we send our children into the world with only one wing? We must exercise our hearts as well. Young eagles must have two strong wings." Locke's performances conclude with the hoop dance that reflects his belief in the unity of humankind. Using 28 hoops to tell a story, he depicts such things as flowers, butterflies, stars, the sun, and an eagle. The hoops represent unity, while the four colors of the hoops—black, red, yellow, and white—represent the four directions, four seasons, four winds, and four complexions of people's skin. At the end of the dance all 28 hoops have been interlocked in a spherical shape as fragile as the balance Locke works toward in human affairs.

what to buy: *Open Circle* ♪♪♪♪ (Makoché Records, 1996) is Locke's latest release and is a fine introduction to the power in his performances.

what to buy next: *Dream Catcher* ♪♪♪ (EarthBeat!/Warner Bros, 1992) and *Love Songs of the Lakota* ♪♪♪ (Indian House, 1982/reissued on CD, 1995) are calming collections of natural sounds and flute songs of the Lakota, Dakota, and Meskwaki that portray his subtle artistry. Included in *Love Songs* are ancient and contemporary songs and laments, including a composition by famed Indian leader, Chief Sitting Bull, who was renowned within his tribe as an honored composer and singer.

the rest:

The Hash in the Mirror ♪♪ (Meyer Creative Productions/Makoché Productions, 1992)
The Flood ♪♪♪ (Parabola Books, 1993) (storybook & tape)
Wopile, the Giveaway ♪♪♪ (Yellow Moon Press, 1993)
Keepers of the Dream ♪♪♪ (EarthBeat!/Warner Bros., 1994)

worth searching for: Several of Locke's releases are either available on cassette only or are currently out of print entirely, including *"make me a hollow reed..."* ♪♪♪ (Kevin Locke/Meyer Creative Productions, 1990); *Lakota Love Songs & Storks* ♪♪♪ (Kevin Locke/Meyer Creative Productions, 1990); *The Seventh Direction* ♪♪♪ (Kevin Locke/Meyer Creative Productions, 1990); *Lakota Wiikijo Olowan, Volume II* ♪♪♪ (Featherstone Records, 1986); *Journey to the Spirit World* ♪♪♪ (Tatanka Records, 1983); and *Lakota Wilkijo Olowan, Volume I* ♪♪♪ (Featherstone Records, 1983). He has also appeared on *Tribal Voices* ♪♪♪ (EarthBeat!/Rhino, 1996), *Lullaby* ♪♪♪ (Music for Little People,

4/8/2 *jack logan*

bouzouki

Originally a Greek folk instrument belonging to the family of long-necked lutes, the bouzouki was introduced into Irish traditional music in the early 1970s by Johnny Moynihan, who was at the time with the band Sweeney's Men and later on a member of Planxty and De Danann. Now made by local instrument makers, the bouzouki and its relations, alternatively called octave mandolins, citterns, or (improperly) mandocellos, and typically strung with four or five courses, have since become the instrument of choice for accompanying traditional music throughout the British Isles, Ireland, and further afield. Early Irish exponents of the instrument who contributed to its success include De Danann's Alec Finn, who still plays a three-course, bowl-back Greek instrument, Andy Irvine, formerly with Sweeney's Men, Planxty, and now with Patrick Street, and Dónal Lunny, of Planxty and Bothy Band fame, who introduced the five-course blarge (i.e., "bouzouki large," covering the range of the mandocello and bouzouki) during the second Planxty period and the electric, solid-body bouzouki while a member of Moving Hearts. The instrument is generally tuned an octave below the mandolin (GDAE) or in related open tunings (GDAD, ADAD), and can be used to pick melodies or counter-melodies, strum chords, or play combinations of all of the above.

Philippe Varlet

1994), and *Tribal Winds* ♪♪♪ (EarthBeat!/Warner Bros., 1996), "various artists" compilations of possible interest.

influences:

◀◀ Richard Fool Bull, Arlo Good Bear, Ben Black Bear

Neal Walters

Jack Logan

Born February 8, 1959, in Greenville, MS.

Imagine that, as the '70s were winding down, Elvis Costello was an amateur songwriter/professional mechanic living in Georgia, and the Attractions were some backwater galoots who'd join him on the weekends to swill beer and cut songs on cheap recording gear. Imagine, too, that Costello was too self-deprecating to presume that anyone would actually want to *hear* the first 600 songs he'd recorded over the course of 14 years. And then someone came along and selected 42 of them for his two-disc introduction to the world. Substitute Jack Logan for Costello and the Liquor Cabinet (actually, a loose configuration that's abetted Logan since 1979) for the Attractions and you pretty much have the story behind *Bulk*, a 1994 underground magnum opus that inspired widespread acclaim in the pop press. Peter Jespersen, best known for his role in developing the Replacements, learned of Logan through Peter Buck of R.E.M. After seeing Athens, Georgia-based Logan perform, Jespersen asked him to send along some tapes. Following repeated requests, a package finally arrived containing three 90-minute cassettes full to the brim with rootsy, literate material Jesperson found absolutely dazzling. From those tapes, Logan's new patron culled *Bulk*, which quickly garnered critical hosannas that continued with his second release. When last heard from, however, Logan was holding on to his day job as a pool-equipment mechanic.

what's available: *Bulk* ♪♪♪♪ (Medium Cool-Twin/Tone, 1994, comp. prod. Peter Jesperson) is an expansive aberration from an artist who specializes in terse, finely detailed lyrics framed by basic bar-band rock. For point of reference, think the late American Music Club, whose Mark Eitzel is a vocal and visceral dead-ringer for Logan. Recorded in various settings using different supporting casts, the 42-song-strong *Bulk* is an unselfconscious snapshot of a crew of music-lovers at play. As such, it has a rare charm. The two-hour-plus *Bulk* is a tough album to top, and, indeed, *Mood Elevator* ♪♪♪ (Medium Cool/Restless, 1996, prod. Peter Jesperson, Kelly Keneipp) doesn't have the sweep of its predecessor. As with his earlier songs, Logan remains fixated with the little horrors that put souls to the test. "Ladies and Gentleman" is set in a crowd of people prepared for bad news; "What Was Burned" kicks through the ashes of a blazed home. Logan's foreboding side, which reared up in several *Bulk* songs, returns with "Estranged," where a jilted lover muses: "The very sound of her voice is a blow to my head/I don't want her alive, and I don't want her dead."

influences:

◀◀ Elvis Costello, Mark Eitzel, Eric Andersen

Steven Stolder

Loggins & Messina /Kenny Loggins

Formed 1972, in Los Angeles, CA. Disbanded 1976.

Kenny Loggins (born January 7, 1948, in Everett, WA), guitar, vocals; Jim Messina (born December 5, 1947, in Maywood, CA), guitar, bass, vocals.

Kenny Loggins, whose claim to fame at the time was the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's recording of his "House at Pooh Corner," was fortunate to have Jim Messina produce his first solo album. The result, *Sittin' In*, was the first of what was to become a highly successful partnership. Messina's credentials include playing bass, assembling the material and producing Buffalo Springfield's final record, *Last Time Around*; he was also a founding member of Poco and remained for the group's first three superb albums. A fine technician with a great ear, Messina probably curtailed Loggins's penchant for overly sensitive mush. Together they spun out a long string of hits, including "Danny's Song," their own treatment of "House at Pooh Corner" and "Your Mama Don't Dance." On his own—following the duo's 1976 split-up—Loggins parlayed his personable image and talent into a successful, if creatively middling, solo career marked by excessively romantic songs, ultra-slick production, but also numerous hits, particularly soundtrack smashes such as "Footloose," "Nobody's Fool," and "Danger Zone."

what to buy: Loggins and Messina's debut, *Sittin' In* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1972, prod. Jim Messina), is their best, most fully realized recording. Practically every song is a charmer, from the tight rockin' country-guitar accents on the opening track, "Nobody but You," to Loggins's sweet ballad, "Danny's Song." *On Stage* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974) features an excellent backing band and a definitive, extended version of "Angry Eyes."

what to buy next: *Loggins & Messina* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972), the duo's sophomore effort, has the tiresome single "Your Mama Don't Dance" but also the studio version of "Angry Eyes." Loggins's solo album *Nightwatch* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1978, prod. Bob James) includes the hit "Whenever I Call You Friend" (a duet with Stevie Nicks when she could still sing).

what to avoid: The duo's *Native Sons* **woof!** (Columbia, 1976) and *So Fine* ♪ (Columbia, 1975) suffer from severe lapses in songwriting originality. Loggins's *Vox Humana* **woof!** (Columbia, 1985) is so overblown that it leaves one speechless.

the rest:

Loggins & Messina:

Full Sail ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1973)
Mother Lode ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974)
Best of Friends ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1976)

Kenny Loggins:

Celebrate Me Home ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Keep the Fire ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979)
Alive ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1980)
High Adventure ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1982)
Back to Avalon ♪ (Columbia, 1988)
Leap of Faith ♪ (Columbia, 1991)
Outside: From the Redwoods ♪½ (Columbia, 1993)
Return to Pooh Corner ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994)
Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: The Greatest Hits of Kenny Loggins ♪♪ (Columbia, 1997)
The Unimaginable Life ♪ (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: The 20 songs on the Japanese Loggins and Messina collection *Star Box* ♪♪♪½ (CBS/Sony, 1989) offer a better overview than the domestic *Best of Friends*.

solo outings:

Jim Messina:

Watching the River Run ♪♪♪ (River North, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Simon & Garfunkel, Poco, Bread

▶▶ Captain & Tennille, Fleetwood Mac

see also: *Buffalo Springfield*

Patrick McCarty

Lonesome River Band

Formed 1983, in VA.

Ronnie Bowman, bass, guitar, vocals (1990–present); Sammy Shelor, banjo, guitar, vocals (1990–92, 1993–present); Don Rigsby, mandolin, vocals (1996–present); Kenny Smith, guitar, vocals (1996–present); Tim Austin, guitar, vocals (1983–95); Dan Tyminski, mandolin, vocals (1988–92, 1993–94); Adam Steffey, mandolin (1983–88); Dale Perry, banjo, vocals, guitar (1983–89); Jerry McMillan, bass, vocals (1983–89).

The Lonesome River Band has had a revolving door bringing in and releasing some of the best talent in the world of '80s and '90s bluegrass, by the late 1990s ending up with a foursome considered one of the strongest instrumental and vocal bands playing. One of this band's main strengths is that they can blur the line between traditional and modern and leave you with a set of songs that are both powerful and exciting.

lonesome standard time

what to buy: With the release of *One Step Forward* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Lonesome River Band) the Lonesome River Band, once again with a new lineup, had really settled into being one of the most hard driving and powerful vocal and instrumental bluegrass bands of the '90s. Combine IBMA award-winning Sammy Shelor on banjo with two top-notch vocalists (Ronnie Bowman and Don Rigsby) and you have one of the most exciting bands in modern bluegrass today.

what to buy next: *Old Country Town* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Lonesome River Band) was the last album to include Tim Austin and Dan Tyminski. *Carrying the Tradition* ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1991, prod. Lonesome River Band) was recorded right about the time when the Lonesome River Band made the jump from being a good bluegrass band to becoming one of the best bluegrass outfits around.

the rest:
Looking for Yourself ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1989)
Lonesome River Band ♪♪♪ (Rebel) (cassette only)

solo outings:
Ronnie Bowman:
Cold Virginia Night ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1994, prod. Lonesome River Band, Ronnie Bowman)

Sammy Shelor:
Leading Roll ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997, prod. Sammy Shelor)

Kenny Smith:
Studebaker ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997, prod. Kenny Smith)

Don Rigsby:
A Vision ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1998, prod. Don Rigsby)

influences:

◀◀ Stanley Brothers, Earl Scruggs, J.D. Crowe & the New South

▶▶ Alison Krauss & Union Station

Steve Gardner

Lonesome Standard Time /Larry Cordle

Formed 1990, in Nashville, TN.

Larry Cordle (born November 16, 1949, in Cordell, KY), guitar, lead vocals; Glen Duncan, fiddle, guitar, vocals; Butch Baldassari, mandolin; Wayne Southards, bass, vocals (1991–92); Billy Rose, bass, vocals (1993–94); Robin Smith, bass (1994–95); Mike Bub, banjo, bass (1991–92); Larry Perkins, banjo (1993–94); Keith Little, banjo, guitar, vocals (1994–95).

Formed by songwriter Larry Cordle and ace fiddler Glen Duncan (who's worked with most of the top country and bluegrass acts), Lonesome Standard Time was one of the bluegrass success stories of the early '90s. Cordle's mountain-inflected lead singing and Duncan's strong tenor harmonies give the band a potent vocal sound, most often put to the service of Cordle's distinctive original songs. With a stage presentation and musical ethos reminiscent of 1950s-era Flatt and Scruggs, LST has played many of the major festivals and venues, recorded a trio of well-received albums, and has had a few singles reach the top ranks of the bluegrass charts. By 1996, however, the band had scaled back its personal appearances and has since been largely inactive. In addition to his work with Lonesome Standard Time, Cordle has been a successful Nashville songwriter since the early 1980s, when boyhood friend Ricky Skaggs had a Number One country hit with Cordle's "Highway 40 Blues." A CPA in east Kentucky until he became a full-time songwriter, Cordle has had songs recorded by such artists as Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Alison Krauss, Kathy Mattea, and John Anderson. He also shared the International Bluegrass Music Association's 1993 Song of the Year award with co-writer Jim Rushing for their song "Lonesome Standard Time."

what to buy: *Larry Cordle, Glen Duncan & Lonesome Standard Time* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. Glen Duncan, Larry Cordle) introduced the band and got a ton of radio airplay, thanks to "Lonesome Standard Time," "Lower on the Hog," and "Kentucky King," the last a tribute to Bill Monroe that featured the bluegrass patriarch guesting on mandolin. *Mighty Lonesome* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Lonesome Standard Time), which includes the top bluegrass hit "The Bigger the Fool (The Harder the Fall)," showcased some of Cordle's more poignant songs, notably "The Tracks We Leave" and "Kentucky Thunder." Covers of tunes by Flatt and Scruggs and the Stanley Brothers honor the band's roots. *Lonesome As It Gets* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Glen Duncan, Larry Cordle) is sparked by a pair of Duncan-penned instrumentals, "Duncan's Blues" and "Blue Field," a handful of Cordle originals, and covers of Jimmie Rodgers and John Prine classics.

what to buy next: Mandolinist Butch Baldassari has recorded at least three solo albums, including a Christmas collection; the most easily located is probably the all-instrumental *Old Town* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1990, prod. Butch Baldassari). Multi-instrumentalist Larry Perkins recorded the star-studded *A Touch of the Past* ♪♪♪ (Pinecastle, 1993, prod. Butch Baldassari, Larry

Perkins), which pays tribute to such musical idols as Uncle Dave Macon and Mississippi John Hurt.

influences:

Flatt & Scruggs, Bill Monroe

Wyatt Rice & Santa Cruz, Blue Highway

Jon Hartley Fox

Larry Long

Born 1951, in Des Moines, IA.

A self-professed "father, educator and troubadour," Larry Long sings of clean air, fair prices, workers rights, and the struggle of Native Americans. Although Woody Guthrie provided an early inspiration, Long has taken the folk process a step further and is currently involved with writing and performing songs honoring what he calls "the unsung heroes of America." The son of a coffee salesman who died when Larry was 13, Long was raised by his mother and two sisters. Although initially influenced by the rock and folk-rock of the Beatles and Bob Dylan, he became increasingly absorbed with the songs and social consciousness of Guthrie and Pete Seeger. As a student at St. Cloud State College, Long joined student protests against the Vietnam War and marched in three Washington, D.C. rallies. Meeting disgruntled Vietnam veteran Max Siegrist, he helped to set up draft information centers in St. Cloud. In collaboration with "Fiddlin'" Pete Watercott, Long began to use music as a persuasive tool; during the six years the pair performed together, they became mainstays at coffeehouses and clubs in Papal Creek, Iowa, and hosted weekly hootenannies and open mics. When Watercott was drafted for conscientious objector duty in California, Long relocated to the Sierra Nevada. His compositions have paralleled his growing political involvement: "Pope County Blues" was written for farmers protesting the intrusion of power lines in 1976; "Run for Freedom" was composed for Kimberly Rose Means (Wanbi Wakan Win'), who was struck and killed by a drunk driver during a freedom run across South Dakota by Dakota and Lakota children. Long has performed during many Woody Guthrie tribute concerts. Together with the Children of Okemah, he recorded a live album *It Takes a Lot of People* in Guthrie's hometown—Okemah, Oklahoma. Long's 1995 album, *The Psalms*, was based on the Biblical works of the Old Testament and the King James version. In addition to his "officially-released" albums, he has recorded many cassettes to benefit striking workers.

what to buy: *Run for Freedom, Sweet Thunder* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Billy Peterson) combines Long's first two albums—*Run for Freedom* and *Sweet Thunder*. Accompanying his rustic tenor vocals on guitar and joined by Michael Johnson on guitar, Peter Ostroushko on fiddle, and Claudia Schmidt's vocals, Long sings of the struggles of Native Americans ("Sacred Black Hill," "Anna Mae," "American Hymn," "Water in the Rain," and "Run for Freedom") and of his quest for freedom ("Love Will Lay Hate Down" and " Road to Freedom."

what to buy next: *Living in a Rich Man's World* ♪♪♪♪ (Atomic Theory, 1997, prod. Larry Long) reflects the work of a modern American troubadour. With the aid of acoustic instrumentalists and vocalists who include Butch Thompson, Paul Cotton, John Hammond, and Prudence Johnson, Long takes a powerful look at the pride of the "common folk" with songs including "Matthius Dahl—The Violin Maker," "Uncle Mel," "Dr. Massey," "Hennessey's Bar," and "Farm Song."

the rest:

Run for Freedom ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Sweet Thunder ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987)
It Takes a Lot of People ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
Troubadour ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992)
The Psalms ♪♪♪½ (Stellar, 1995)
Here I Stand: Elder's Wisdom, Children's Song ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1997)

influences:

Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Joe Hill, Bob Dylan

Jon Gailmor, Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, Billy Bragg

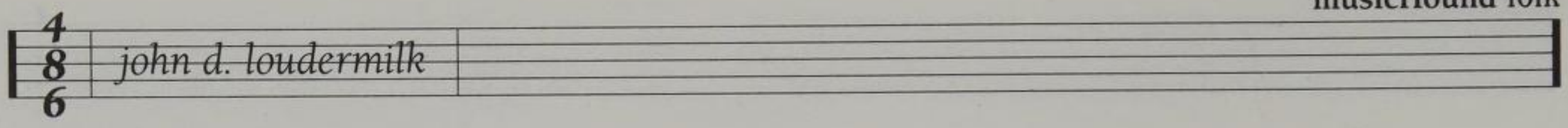
Craig Harris

Longview

Formed December 1995, in North Brookfield, MA.

Dudley Connell, guitar, vocals; Glen Duncan, fiddle; James King, vocals, guitar; Joe Mullins, banjo, vocals; Don Rigsby, mandolin, vocals; Marshall Wilborn, bass.

Longview, with members Dudley Connell, Glen Duncan, James King, Joe Mullins, Don Rigsby, and Marshall Wilborn, can easily be described as a "supergroup." One common problem with supergroups, in any type of music, is that the sum often does not equal the sum of its parts. That certainly is not the case with this group, however. With this combination of musicians, whose resumes list some of the best names in bluegrass music history (Bill Monroe and His Blue Grass Boys, Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, J.D. Crowe and the New South, Jim and Jesse, the Osborne Brothers, the Johnson Mountain Boys, the Seldom Scene, etc.), we have not only a great group



of individuals, but a fabulous band. One listen to King and Rigsby singing together will knock your socks off, as will the King–Connell duets.

what's available: *Longview* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Ken Irwin, Longview) is the first, but hopefully not the last, from this supergroup. Don Rigsby alone, brings a lot to this group. His love for everything Stanley becomes quite clear as you hear him pull an old Ralph Stanley/Ricky Skaggs duet "The River Underground" out of hiding and, with King, give it new life with their powerful harmonies. The trios on this album, sung by King, Rigsby, and Connell, are especially strong, helping once again to take a group of bluegrass individuals and blend them into a band.

influences:

◀◀ Stanley Brothers, Bluegrass Album Band

see also: *Lonesome River Band, Johnson Mountain Boys, Seldom Scene, James King Band, Lonesome Standard Time, Lynn Morris Band, Bluegrass Cardinals, J.D. Crowe & the New South*

Steve Gardner

John D. Loudermilk

Born March 31, 1934, in Durham, NC.

After trying his luck and largely failing as a pop recording artist during the 1950s (under the name Johnny Dee), John D. Loudermilk settled in Nashville, hooked up with Chet Atkins, and began penning songs in earnest. "Tobacco Road"—his most enduring piece of work—was a gritty country-blues tune that became a pop smash for England's Nashville Teens. Though Loudermilk would continue to put out records, he would find more success as a songwriter during the 1960s. The Everly Brothers' "Ebony Eyes," Stonewall Jackson's "Waterloo," The Casinos' "Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye," and the Raiders' Number One pop hit "The Lament of the Cherokee Reservation Indian (Indian Reservation)" are among his more notable songs (the latter was covered in excerpted form as the coda to Tim McGraw's "Indian Outlaw," giving Loudermilk his most recent country credit).

worth searching for: Don't expect to find Loudermilk's albums easily in the United States. *Best of John D. Loudermilk* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1973), now out of print, reprises 1962's *12 Sides of*, including "Tobacco Road," "Road Hog," and "Big Daddy," and includes Loudermilk's rendering of "The Lament of the Cherokee Reservation Indian (Indian Reservation)." *Blue Train* ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994) and *Sittin' in the Balcony* ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1995) are reissues available from a German label.

influences:

◀◀ Hank Williams

▶▶ Tony Joe White

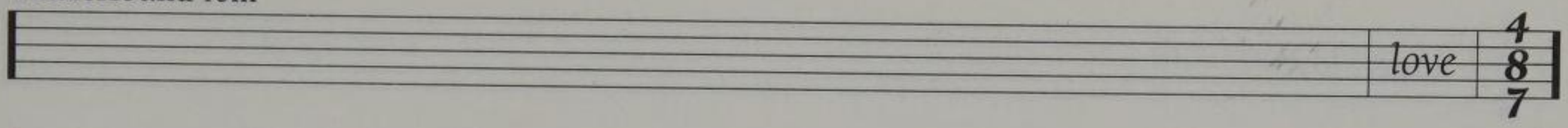
David Simons

Louvin Brothers /Charlie Louvin

Brother duo from AL. Disbanded 1963.

Lonnie Ira Louvin (born April 21, 1924, in Rainesville, AL; died June 28, 1965); Charlie Elzer Louvin (born July 7, 1927, in Rainesville, AL).

Without question, the Louvin Brothers are country music's most successful and most influential brother duo. Their two complementary voices, in contrast with their divisive personal battles, made for some incredible music and have cemented their place in the annals of country music history two decades after the Blue Sky Boys and the Delmore Brothers paved the way. Growing up in Henegar, Alabama, the pair began singing together as boys and had a radio program on WDEF in Chattanooga in 1942, where they were known as "The Radio Twins." Charlie went into the army while Ira worked with Charlie Monroe, elder brother of Bill. In 1946 the Louvins were reunited, making their first record the following year on the Apollo label. Recordings followed in fairly rapid succession for Decca and MGM and, finally, Capitol in 1952. For three years they remained on the label without a hit until they scored with "When I Stop Dreaming" in 1955. Their next hit, 1956's "I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby," was their only chart-topper. By this time the brothers were established stars on the Grand Ole Opry, where they performed off and on until 1959. Their last Top 10 hit was "My Baby's Gone" in 1959. Although their music continued to showcase their harmonies, their relationship became quite strained during the next few years. In 1963, they broke up the act, both going on to pursue solo careers. As tragic as if it were torn from one of their songs, Ira was killed in a car accident in 1965, on his way back to Alabama from a show in Missouri. Today, Charlie continues to perform on the Grand Ole Opry, and has benefited from the admiration of such fans as Emmylou Harris, whose first chart hit was the Louvins' "If I Could Only Win Your Love." Alison Krauss, along with Jerry Douglas, recorded a gorgeous version of "I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby," which she included on her double platinum *Now That I've Found You: A Collection*. The Everly Brothers and many other acts have also acknowledged the debt they owe to the Louvins. As a solo artist, Charlie Louvin had a pair of Top 10 hits and recorded duets with Harris, Roy Acuff, and Melba Montgomery, also pairing with Louvin afi-



cionado Charles Whitstein. In addition to appearances on the Grand Ole Opry, Charlie has opened the Louvin Brothers Museum in Bell Buckle, Tennessee.

what to buy: *When I Stop Dreaming: The Best of the Louvin Brothers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1995, comp. Marshall Crenshaw) is just what it says, an extensive collection of hits and standout tracks, with comprehensive liner notes.

what to buy next: *Tragic Songs of Life* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996) is stark and beautiful. If you make it through any of these tracks without choking up, see your doctor; there's something seriously wrong with you. *Radio Favorites 1951–57* ♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1987) spans more years than any of the other radio-show discs, and the sound quality, as expected from the CMF, is superior.

the rest:

Satan Is Real ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1959/1996)
Tribute to the Delmore Brothers ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1960/1996)
Songs That Tell a Story ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991)
Live at New River Ranch ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1996)
Christmas with the Louvin Brothers ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1997)

worth searching for: Unless you've just got to have it all, the exhaustive eight-CD *Close Harmony* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1992) is more Louvin Brothers than you'd get through in one sitting. For completists only.

solo outings:

Charlie Louvin:

(With Charles Whitstein) *Hoping That You're Hoping* ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1992)
The Longest Train ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1996)
Louvin Brothers Music Celebration—Live In Holland ♪♪♪½ (Strictly Country, 1995)
Fifty Years of Makin' Music ♪♪♪ (Playback, 1991)
And That's the Gospel ♪♪♪ (Playback, 1990)

influences:

Delmore Brothers, Blue Sky Boys

Whitstein Brothers, Flying Burrito Brothers

Stephen L. Betts

Love

Formed 1965, in Los Angeles, CA.

Arthur Lee, lead vocals, rhythm guitar, piano, harmonica, percussion; Bryan Maclean, lead vocals, guitar (1965–67); John Echols, lead guitar; Ken Forssi, bass; Michael Stuart, drums, percussion (1967–90). Other members include Alban "Snoopy" Pfisterer, drums, harpsichord, organ (1967);Tjay Cantrelli, sax, flute (1967); John Donnellan, lead guitar; Frank Fayad, bass; Gary Rowles, lead guitar, vocals (1970); Rusty Squeezebox, guitar (1990); Henry Liu, bass (1990); David Green, drums (1990); Mike Randall, lead guitar (1990).

Originally named the Grass Roots, the group quickly became Love when another band called the Grass Roots signed to Dunhill Records. Blending the folk-rock delicacy of the Byrds with the bluesy thrash of the Rolling Stones and Yardbirds, Love became a hugely popular band on the Los Angeles club scene at a time when new, experimental, and outrageous psychedelic bands were the rage in a rapidly changing culture. With their long hair and colorful fashion sense, the members of Arthur Lee's band quickly came to symbolize the upheaval and tension in U.S. society while never losing sight of the omnipresent beauty and mystery. Besides being the first successful multiracial rock band, Love was also the first rock band signed to the then-folky Elektra label (Love's first album bears the catalog number EKL-4001). From the start, Love fashioned itself as a dynamic, hard-edged band with a soft touch. Bryan Maclean, who contributed a song or two to each of the band's first three albums (he left after *Forever Changes*) complimented Lee's edgier, powerful side with his own lighter songs. Despite a couple of moderate radio hits with "My Little Red Book," (1966) and "7 and 7 Is" (1967), Love never rose above underground status. That lack of overexposure has kept the band's records sounding particularly fresh to this day. At the heart of a regularly changing cast of group members, Lee was at his creative peak between 1965 and 1970. The group's first four albums (*Love* through *Four Sail*) are its best, with *Forever Changes*, the last with the heart of the original line-up, released at the tail end of 1967, standing as one of the recorded highlights of the rock era. But even after *Four Sail*, subsequent albums have their moments, like the stinging Jimi Hendrix lead guitar on *False Start*'s lead track, "The Everlasting First." After years of hibernation, Love again surfaced on record in 1994 with a still-smiling Lee leading a marvelously retro-sounding band on the single "Girl on Fire" on the small Distortions Records label.

what to buy: Every bit as poignant, melodic, lush, and timeless as *Pet Sounds* and *Revolver*, *Forever Changes* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1967, prod. Arthur Lee, Bruce Botnick) brings back both the shiver and the hippie-warmth of the late '60s with every listen. The band's folkiest album, it never cracked the *Billboard* Top 150 and marked the end of the group's original line-up. Still, it continues to be cited by music lovers and critics as one of the best albums of all-time. More than a 30-year trip back in time, *Forever Changes* is the definite musical trip of its time. The two-CD *Love Story 1966–1972* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra Traditions/Rhino,

laura love

1995, compilation prod. Gary Stewart, Andrew Sandoval, Bill Inglot) contains *Forever Changes* in its entirety, as well as a generous selection of highlights from each of Love's first four album, great non-album B-sides, the Hendrix track from *False Start*, various other curiosities, and excellent liner notes. An essential, beautifully assembled collection for anyone wishing to go deeper than *Forever Changes*.

what to buy next: While six of the best tracks on Love's fourth album, *Four Sail* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1969, prod. Arthur Lee) appear on *Love Story 1966–1972*, *Four Sail* heralded Lee's new Love lineup and has more than a trace of the grace and feel of its predecessor, *Forever Changes*.

the rest:
Love ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1966)
Da Capo ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1967)
Out Here ♪♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1969/One Way, 1990)
False Start ♪♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1970/One Way, 1992)
Studio/Live ♪♪½ (One Way, 1991)
Comes in Colours ♪♪♪½ (Raven, 1994)
Out There ♪♪½ (Big Beat, 1994)

worth searching for: Love's most recent single, "Girl in Fire," recorded with "Midnight Sun," sounds like it could've been a great lost Love single from the '60s, especially with the crafty quote from "7 and 7 Is" during the break.

solo outings:
Arthur Lee:
Vindicator ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1972)

influences:
Byrds, John Coltrane, Beethoven
Doors, Led Zeppelin

David Sokol

Laura Love

Born January 5, 1960, in Omaha, NE.

If Laura Love weren't a singer, she'd be a weaver. She is anyway, but her material is sonic instead of tactile, containing snippets of everything from old spirituals and traditional folk songs to Broadway show tunes and good ol' rock 'n' roll. It's an amazingly rich blend, a technicolor dreamcoat created from a unique musical voice. She's one of those artists whose style is impossible to brand, drawing as it does from so many idioms. To Love, though, it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that funk, and throughout her musical weavings, you'll hear threads of her funky bass-playing snaking around her melodic vocals. To quote her manager, "Take the folk melodies she learned from the Weavers and float them on top of the pop-funk of Sly and that's what informs her." One of the more intriguing performers to emerge out of the Seattle scene, where she now lives, she's about as far from grunge as *Oklahoma!* (which she quotes from in her delightfully catchy song, "I Am Wondering"), yet she also pays homage to Kurt Cobain with a lovely vocal and bass rendering of "Come as You Are"—and delivers an a cappella/zydeco "Amazing Grace"—on her major-label debut, *Octoroon*.

what to buy: No one's done anything as intriguingly adventurous as *Octoroon* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1997, prod. Laura Love) in quite a while. Taking her title from a term meaning of one-eighth African ancestry, Love throws that heritage and whatever else she's got coursing through her veins into this stellar effort. "I Am Wondering" is partly credited to Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II; on "Bad Feeling," she lists one Sylvester Stewart as co-author. But she doesn't sample, she "interpolates," as the liner notes say—with terrific results. Love gently slides her politics in there, too, managing to make her points without bludgeoning. On *Helvetica Bold* ♪♪♪½ (Octoroon Biography, 1994, prod. Laura Love, Linda Severt, Rod Cook), only Love would combine Jackie DeShannon, Hank Williams, and the traditional "Wayfaring Stranger" and "Five Hundred Miles" on the same disc—and pull it off so cleverly. Her reggae version of "Put a Little Love in Your Heart" is better than the original, and her "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" pays sweet homage while distilling it through her singular vocal sensibilities. This was the last of four albums she released on her own label before signing with Mercury. Trivia alert: The uncredited song she quotes from in "A Ha Me a Riddle I Day" is "Who Will Buy" from the musical *Oliver.*

what to buy next: From Indian rhythms to the spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," to good ol' funk and soul, and with such obscurities as the Japanese tune "Sakura" snuck in here and there, Love proves she's an original talent on *Z Therapy* ♪♪♪♪ (Octoroon Biography, 1990, prod. East Side Flash). And *Pangea* ♪♪♪½ (Octoroon Biography, 1992, prod. Laura Love, Michael Lord) contains vivid lyrics and terrific vocalizations.

worth searching for: They're difficult to find, but Love fans should try to hunt down *Menstrual Hut* (Octoroon Biography, 1989), her first album, now out of print, and *Laura Love Collection* (Putamayo, 1995), a compilation. As part of the girl group Venus Envy, Love also contributed to a novelty Christmas album titled *I'll Be a Homo for Christmas* (De Milo, 1988).

influences:

◀◀ Sly & the Family Stone, Weavers, Jackson Five, Laura Nyro

Lynne Margolis

Lyle Lovett

Born November 1, 1957, in Houston, TX.

Originally a Houston folkie, Lyle Lovett went to Nashville during the mid-1980s, when alternative-leaning country acts like Steve Earle, k.d. lang, and Lovett could get a fair hearing. While he did have some country hits and won a country Grammy, Nashville never could figure out what exactly was so intriguing or funny about a guy who wore an "Eraserhead" hairdo instead of a Stetson and sang Tammy Wynette's "Stand by Your Man" with a straight face. It's their loss; Lovett's albums have surveyed jazz, Texas swing, folk, and country. Stylistically, he is, to use his own words, "What Hank Williams is to Neil Armstrong." But Lovett's lyrical bent—witty, ironic, and sometimes unsettlingly direct—is his music's most memorable quality.

what to buy: *Pontiac* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA/Curb, 1987, prod. Tony Brown, Lyle Lovett) is quintessential Lovett. Few could turn the subject matter of a wedding that ends in double murder or a surreal seagoing horseback rider to their advantage, but that's what he accomplishes on "L.A. County" and "If I Had a Boat," respectively. "She's No Lady" and "She's Hot to Go" earned him charges of misogyny, but the songs are as self-deprecating as they are chauvinistic. *Lyle Lovett* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Curb, 1986, prod. Tony Brown, Lyle Lovett) is a spectacular debut featuring the utterly unsentimental "God Will" and Lovett's wry reportage of nuptials held at a funeral parlor, "An Acceptable Level of Ecstasy (The Wedding Song)." On *Joshua Judges Ruth* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Curb, 1992, prod. George Massenburg, Billy Williams, Lyle Lovett) the melancholy streak that has run through Lovett's music from the beginning nearly takes over on such songs as "North Dakota" and "She's Already Made up Her Mind," but injections of fiery gospel ("Church") and Lovett's arid wit ("Since the Last Time," which is narrated by a corpse) make the album one of his deepest and most diverse.

what to buy next: *The Road to Ensenada* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Curb, 1996, prod. Lyle Lovett, Billy Williams) is Lovett's most country-flavored album in a while, and while it contains plenty of upbeat humor ("That's Right (You're Not from Texas)") it's also his most somber album, perhaps reflecting obliquely on his split with ex-wife Julia Roberts. *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band* ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Curb, 1989, prod. Tony Brown, Billy Williams, Lyle Lovett) spotlights his quirkiness with a string of non-sequiturs ("Here I Am") and plays the country numbers strictly for yuks ("I Married Her Just Because She Looks like You," "Stand by Your Man").

what to avoid: Lovett's weakest album, *I Love Everybody* ♪♪♪ (MCA/Curb, 1994, prod. Lyle Lovett, Billy Williams) is the musical proof of your high-school football coach's imprecation that "women weaken legs." Lovett's only recording made during his brief tenure as Mr. Julia Roberts has its moments of wry humor, but it mostly consists of stale leftovers and trifles like "La to the Left" and "Penguins," which are more strange than funny.

worth searching for: The Oscar-nominated hit "You've Got a Friend in Me" from the *Toy Story* soundtrack ♪♪♪ (Disney, 1995) is a boisterous duet with Randy Newman.

influences:

◀◀ Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark, Ray Charles, Randy Newman, Al Green

▶▶ Robert Earl Keen Jr., Walter Hyatt, Eric Taylor, Vince Bell

Daniel Durchholz

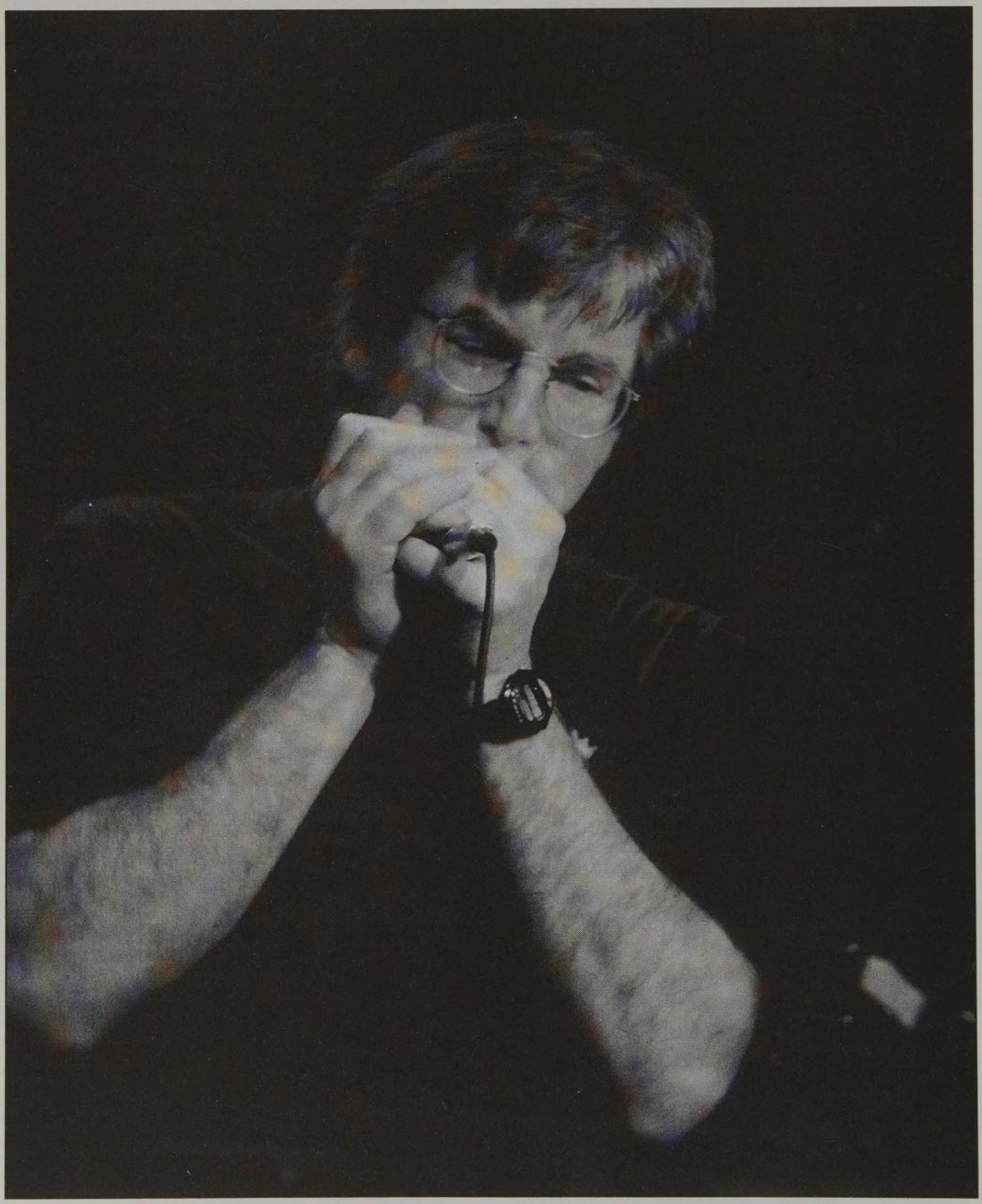
The Lovin' Spoonful

Formed 1965, in New York, NY. Disbanded 1968. Re-formed 1991.

John Sebastian, autoharp, harmonica (1965–68), vocals; Steve Boone, bass, vocals; Zal Yanovsky, guitar, vocals (1965–67); Joe Butler, drums, vocals; Jerry Yester, guitar (1967–68, 1991–present); John Marrella, drums (1991–present); Lena Yester, keyboards, guitar (1991–present).

Dressed in colorful comic-book duds, singing good-timey folk and love songs and plugged-in country blues in Greenwich Village coffee houses, the Lovin' Spoonful—named after a Mississippi John Hurt lyric—were the darlings of Greenwich Village and the country between 1965–67. (The band's early days at the Night Owl Cafe are recounted in the Mamas and the Papas' "Creeque Alley.") The Spoonful's loosey-goosey, youthful innocence and engaging folk-rock caught on like a giant happy-day smile; its first seven singles went Top 10, including "Do You Believe in Magic?," which used as its lead instrument John Sebastian's electrified Appalachian autoharp, and "Summer in the City," which helped define the summer of 1966 as it rose to Number One. The hits ended as quickly as they had begun, and Zal Yanovsky left the group in 1967, replaced by Jerry Yester. Sebastian, who sang and wrote most of the songs, left soon afterward. With Joe Butler as the new lead vocalist, the group managed another record, but the original spirit of the group had already dissipated its energy.

4 9 0 the lovin' spoonful



what to buy: The Spoonful was a singles group, which means *Anthology* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990, prod. Erik Jacobsen)—which includes all the hits in chronological order and enough album sides to keep everyone but the most fanatical happy—is a must-have.

what to buy next: *Hums of the Lovin' Spoonful* ♪♪♪♪ (Kama Sutra, 1967, prod. Erik Jacobsen), *Do You Believe in Magic?* ♪♪♪½ (Kama Sutra, 1966, prod. Erik Jacobsen), and *Daydream* ♪♪♪½ (Kama Sutra, 1966, prod. Erik Jacobsen) contain all the big hits. So do *Best of the Lovin' Spoonful* ♪♪♪½ (Kama Sutra, 1967, prod. Erik Jacobsen) and *Best of the Lovin' Spoonful Volume II* ♪♪♪½ (Kama Sutra, 1968, prod. Erik Jacobsen). Sebastian, meanwhile, released some highly worthwhile solo albums. *John B. Sebastian* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise/MGM, 1970, prod. Paul Rothchild) is a logical extension of Spoonful ideas along with the hit "She's a Lady." *Tarzana Kid* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1974, prod. Erik Jacobsen, John Sebastian) is Sebastion's best solo effort, with Lowell George helping on guitar. And *I Want My Roots* ♪♪♪♪ (Musicmasters, 1996, prod. Jimmy Vivino, John Sebastian), recorded with the J-Band, is a real jug-band album that reaches back to early Spoonful influences with blues legend James "Yank" Rachell as special guest.

what to avoid: Beyond John Stewart's "Never Goin' Back," there's nothing to recommend on *Revelation: Revolution '69* ♪ (Kama Sutra, 1968, prod. Bob Finiz).

the rest:
What's up Tiger Lily ♪♪ (Kama Sutra, 1966)
You're a Big Boy Now ♪♪ (Kama Sutra, 1967)
Everything Is Playing ♪♪♪ (Kama Sutra, 1967)

worth searching for: Many of the masters for Spoonful recordings have long been destroyed, which makes more reissues unlikely. The only way to actually hear the group as it originally sounded is to find their records on the original vinyl.

solo outings:
John Sebastian:
Four of Us ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1971)
Real Live John Sebastian ♪♪ (Reprise, 1972)
Welcome Back ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1976)
The Best of John Sebastian ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1989)
Tar Beach ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)
King Biscuit Flower Hour Presents ♪♪♪½ (King Biscuit Flower Hour, 1996)

John Sebastian of the Lovin' Spoonful **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

influences:

⏪ Mississippi John Hurt, Fred Neil, the Weavers, Rev. Gary Davis

⏩ Crosby, Stills & Nash, Poco, the Eagles

Leland Rucker

Jez Lowe /Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies

Born July 14, 1955, in County Durham, England. Bad Pennies formed 1990.

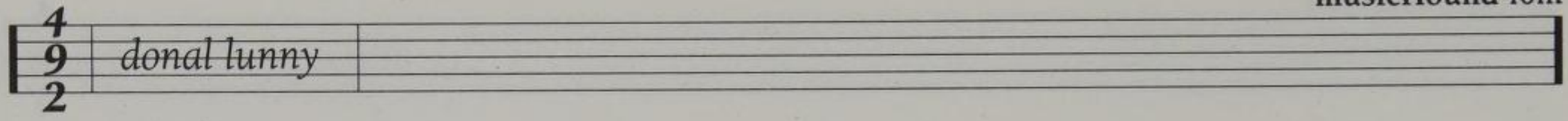
Jez Lowe, vocals, guitar, cittem, harmonica, whistle; Bev Sanders, vocals, whistle, percussion; Bob Surgeoner, double bass, keyboard, slide guitar, accordion, banjo, vocals; Billy Surgeoner, fiddle, keyboard, whistle, double bass, vocals.

Jez Lowe had been playing around his native northeast England for several years before his first solo album, *Jez Lowe,* was released in 1980. He went on to record eight more solo albums for the British label Fellside, all the while developing his talents as vocalist and songwriter who vividly described life in the declining mining towns of northeast England. Lowe's songs always have unforgettable melodies and he delivers them in a friendly tenor. In 1990 Lowe began working with the Bad Pennies, a sympathetic backing group with whom he's now recorded three albums. Lowe also finished a new album, *The Parish Notices*, with a slightly different set of "Bad Pennies": Jez Luton, on vocals, bass, and keyboards, and Judy Dinning, on vocals, guitar, keyboards, and percussion.

what to buy: *Tenterhooks* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Paul Adams) is the third album Lowe recorded with the Bad Pennies and is an excellent display of their group sound: full group harmonies and well-thought-out instrumental arrangements. There's also a trace of jazz in "Aloysius" and the catchy "Workhouse." The album also includes a lovely *a capella* song, "The Crake in the Morning." If you'd like a taste of Lowe's solo, more pared-down sound, then check out *Galloways* ♪♪♪♪ (Musics Pangaea, 1995, prod. Thomas Hurst), a compilation that includes all of Lowe's 1985 *Galloways* and half of his first album, *Jez Lowe*.

the rest:
The Parish Notices N/A (Green Linnet, 1998)

worth searching for: All the rest of Lowe's albums are available only as imports. He and the original Bad Pennies did contribute a track to the *a capella* collection *Voices* ♪♪♪♪ (Fellside, 1992/ Musics Pangaea, 1996).



influences:

Richard Thompson, Pete Coe, Watersons, Dick Gaughan

Pete Morton, Billy Bragg, Oyster Band, Andy M. Stewart

Ken Roseman

Donal Lunny

Born in Ireland.

Guitar and bouzouki player Donal Lunny has been called "the Quincy Jones of Irish music" for his multiple roles as musician, producer, organizer, presenter, and catalyst for high-quality musical collaborations. After beginning his musical career as the drummer in a high school rock band, Lunny discovered the guitar and got hooked on music. A couple of years ahead of him at school in Newbridge, there was a young man named Christy Moore, with whom Lunny teamed up to form a singing group, the Rakes of Kildare. The music they played, he says, was a pretty close copy of the Clancy Brothers, but they had the advantage of a nearby pub where real traditional music was played. Before long, the idea of combining the ballad-group sound of singing and guitar with the traditional tunes he heard in the pub began to dawn on him. When he finished school, Lunny went to Dublin to study art. There he met up with new friends, some of whom shared his musical ideas. He played in a group called the Emmet Folk with Mick Moloney, who later joined the Johnstons. He then ran a folk club with Andy Irvine, who had played with Sweeney's Men. All of these groups had one thing in common: the desire to blend the more accessible style of the ballad groups with the lyrical beauty of real traditional music. All of them were successful to an extent, but none fulfilled this dream as thoroughly as Lunny's next group, Planxty. Planxty grew out of the sessions for Christy Moore's 1972 LP, *Prosperous*. Moore was returning to Ireland after a stint on England's folk club circuit, and he wanted his album to be a celebration; he asked eight musical friends to come to Downing's Pub in Prosperous, the same pub where Lunny first experienced traditional music. There they arranged and recorded the LP. When the album was done, Lunny, Moore, Irvine, and Liam O'Flynn, who had worked out many of the arrangements together, decided to form Planxty, a new kind of Irish band. At the time Lunny was making a living by making jewelry, but he quit his job to pursue his musical career with Planxty. In 1975 Lunny left Planxty to join a group that never got off the ground. His career, however, bounced back nicely. He joined a band that was first known as Seachtar and then as 1691. After Lunny joined, they changed their name to the Bothy Band, and quickly gained a reputation as the most phenomenal group ever on the Irish folk scene. While Planxty had delivered sweet lyricism, the Bothy Band traded in pure power; the combination of driving flute, fiddle, and uilleann pipes accompanied by guitar, bouzouki, and keyboards left audiences absolutely stunned. Lunny toured with the Bothy Band and recorded four albums with them. When the Bothy Band broke up, Planxty took the opportuity to reunite, and several tours plus three more albums ensued. From the last version of Planxty, Lunny and Moore built Moving Hearts, an Irish traditional-rock fusion group. Moving hearts involved Moore and Lunny as well as Declan Sinnott (later Mary Black's musical director), Declan Masterson, and Davy Spillane. Lunny remembers it as a time of powerful performances as well as a great learning experience, combining bass and drums with traditional music in new ways. Since Moving Hearts broke up in the early 1980s, Lunny has been more active as a producer, organizer, and presenter than as a musician. He has produced records by many of the top groups in Ireland and Scotland, including Altan, Capercaillie, and Sharon Shannon. He has served as musical director for many television series, including two documentary series about traditional and contemporary Irish music. He has recently put together a group and has toured, though there is still only one Donal Lunny album, recorded in 1983. Lunny's name as a musician, compiler, or producer, however, virtually assures a high-quality album.

what's available: *Donal Lunny* ♪♪♪ (Gael-Linn, 1987, prod. Donal Lunny) is really not a solo album, but a live ensemble record of Lunny's 1987 band. Lunny's collaborators include Arty McGlynn (guitar), Nollaig Casey (fiddle), Cormac Breatnach (flute), and Sean Og Potts (uilleann pipes). It's all great, high-energy music, expertly played and produced. There's only one problem: it's just 27 minutes long, and priced like a full album. If you're willing to pay the price, it's a fine set. If not, you're better off exploring Lunny's work as a band member and producer.

influences:

Christy Moore, Andy Irvine, Mick Moloney

Planxty, Bothy Band, Moving Hearts, Altan, Capercaillie, Sharon Shannon

see also: *Planxty, Bothy Band, Moving Hearts*

Steve Winick

Bascom Lamar Lunsford

Born 1882, in Mars Hill, NC. Died 1973, in Asheville, NC.

Known to many as the "Minstrel of the Appalachians," Bascom

Lamar Lunsford was an Asheville, North Carolina lawyer and a virtually inexhaustible source of Southern culture and folklore. Lunsford wrote, collected, and performed dozens of ballads, banjo tunes, and sacred songs during the years immediately preceding and following World War II. His most famous compositions include "Old Mountain Dew" and "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground," a song that employs surrealistic imagery to convey vague but almost unbearably intense emotions.

what's available: *Smokey Mountain Ballads* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1953) is a charming collection of field recordings, including "Old Mountain Dew," made for the Smithsonian Institution. *Ballads, Banjo Tunes, and Sacred Songs of Western North Carolina* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1996) is an exemplary single-disc collection of Lunsford's best-known material recorded for the Archive of American Folk Song in March 1949.

influences:

◀◀ Charlie Poole, Clarence Ashley, Vernon Dalhart

▶▶ Dock Boggs, Bob Dylan, the Band, Holy Modal Rounders

Bill Friskics-Warren

Claire Lynch /The Front Porch String Band

Born February 20, 1954, in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Singer/songwriter Claire Lynch, along with her Front Porch String Band, has brought a touch of gentle grace to each of her recordings, combining powerfully performed bluegrass with gentle gospel tunes and acoustic country music. Born in upstate New York, Lynch relocated to Alabama at age 12, and has remained there. In 1973 she became a member of Hickory Wind, a band that included her future husband, mandolin and fiddle player Larry Lynch. By 1975 they were called the Front Porch String Band. By the time the Front Porch disbanded in 1981, they'd recorded three albums. Claire soon became acquainted with Nashville, and began writing songs and pitching them to several artists. Among those who discovered her talent early on were Kathy Mattea, who recorded "Hills of Alabam," and Patty Loveless, who cut "Some Morning Soon" in 1990. These days, with her Rounder album earning a Grammy nomination, and the Front Porch String re-formed, playing numerous festivals, and appearing on the Opry frequently, Lynch has also been in demand as a back-up vocalist for Pam Tillis, Dolly Parton, and Linda Ronstadt, among others.

editor's choice

4 more pipe albums you can't live without

Kathryn Tickell, *The Gathering* (Park)

Hamish Moore, *Stepping on the Bridge* (Greentrax)

Kathryn Tickell, *On Kielder Side* (Saydisc)

Hamish Moore & Dick Lee *Farewell to Decorum* (Greentrax)

what to buy: *Moonlighter* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Bil VornDick) explores bluegrass, folk, and Cajun music with great success. The title track is a testament to the busy life of a working mother, something to which Claire—and millions of other women—can easily relate.

what to buy next: *Silver & Gold* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Claire Lynch, Rich Adler) covers a lot of ground in the bluegrass/folk arena. The haunting "Death Angel" and a re-working of Joe Cocker's "Hitchcock Railway" are among the many highlights here. *Friends for a Lifetime* ♪♪♪♪ (Brentwood, 1993, prod. Bil VornDick) is an inspiring collection of bluegrass/gospel tunes that could convert just about anyone!

solo outings:

Front Porch String Band:

Lines and Traces ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1991)

Front Porch String Band ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1991)

influences:

◀◀ Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt

▶▶ Forbes Family

Stephen L. Betts

Mabsant

See: Robin Huw Bowen

4/4 joel mabus

Joel Mabus

Born September 13, 1953, in Belleville, IL.

Upon hearing Joel Mabus for the first time, one might be surprised to hear of his "pedigree": His parents (and an uncle or two) played hillbilly music in a family band (the White Star Rangers) that played on a weekend road show of the *WLS Barn Dance*, one of the Depression-era's radio-powerhouse counterparts to the *Grand Ole Opry*. You'd think he'd grow up to be some kind of hotshot picker, and he is—but it's not often you hear all that technical skill take a back seat to a good story, a well-timed joke, a vivid phrase—especially not in a single artist. The headline on his website reads: "He's a singer/songwriter, but he doesn't sound like one." Indeed, asking a DJ, promoter, or booking agent if they want to hear another songwriter's CD is akin to asking your dinner guests if they want to see a slide show of your home remodeling. The fact is, Joel Mabus *doesn't* sound like one. It's hard to imagine another artist on the folk scene who combines the same concise, deceptively understated, lyrical insight and sometimes devastating wit with such world-class instrumental prowess. Imagine Garrison Keillor judging the Flatpicking Guitar Championship at Winfield, or John Prine releasing a banjo album—but such comparisons don't do Mabus justice; his music is as distinctive and identifiable as it is hard to pigeonhole.

what to buy: If you can only get just one by Mabus, it's got to be *The Naked Truth* ♪♪♪♪½ (Fossil, 1988, prod. Joel Mabus)—one of the rare times a live album will be put at the top of an artist's recommended list. It contains the only recorded version of "Duct Tape Blues," a staple of Mabus's live shows for many years and certainly his most requested song. Add to the list "Touch a Name on the Wall," his song about Vietnam era veterans, the memorable "Hitler Was a Vegetarian, Too," the original clawhammer banjo tour-de-force "Tom Paine's Dream," and many other delights.

what to buy next: There are no real clinkers in Mabus's discography; try the more up-to-date *Promised Land* ♪♪♪♪ (Fossil, 1994, prod. Joel Mabus), a polished studio album to match the above live set. It's a good example of the home-grown effort Mabus produces on his own label—you may not achieve the splash of fame you'd achieve on a more high-profile label, but when an artist like this controls every aspect of the project from beginning to end, you sure make better records.

the rest:

Firelake ♪♪½ (Fossil, 1990)
Short Stories ♪♪♪ (Fossil, 1992)
Flatpick and Clawhammer ♪♪♪½ (Fossil, 1993)
Western Passage ♪♪♪♪ (Fossil, 1996)
Rhyme Schemes: New Words and Music (Fossil, 1997)

worth searching for: Of his two out-of-print LPs on the Flying Fish label, the second one, *Fairies and Fools* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984, prod. Joel Mabus, Gary Reid) is worth a listen if you can find it. It was his first instrumental album (except for one unaccompanied vocal), and one of the earliest explorations of the American-Celtic connection, a musical well that's been visited by many artists since. It's beautifully recorded also.

influences:

Doc Watson, John Hartford, Newgrass Revival, Tom Paxton, Art Thieme

Dan Crary, Robin & Linda Williams

Chris Rietz

Margaret MacArthur

Born May 7, 1928, in Chicago, IL.

The traditional folk songs of Vermont have been resurrected through the music of folklorist, harp player, and vocalist Margaret MacArthur. Her albums are unadorned celebrations of the working and farming class of the Green Mountain state. MacArthur's love of folk songs was inherited from her mother who sang her nursery rhymes. Her musical education continued after she and her mother moved temporarily to Utah, where her mother, who had been divorced, was re-married to a forest ranger who sang cowboy songs. She spent her childhood years in Arizona and the Ozark Mountain region of Missouri. She has collected songs in many areas of the country, most notably in western Kentucky and in Vermont where she has lived since 1948. MacArthur's music has continued to reflect the rural simplicity of her lifestyle. After moving to southern Vermont in 1948 to be married, she lived without electricity for many years. She began collecting folk songs in Vermont after volunteering to teach music at the school that her three children—Dan, Gary, and Megan—attended. Her first album, *Folk Songs of Vermont*, was released in 1962. She also sings songs of Arizona, where she lives and performs during the winter. Her music rings true with years of research and fieldwork and her ability to paint pictures with words gives her songs unusual poignancy and humor. Through her concern for authenticity, she has helped revive the use of "old" instruments. In 1962 her husband John restored a small harp-zither made in Columbus, Ohio in 1896. This has been widely copied by instrument makers who call it the "MacArthur Harp." In 1985, New England

Arts Biennial officials of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst named Mrs. MacArthur one of seven "New England Living Art Treasures." They lauded her for her voice and for having "uncovered the core of New England life through her research and performance of traditional music." In 1997 she was selected to appear at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts as the sole representative of Vermont in an annual celebration that hosts artists from across the country. Although she's primarily performed as a soloist, accompanying herself on dulcimer and harp-zither, MacArthur recorded three albums with support from her family: *Make the Wildwoods Ring*, *MacArthur Road*, and *On the Mountains High*. Her 1976 album, *Old Songs*, features the vocal and guitar accompaniment of Gordon Bok. MacArthur is often joined by sons Dan and Gary and daughter Megan, and are billed as the MacArthur Family. Their concerts are musical explorations of rural life, with Dan and Megan adding contemporary compositions to their mother's traditional songs. Their rich vocal harmonies are complemented by the sensitive accompaniments of Dan's guitar, Megan's acoustic bass, and Gary's fiddle or mandolin (home-made). *Sing Out!* magazine reported "the younger generation displays an easygoing musicality born of lifelong exposure to their mother's repertoire, tempered with an affinity for more contemporary country styles. . . . Megan's voice is a clear fluid instrument." Megan MacArthur is also part of the group Trillium, which includes Ellen Gawler (fiddle, guitar, vocals) and Elisabeth Wolfe (banjo, guitar, vocals). This excellent trio has been playing and singing together since the early 1990s.

what to buy: A wide range of traditional sources are explored on *Them Stars* ♪♪♪♪ (Whetstone, 1996, prod. MacArthur Family). Accompanying herself on harp and dulcimer, and joined by members of her family, MacArthur interprets several tunes—"Penny Portion," "Black Eyed Susan," "Half Hitch," and "Molly Bawn"—from the H.H. Flanders Collection of Vermont folk songs as well as songs by Pete Seeger ("O Had I a Golden Thread"), Pete Sutherland ("Endless Chain"), and Dan Berggren ("Old Green Sweater"). The title track is a musical adaptation of a Native American legend. MacArthur displays her instrumental skills with a solo harp rendition of a traditional fiddle tune, "Opera Reel for Harp Zither," and a solo dulcimer interpretation of "Droning Mrs. Gobier/Old Christmas." Megan joins her mother for a duet version of the Irish ballad, "Molly Bawn," while son Dan sings his original tune, "Leaving Scotland."

what to buy next: *Vermont Heritage Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Vermont Folklife Center, 1994, prod. Margaret MacArthur) is a collection of 15 songs that were written over several years when MacArthur was an artist-in-residence at elementary schools around Vermont. She worked with dozens of students who researched their town's history through interviews with town elders and studying old records. With Mrs. MacArthur as editor and composer, they developed their findings into song. A *Vermont Heritage Songbook* was also published that contains 42 songs, 15 of which are recorded on this CD with the help of her children and grandchildren. *Vermont Ballads & Broadsides* ♪♪♪ (Whetstone, 1989) (cassette only) is a further sampling of the folk music of the Green Mountain state. Alternating unaccompanied singing with songs backed by her solo dulcimer and harp-zither, MacArthur explores the state's past with re-workings of traditional tunes including "The Marlboro Medley," "The Ballad of Runaway Pond," "The Legend of Duncan Campbell," and "The West Rutland Marble Bawn." *MacArthur Road* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall Records, 1989, prod. MacArthur Family) is a MacArthur Family recording featuring Megan's vocals and several of Dan's original compositions such as "Yucky Bugs," a song often requested in the family performances. One unique selection is "Kitchen Dance," a poem from an old newspaper clipping (1934) which Margaret narrates in between several snippets of fiddle tunes played by the rest of the family. Any of these recordings can be ordered from the family at Box 15, MacArthur Road, Marlboro, Vermont 05344.

the rest:

Folksongs of Vermont ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1962) (cassette only)
(With the MacArthur Family) *On the Mountains High* ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1972) (LP only)
(With Dan MacArthur and Gordon Bok) *Old Songs* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976) (cassette only)
(With the MacArthur Family) *Make the Wildwoods Ring* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1981) (LP only)
Almanac of New England Farm Songs ♪♪♪ (Whetstone, 1982) (cassette only)
How to Play the MacArthur Harp ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1987) (cassette and manual)

solo outings:

Trillium:
The Sun She Rises ♪♪♪♪ (Lady Moon Productions, 1993, prod. Trillium)
Wild Flowers ♪♪♪♪ (Lady Moon Productions, 1994, prod. Trillium)

influences:

◀◀ Helen Hartness Flanders, Alan & John Lomax

▶▶ Trillium, Sally Rogers, Claudia Schmidt

Heidi Cerrigione and Craig Harris

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9
6 *ewan maccoll*

Ewan MacColl

Born Jimmy Miller in 1915, in Auchterarder, Perthshire, Scotland. Died October 22, 1989.

Ewan MacColl was one of the main forces behind the folk revival that swept Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. Born Jimmy Miller in Scotland, he was brought up in Salford, greater Manchester. At the age of 15 he changed his name to Ewan MacColl, memorializing a little-known nineteenth-century Lallans poet. He became a poet himself, and a laborer, working at various menial jobs while indulging in his first love, the theater. In 1931, he founded a street theater company called the Red Megaphones, and in 1934 he formed Theatre in Action, an influential precursor to the Theatre Workshop. MacColl's theatrical activities continued through the postwar period. In 1945 he wrote his first full-length play, and was ultimately hailed by George Bernard Shaw as "the only significant post-war British dramatist." But he was also coming to be more and more interested in folk song. Both of his parents sang traditional Scottish songs, and he had been exposed to them at an early age. He had always collected and sung traditional songs, and the success of Jazz clubs in the 1950s gave him a new venue for the songs he loved. He began to appear at various jazz clubs, a practice that accelerated during the skiffle craze of 1956–57. Because of the skiffle bands' reliance on American material, MacColl felt there was not enough native British music being sung among the younger generation. He began to advocate a policy whereby English singers would sing English songs, Scottish singers would sing Scottish songs, and so forth. MacColl found many ways to spread his ideas about folk song during the 1950s. In 1953 he began a club—the Ballads and Blues Club—which became the model for the English folk-club phenomenon. He later founded the Singer's Club, a folk club organized on socialist principles, and the Critics Group, a collection of young singers who met regularly to discuss folk song, and who also performed and recorded. This group nurtured many important performers of the younger generation, including Sandra Kerr, John Faulkner, Frankie Armstrong, and Brian Pearson. During the same period, MacColl created a series of radio programs that utilized folk songs, under the rubric *The Radio Ballads*. These programs and others frequently teamed him up with other singers, including A.L. Lloyd.

They were a great success, and made MacColl relatively famous despite the same socialist politics that had harmed Lloyd's radio career. For these programs, he began to write songs, and he became an accomplished songwriter as well. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, MacColl was an influential force. He provided encouragement and advice to all manner of performers, from folk-rock stars like Maddy Prior, whose band Steeleye Span performed many songs she learned from MacColl, to Elvis Costello, whose first public appearance was a floor spot at an Ewan MacColl concert. He continued to perform and record, releasing over 150 LPs in his lifetime. He provided both traditional songs and his own songs to generations of folk performers; from the Johnstons and the Dubliners in the 1960s to the Pogues in the 1980s. In the 1970s, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," which MacColl wrote for his third wife and musical partner Peggy Seeger, was recorded by Elvis Presley and by Roberta Flack; Flack's version topped the U.S. pop charts and won a 1972 Grammy award. MacColl continued to perform until shortly before his death on October 22, 1989.

what to buy: *The Real MacColl* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1993, prod. Tony Engle) was compiled from five original albums recorded for Topic between 1958 and 1966. The songs it presents reflect MacColl's varied relationships with song traditions. They include older Child ballads, Jacobite ballads, modern songs of industrial disasters, and original MacColl compositions. Notable tracks include a detailed version of "Van Dieman's Land," an excellent "Minorie" (a.k.a. "The Two Sisters"), and a wonderful take on Hamish Henderson's World War II song "Farewell to Sicily." MacColl's wife, Peggy Seeger, accompanies him on many of these songs, playing guitar and five-string banjo. The accompaniments are mostly subtle, tasteful, and unobtrusive, and many of the most effective tracks—like the devastating "Bramble Briar"—are sung unaccompanied in MacColl's supple and unique voice. Of MacColl's original songs, the best-known included on *The Real MacColl* is "Dirty Old Town," his ode to Salford, which has been covered by a whole stable of folk artists including the Pogues. The traditional material includes the original recordings from which Steeleye Span learned "Rogues in a Nation," "Sheepcrook and Black Dog," and "Come Ye O'er Frae France," testifying to MacColl's influence on the generation that followed him.

what to buy next: *Black and White* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Neill & Calum MacColl) is a CD compiled by MacColl's family from privately owned studio and live tapes. It gathers together a good number of MacColl's favorite traditional songs, such as the "Highland Muster Roll," which he used at the beginning of concerts to test the hall's acoustics and his own voice. It also features many of his best-known compositions, including "Dirty Old Town," "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," "The Ballad of Accounting," "The Shoals of Herring," and "Kilroy Was Here." One of MacColl's first songs, "The Man-

chester Rambler," is given a particularly spirited arrangement by MacColl and many of his friends and family, including his daughter, pop star Kirsty MacColl. This is an excellent and unusual album. *Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger: Folk on Two* ♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1996, prod. Geoffrey Hewitt) is another interesting and unusual CD. It is not primarily an album of MacColl's singing. Instead, it is better seen as an album about MacColl, featuring some songs sung by him and many of the songs he wrote sung by his friends and disciples. The first six tracks come from a 1986 concert of MacColl's songs in honor of his 70th birthday. Singers include Ian Campbell, Belle Stewart, Ray Fisher, Peggy Seeger, and MacColl; MacColl himself sings only one of these tracks. The other five songs are from another concert honoring MacColl, this one from 1987. Here, Seeger sings two songs and MacColl three. "Joy of Living," the last song on the disc, is a loving farewell to the world from a man nearing the end of his life; the fact that MacColl died only a few years later makes it a poignant moment in retrospect. The album concludes with a fascinating 10-minute interview in which MacColl speaks about the origins of the British folk revival. *Classic Scots Ballads* ♪♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1997, prod. Anton Glovsky), a reissue of a 1959 LP recorded by MacColl and Seeger, contains another fine selection of songs from the duo; MacColl sings and Seeger provides vocal harmonies and guitar, banjo, concertina, and Appalachian dulcimer backup. This album focuses exclusively on traditional songs, and on songs sung in the lowland Scots tongue; titles include "Aikendrum," "The Maid Gaed Tae the Mill," "Hughie Graeme," and "I Loved a Lass." The arrangements are tasteful and low-key, and allow MacColl's expressive voice as much freedom as it needs. Although it is short, this CD has the advantage of state-of-the-art sound restoration, which makes it sound better than most of the duo's reissues. *The Jacobite Rebellions* ♪♪♪½ (1962) was one of the albums from which *The Real MacColl* was compiled. It has also been reissued as a stand-alone CD containing the entire 1962 LP, no more or less. The disc features many stirring performances not found on *The Real MacColl*. Most of the well-known Jacobite ballads appear on this album. (This is not surprising; they are well known partly because they appeared on this album.) MacColl's rich voice was one of the revival's defining sounds, and his sense of drama informs such songs as "Cam Ye o'er Frae France" and "Donald MacGillivray." The deep loss and unfulfilled longing of many Scots is expressed beautifully in many of these songs, such as "Wae's Me for Prince Charlie" and "Bonnie Moorhen." As on most of his releases, MacColl is accompanied by Seeger on guitar and banjo and also sings many songs unaccompanied. *Bothy Ballads of Scotland* ♪♪♪½ is an entirely unaccompanied affair. It contains songs of the rural laborers of the last century, which were sung in the bothy or farm barracks. Most of the songs are therefore about farm life, farm work, and love among the fields. Many of the songs show hired laborers in direct conflict or at least disagreements with their employers, a frequent theme of bothy songs. Others treat the classic themes of folk song: unrequited love, premature death, good whiskey, and bawdy fun. MacColl is in fine voice on this disc, which suffers only from being relatively short and rather lo-fi.

the rest:
(With Peggy Seeger) *Lover's Garland* ♪♪½ (Pye, 1962)
(With Peggy Seeger) *At the Present Moment* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1973)
Songs of Robert Burns ♪♪♪ (Ossian, 1996)
Scottish Traditional Songs ♪♪♪ (Ossian, 1996)
Traditional Songs and Ballads of Scotland ♪♪♪ (Ossian, 1996)

worth searching for: MacColl made more than 150 LPs, so used record bins are bound to have some of his material. One set that was particularly important was the nine-LP *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Riverside, 1956, prod. Kenneth Goldstein), which was produced and annotated by folklorist Kenneth S. Goldstein and featured both MacColl and A.L. Lloyd. MacColl also recorded three volumes of *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Folkways, 1961–64) and two volumes of *Broadside Ballads* (Folkways, 1961). Indeed, MacColl is the main performer on about 20 Folkways albums, all of which are available as custom cassettes or CDs from Smithsonian Folkways Records at the Smithsonian Institution.

influences:
◀◀ Betsy Miller, Jeannie Robertson, Belle Stewart

▶▶ Dolores Keane, John Faulkner, Sandra Kerr, Brian Pearson, Frankie Armstrong, Mick Moloney, Johnstons, Dubliners, Clancy Brothers, Steeleye Span, Archie Fisher, Ray Fisher, Cilla Fisher, Tannahill Weavers, Dick Gaughan

see also: *Peggy Seeger*

Stephen Winick

Pat MacDonald

See: Timbuk 3

Rod MacDonald

Born August 17, 1948, in Southington, CT.

Poetic vision and journalistic insight are combined through the songs of Rod MacDonald. A graduate of the law school at Co-

lumbia University in New York and a former reporter for *Newsweek*, MacDonald is one of contemporary folk music's most prolific songwriters. His song, "American Jerusalem" was covered by Garnet Rogers and Shawn Colvin, while "Sailor's Prayer" has been interpreted by Suzie Burke, Free Hot Lunch, Jean Redpath, Lisa Neustadt, Gordon Bok, and the Hudson River Sloop Singers. His naturalistic anthem, "Every Little Thing," was covered by the Bitchin' Babes on their 1991 debut album, *Buy Me, Bring Me, Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!!*. One of the spearheads of Greenwich Village's folk scene since the early 1970s, MacDonald recorded many songs for *The Fast Folk Musical Magazine* and booked musicians for the influential Speakeasy Coffeehouse on Bleeker Street between 1984 and 1987. Although he maintained an apartment in the Village until 1997, MacDonald spent most of his time on the road. He spent several years living in Italy in the late 1980s, and currently calls south Florida home.

what to buy: MacDonald was spending most of his time in northern Italy when he recorded *Highway to Nowhere* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. Mark Dann, Rod MacDonald). With most tracks originally released in Europe as *Bring on the Lion* ♪♪♪ (Brambus, 1989, prod. Rod MacDonald, Mark Dann), the album focuses on the more romantic side of MacDonald's repertoire with such songs as "Moonlight and Fire," "Love at the Time," and "The Coming of the Snow." MacDonald's balladeering skills are exemplified by two additional songs included on *Highway to Nowhere*—"Norman" and "The Way to Calvary." The opening tune, "Norman," is a haunting, darkly humorous look through the eyes of Norman "Psycho" Bates. "The Way to Calvary" is a lengthy tale of two runaway slaves at the time of Christ. "After the Singing" was recorded and originally broadcast during a performance for the National Public Radio in-concert show *Mountain Stage*.

what to buy next: Although *The Man on the Ledge* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994, prod. Rod MacDonald, Mark Dann) includes two songs, "For the People (Song for Czechoslovakia)" and "Auschwitz," the focus reflects MacDonald's views of his homeland in the United States. In addition to a new recording of "American Jerusalem," the album includes politically tinged tunes "Some Things I Like about America," "Dallas," and "Hey, Mr. President," a humorous spoof of President Clinton's pot-smoking experiences. MacDonald's second album, *White Buffalo* ♪♪♪ (Autogram, 1985/Mountain Railroad, 1985/McDisk, 1987/Gadfly, 1996, prod. Rod MacDonald, Mark Dann), remains a powerful document of the early 1980s Greenwich Village folk scene. With instrumental support from co-producer Mark Dann (bass, guitar), John Kruth (mandolin), Seth Farber (organ), and the late Howie Wyeth (drums) and vocal harmonies by Nikki Matheson and Steve Eriksson, MacDonald successfully showcases his politics-meets-romance songs. "Stop the War" recalls MacDonald's steps towards being a conscientious objector and "The Aliens Came in Business Suits" takes a rocking, witty look at interplanetary invasion. "Ode to the Pretty Girls" and "Cross Country Waltz" offer more romantic views. The title track reflects MacDonald's visits to the Hopi and Sioux reservations.

the rest:
And Then He Woke Up ♪♪♪½ (Gadfly, 1996)

worth searching for: MacDonald's debut album, *No Commercial Traffic* ♪♪♪♪ (Cinemagic, 1983, prod. Moogy Klingman, G. Parker), is a masterpiece of modern folk-rock. With MacDonald's soft-spoken vocals, acoustic guitar and harmonica accompanied by New York musicians including John Kruth (mandolin, flute), Dann (bass, 12-string guitar), John Lewis (piano), Chuck Hancock (saxophone), and background vocalists including Dave Van Ronk, Tom Intondi, and Lucy Kaplansky, the album documents the power of MacDonald's early work. In addition to the original recordings of "American Jerusalem," "A Sailor's Prayer," and "Every Little Thing," the album includes the folk-rocking tunes, "The Unearthly Fire" and "On the Road (in New York Town)." Many of MacDonald's early songs were featured on issues of *The Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. A live version of "The Road to Calvary" is included on *Circles in the Stream—Volume I* ♪♪♪ (WUMB, 1993, prod. Tom Callahan), a collection of folk and acoustic music recorded live at WUMB Public Radio at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Roger McGuinn, John Lennon
▶▶ Jack Hardy, Richard Meyer, Shawn Colvin, Cliff Eberhardt

Craig Harris

Ashley MacIsaac

Born February 24, 1975, in Creignish, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Young Ashley MacIsaac's success in the music industry shouldn't come as much of a surprise. The teenage fiddle phenomenon has been exposed to music all his life—his father, a fiddle player, would play around the house, and Ashley himself got a rather early start learning to step dance at age five and beginning formal fiddle instruction at the tender age of nine. He began touring Canada as well as U.S. cities such as Detroit

and Boston by the time he was 13 and has filled venues ranging from local Cape Breton sites to New York's Carnegie Hall. Does the term "prodigy" come to mind? MacIsaac has won numerous awards, including Best Live Act at the 1995 East Coast Music Awards, and Best New Solo Artist and Best Roots and Traditional Album–Solo at the 1996 Juno Awards. Keep your eyes and ears open as MacIsaac is certainly just scratching the surface of a wealth of talent.

what to buy: MacIsaac was the subject of a major label feeding frenzy while still in his teens, with his major label debut, *Hi How Are You Today?* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1995) receiving critical and commercial acclaim. This album, which sold more than 50,000 copies in three weeks, reflects both his Celtic/Canadian heritage and his youthful exuberance in its driving, aggressive instrumentation, a perfect if unlikely combination of ancient Celtic folk songs with modern rock arrangements and attitude.

the rest:
Close to the Floor (Independent, 1992)
A Cape Breton Christmas (Independent, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Chieftains

Christopher Scanlon

Kate MacKenzie

Born April 25, 1952, in IA.

Kate MacKenzie first gained notice as a regular performer on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*, where she was both a solo performer and a member of the Hopeful Gospel Quartet alongside Keillor and Robin and Linda Williams. She sang lead with the Minneapolis-based bluegrass band Stoney Lonesome for more than 15 years. Her solo recordings mix bluegrass with honky-tonk, country blues, and swamp music.

what's available: Backed by the likes of Emmylou Harris, Alison Krauss, Béla Fleck, Sam Bush, and the Fairfield Four, the all-acoustic *Let Them Talk* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994, prod. Nick Forster), MacKenzie's debut solo album, dances on the line between country and bluegrass. *Age of Innocence* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996, prod. Nick Forster) is similar in style to her first album, though it also demonstrates MacKenzie's growth as a songwriter. It is very similar to the sort of rootsy country/bluegrass blend for which Emmylou Harris was once noted.

influences:
◀◀ Stoney Lonesome, Emmylou Harris

◀◀ Claire Lynch, Laurie Lewis

Douglas Fulmer

Dougie MacLean

Born in 1954, in Perthshire, Scotland.

Heralded as Scotland's premier folk singing troubadour, Dougie MacLean writes finely crafted songs that are inspired by self-discovery, nature, love, and Gaelic history. Whether he's singing about the Australian outback in "Singing Land" or coming to grips with self-doubt in "Ready for the Storm," his lilting melodies are bright and beautiful lullabies in these troubled times. An exceptional performer who tours the world over, MacLean's concerts are highlighted by his enthusiasm and knack for storytelling between songs. Born a gardener's son in a family where his father played fiddle and his mother the mandolin, MacLean was busking around Scotland in his teens when he was picked to be a member of the Tannahill Weavers, a popular traditional folk group. MacLean, anxious to perform more of his own compositions, teamed up with Alan Roberts, a Scottish guitarist, for two albums, *Caledonia* and *C.R.M.* (the latter also with Alex Campbell). Looking to broaden his playing skills further, MacLean joined Silly Wizard, another notable Scottish folk group, and spent six months touring Europe and America with the band. Since 1983 he has been releasing his own songs on his own private label, Dunkeld Records, and enjoying immense popularity as a consummate performer who champions issues such as Scottish independence and protecting the environment. Dunkeld Records can be described as "Scotland's new heritage music" and the roster of folk musicians signed to the label include Hamish Moore, Sheena Wellington, Freda Morrison, Gordon Duncan, and Blackeyed Biddy. In 1989 and 1990, MacLean toured the States and did concerts for the popular public radio series *Thistle & Shamrock*. He also played the Shetland and Orkney music celebrations, and was a featured performer at the Edinburgh Festival. In 1993 the BBC presented *The Land: Songs of Dougie MacLean* on television. In the last few years he has made Nashville an important spot on his itinerary, performing in concert with country star Kathy Mattea, and co-producing her *Time Passes By* album. In the other extreme, 1996 saw one of his songs, "The Gael," given the Techno/Dance treatment by Galleria and played in discos in Europe. MacLean has a special knack for drawing large crowds and devoted fans to his concerts who seem to know every word of every song he's written, and his live appearances are memorable events for all. With the release of the highly successful

Riof in 1997, MacLean's popularity only seems to grow in time. Thanks to MacLean starting his own record company, Dunkeld Records, just about all of his albums since 1983 are now available in stores or can be mail-ordered through Dunkeld Records, Cathedral Street, Dunkeld, Perthshire PH8 OAW Scotland. Tel: (01350) 727686; Fax: (01350). 728606. His website, www.dunkeld.co.uk, is divided into "The Studio," "The Gallery," "The Office," and "The Store," with other sites that explain his guitar tunings, tour dates, and guitar and fiddle preferences. There is also an excellent newsletter called *Contact* (available at the address above) which keeps Dougie fans updated with news and album information.

what to buy: The best compilation of MacLean material can be found on *Putamayo Presents the Dougie MacLean Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Putamayo, 1995, prod. Dan Storper) and includes songs from seven MacLean albums. *Singing Land* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dunkeld Records, 1986, prod. Dougie MacLean, Jennifer MacLean) is the ultimate MacLean experience; it best represents his stylistic brilliance with songs teetering between pure joy ("This Love Will Carry") and destruction ("Guillotine's Release"). Another heavy hitter for best MacLean album would be *Riof* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dunkeld, 1997, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes, Jennifer MacLean), a fine mix of haunting instrumentals, finely crafted traditional songs, and contemporary songs that whisk you away to the Scottish highlands in a blink of an eye. Also quite good and highly recommended are *Real Estate* ♪♪♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1988, prod. Dougie MacLean, Jennifer MacLean), *Indigenous* ♪♪♪½ (Dunkeld, 1991, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes), and *Whitewash* ♪♪♪½ (Dunkeld, 1990, prod. Dougie MacLean, Jennifer MacLean).

what to buy next: *The Plant Life Years* ♪♪ (Osmosys, 1995, prod. Nigel Pegrum) is a compilation of songs taken from MacLean's early records *Caledonia*, *C.R.M.*, and *Snaigow*, and demonstrates MacLean's fondness for traditional tunes. If you're looking for mainly instrumentals with the MacLean magic touch, then you can't go wrong with *Fiddle* ♪♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1984, prod. Dougie MacLean, Jennifer MacLean), *The Search* ♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1990, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes), and *Sunset Song* ♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1993, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes). All three are rooted in traditional Scottish folklore, and provide plenty of opportunities for MacLean's masterfully played guitar and fiddle to shine. If you like Scottish poets Robert Burns, Neil Gow, and Robert Tannahill, then you'll enjoy MacLean's wonderful song interpretations on *Craigie Dhu* ♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1983, produced Dougie MacLean, Roy Ashby) and *Tribute* ♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1995, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes, Jennifer MacLean). Don't forget to wear the tartan! Then again, if you want to hear more of Dougie's own passionate early songwriting in the style of *Riof*, you should buy yourself *Butterstone* ♪♪ (Dambuster, 1989, prod. Richard Digance) and *Marching Mystery* ♪♪ (Dunkeld, 1994, prod. Dougie MacLean, Graeme Hughes, Jennifer MacLean).

what to avoid: If you're thinking of hearing a lot of MacLean on the soundtrack of *The Last of the Mohicans* (Morgan Creek, 1992, prod. Michael Mann), forget it. With only ten minutes of music by MacLean, there's far too much symphonic trembling to contend with to make it worth the money.

worth searching for: Four MacLean albums are rare and quite worth the treasure hunt. The wonderful *Caledonia* ♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1978, prod. Nigel Pegrum) features the original version of "Caledonia," which was later made into a mega-hit by Frankie Miller and which is the nearest thing to a Scottish national anthem in the last 20 years. This early version of the song uses the swirling sounds of the Delme String Quartet to offset MacLean's homesick longing for the mother country. The songs on the album are firmly rooted in tradition, but have the familiar MacLean trademark: jangling guitar and passionate voice. Ace guitarist Alan Roberts is featured throughout. *C.R.M.* ♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1979, prod. Nigel Pegrum) is a spirited and rollicking romp with Scottish music legends Alex Campbell and Alan Roberts (again). More of a Celtic hootenanny than other MacLean efforts, *C.R.M.* has a pub-like feel on numbers like "Rattlin' Roarin' Willie" and "Leis a Lurighan." *Snaigow* ♪♪ (Plant Life, 1980, prod. Nigel Pegrum) and *On a Wing and a Prayer* ♪♪ (Plant Life, 1981, prod. Nigel Pegrum) showcase MacLean's early songwriting talents as he refines his personal style.

influences:

- Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Cat Stevens, Frazer McGlen & His Scottish Country Dance Band
- Kathy Mattea, David Wilcox, Martin Simpson, Dick Gaughan

TJ McGrath

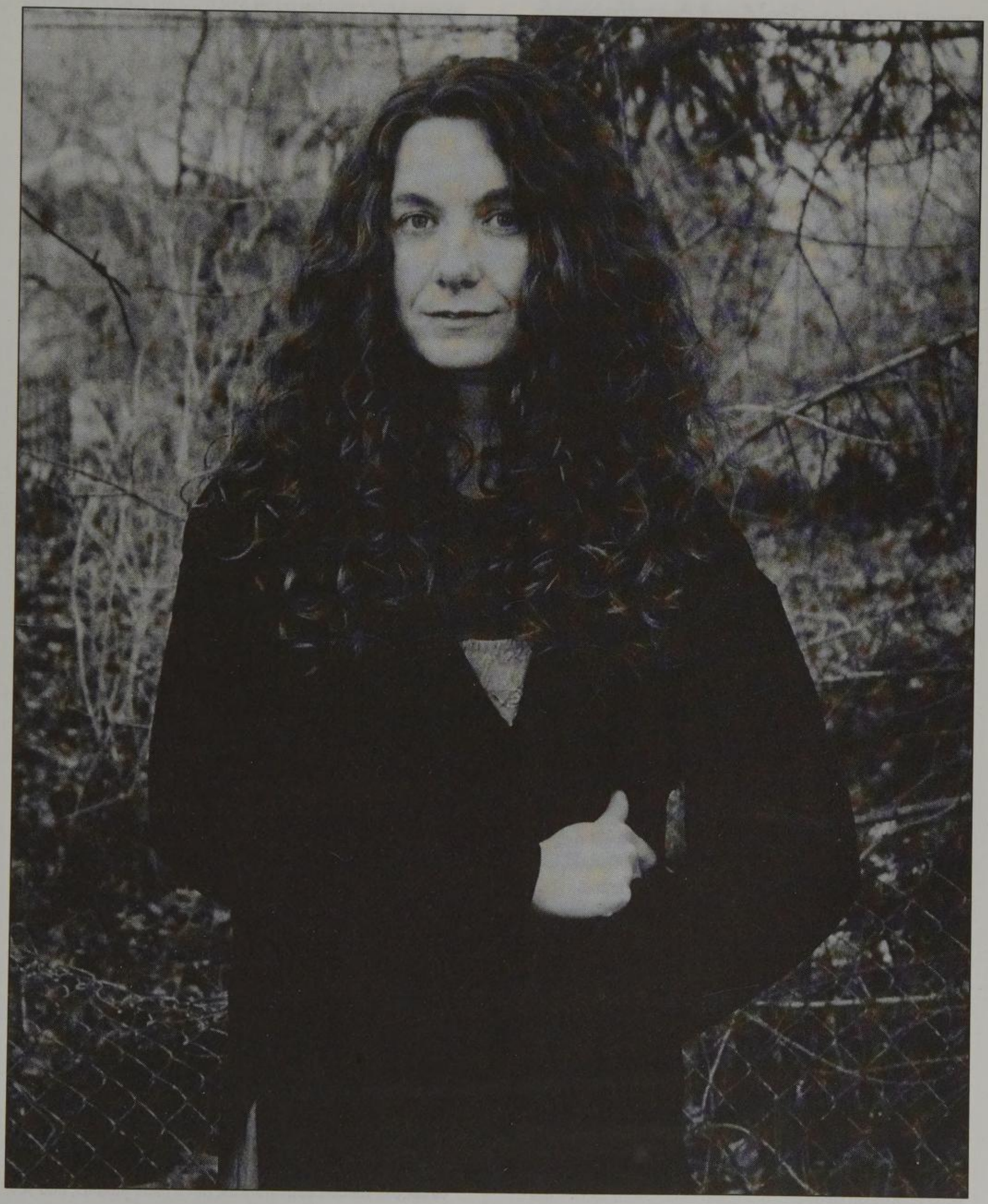
Kate MacLeod

Born March 8, 1961, in Baltimore, MD.

Kate MacLeod is a living argument for the voice as a bluegrass in-

Kate MacLeod

kate macleod 501



strument. Hers is reedy, a bit uneven, like Robin Holcomb's but stripped of many of Holcomb's mannerisms. She's a fine songwriter as well, and one of the best additions to Andrew Calhoun's Waterbug label. A native of Maryland, MacLeod now makes Utah her home, and there's definitely a western feel to her music. Celtic music is a subtler but no less important influence on her music, and she still perfcrms with a Celtic band in Utah.

what's available: *Trying to Get It Right* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1994, prod. Charles Sawtelle) is wonderfully eclectic; it includes a song inspired by William Least Heat-Moon, "PrairyErth," Jean Ritchie's "None but One," and "Alaska," a travel song that uses the 49th state as a metaphor for distant peace. *Constant Emotion* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1997, prod. Charles Sawtelle) has an impressive bluegrass pedigree; it features Peter Rowan and Sally Van Meter. Her songs here have a deceptive naiveté, epitomized by "The Child," which was adapted from the traditional song "False Knight on the Road." (The child comes out as the winner.)

influences:
◀◀ Norman Blake, Jean Ritchie, Mary McCaslin

Pamela Murray Winters

Buddy MacMaster

Born October 18, 1924, in Timmins, Ontario, Canada.

Buddy MacMaster is one of the grand men of Cape Breton fiddle music. Long a legend at parties and dances in Nova Scotia, MacMaster has in recent years begun to take his muscular, elegant fiddling to audiences in Europe and the United States. MacMaster is known throughout Nova Scotia as a dance fiddler, and his strong, rhythmic playing will surprise fans used to the more sedate fiddle style of Scottish musicians like Alasdair Fraser. He grew up in a musical household, first in Ontario, then in the town of Judique, Nova Scotia where his parents moved when he was four. A natural musician, MacMaster began fiddling at age three, played his first concert at age 12 and has been performing regularly ever since. Like many great folk fiddlers, MacMaster for most of his life played music in his off-hours while working a day job to support his family. After his retirement from the Canadian National Railway in 1988 he rededicated himself to music and began to perform regularly outside of Nova Scotia. He has since recorded two albums and performed and taught all across the United States and in Scotland. In 1995, MacMaster received an honorary doctorate from St. Francis Xavier University in Cape Breton for his contributions to Scottish culture.

what to buy: Although MacMaster's profile within the United States has risen slightly over the past few years, his recordings are still rare. They are, however worth searching out as excellent examples of down-home Cape Breton fiddle music. *Judique on the Floor* ♪♪♪♪ (Sea-Cape, 1989, prod. Allister MacGillavry) is the only one of MacMaster's recordings available on CD. It is an excellent collection of airs, reels, jigs, and strathspeys played with a great deal of drive. Particular highlights are the closing medley begun by "R.P. Cummings' March" and continuing through a brace of strathspeys and reels, and his version of the slow air "Da Slockit Light" composed by Shetland fiddler Tom Anderson.

what to buy next: *Glencoe Hall* ♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1991, prod. Buddy MacMaster) is a cassette-only release. It, too, is an excellent recording of lively Cape Breton dance music, if a little stiffer than the first album, and deserves release on compact disc. Both recordings are graced by the solid, lively piano playing of John Morris Rankin.

worth searching for: *Buddy MacMaster*, produced by Peter Murray in 1995, is an excellent video documentary about MacMaster's life and music, and contains several great performances.

influences:
◀◀ Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald, Bill Lamey, Angus Chisolm
▶▶ Natalie MacMaster, Ashley MacIsaac, Tracey Dares

Tony Ziselberger

Natalie MacMaster

Born June 13, 1972, in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Natalie MacMaster is at the top of a talented class of young musicians bringing the traditional Scottish fiddle music of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, to the world. An excellent young fiddler and dancer with undeniable charisma and stage presence, MacMaster is well-known to audiences in the United States from frequent performances at festivals and on tours. She has appeared on the Celtic Fiddle Festival tour with Martin Hayes and Brian MacNeill and toured with the Chieftains, Carlos Santana, and others. She grew up in a musical family, getting her first fiddle at age three and learning to play from some of the greats of Cape Breton music, including her uncle, legendary fiddler Buddy MacMaster. She recorded her first album at age 16 and soon after was performing at major festivals in Canada and the States. MacMaster's career has continued to develop over countless concert appearances, three more albums, and sev-

eral awards from the Canadian music industry. She is among Canada's best-known traditional performers and has a great future ahead of her.

what to buy: What to buy from MacMaster's small catalog depends on your tastes. For someone just beginning to explore Cape Breton's music *No Boundaries* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Chad Irschick) would serve as a fine introduction. A mixed bag of tunes and songs from Cape Breton and beyond, set in both very traditional and contemporary settings, this record was released in Canada by Warner Bros. and was designed to bring Natalie's music to as wide an audience as possible. As with all of her recordings, the playing is flawless and filled with energy, particularly when she works with long-time partners Dave MacIsaac and Tracey Dares. Although some of the contemporary arrangements strain a little too hard at a Sharon Shannon-ish crossover style, Natalie's good taste keeps things pretty well under control. Rounding out the collection are two songs, one sung by Cookie Rankin of the Rankin family, and one by Cape Breton songwriter Bruce Guthro, that provide a nice change of pace from the fiddle tunes. For those music fans who like their coffee black, their scotch neat, and their fiddle music straight, *Fit As a Fiddle* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Glen Meisner, Dave MacIsaac) is the recording to choose. MacMaster powers through a solid set of traditional Cape Breton dance music, accompanied by MacIsaac and Dares. The arrangements are more simple than on *No Boundaries* and the forays into outside styles less adventuresome. This is a simple, powerful album showcasing Natalie at what she does best, Cape Breton fiddling with a lot of drive, swing, and power, an awesome technique wedded to great taste, and a thorough understanding of the tradition.

what to buy next: Previously available only in Canada, *A Compilation* ♪♪♪½ (MacMaster Music, 1996/Rounder, 1998, compilation prod. Paul MacDonald) is a reissue of selected tracks from MacMaster's first two albums, *Four on the Floor* and *Road to the Isle*, both originally on cassette and now out of print. Natalie was just a teenager when she made these strong, self-assured recordings. Her playing is excellent as always, with great swing and lift on the dance tunes and a solid touch on the slow airs. Although she has matured as a musician since these early recordings, the feel, the technique, and most important, the taste were all there from the beginning as this fine CD shows.

influences:

◀◀ Buddy MacMaster, Brendan Mulvihill, Jerry Holland

▶▶ Ashley MacIsaac, Richard Wood

Tony Ziselberger

Madeline MacNeil

Born January 17, 1940, in Norfolk, VA.

Madeline MacNeil is well known for her talents as a singer and performer on the hammered and fretted dulcimers. She is equally well known for the warmth and generosity with which she shares her music and encourages others to play and sing. Her angelic voice, full of power and precision, combined with the gentleness of her dulcimer playing, casts a magical spell over her audiences. The silver-haired woman with the golden voice has won the admiration of countless fans across the country. MacNeil's 25 years as a professional musician have included performances at the Smithsonian Institution, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and many folk festivals across the country. She is recognized by the Virginia Commission for the Arts as a Touring Virginia Artist and has received an Arts on the Road grant from the commission. The Summer Solstice Traditional Music Festival honored her for her contributions to acoustic music through performing, books, and recordings, as did the California State Legislature. MacNeil has received an Artie award in music from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley Arts Council and she also won an Indie from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors for her recording *Heart's Ease*. Since 1975 MacNeil has published the *Dulcimer Players News*, a quarterly magazine, which has guided players, builders, and dulcimer enthusiasts (both fretted and hammered) on their musical journey.

what to buy: *A Place Apart* ♪♪♪♪½ (Turquoise Records, 1991, prod. Seth Austen) is a premier example of MacNeil's work and stands just slightly above the rest of her catalog as it contains the most beautiful rendition of "Shenandoah." This collection of contemporary and traditional songs is stitched together by "meaningful words and enchanting melodies which transcend time." Hammered and fretted dulcimers are featured with accompaniment by talented musicians, Seth Austen (guitar) and Ralph Gordon (bass, cello).

what to buy next: *Soon It's Going to Rain* ♪♪♪♪ (Roots & Branches, 1992, prod. Seth Austen) has a theme of water flowing through this recording, creating a sense of tranquillity. In addition to Austen's guitar, Frances Lapp Averitt joins on flute and Flawn Williams adds harmony vocals, including a wonderful duet on "Your Song," written by Elton John and Bernie Taupin. *All through the Night* ♪♪♪♪ (Roots & Branches, 1995, prod. Seth Austen) is music for eventide with songs telling of healing and peace, inspired by visits to her neighbors at the Holy Cross Abbey. Several talented musicians and singers lend

harmony on this recording, including Allen Dec (harp). *Lone Wild Bird* ♪♪♪♪ (Roots & Branches, 1993, prod. Seth Austen) features MacNeil with her voice, hammered dulcimer, and fretted dulcimer accompanied by the beautiful guitar music of her long-time friend Austen. "Who Knows Where the Time Goes?" is absolutely captivating. *Heart's Ease* ♪♪♪♪ (Turquoise Records, 1989, prod. Seth Austen) focuses on traditional Celtic and classical pieces. The hammered dulcimer is joined by guitar, cello, flute, harpsichord, and piano in duets and trios playing beautiful traditional music of Ireland and England, along with compositions by Bach, Beethoven, O'Carolan, Chiesa, Sor, and Austen. All MacNeil recordings are available from Roots & Branches Music, P. O. Box 2164, Winchester, Virginia 22604.

the rest:
The Holly and the Ivy ♪♪♪½ (Kicking Mule Records, 1995)
Christmas Comes Anew ♪♪♪½ (Kicking Mule Records, 1995)
The Crowning of the Year ♪♪♪½ (Roots & Branches, 1996)

worth searching for: *Strawberry Fair* ♪♪♪½ (Troubadour Music, 1977, prod. Madeline MacNeil, Phillip Mason) is a recording of singing with accompaniment on Appalachian dulcimer but is now out of print.

influences:
◀◀ Peter, Paul & Mary, Judy Collins, Ralph Lee Smith, Russell Fluharty, Sam Herrmann

▶▶ Steve Schneider, Sam Rizzetta

Heidi Cerrigione

Uncle Dave Macon

Born David Harrison Macon, October 7, 1870, in Smartt Station, TN. Died March 22, 1952.

David Macon became better known as simply "Uncle Dave," but was also called "the Dixie Dewdrop." In his 50s Macon began performing banjo and, in 1925, joined the Grand Ole Opry, becoming one of its first real star attractions. Today he is a true legend in country music and was an early member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, elected in 1966. Born near McMinnville, Tennessee, Macon moved with his family to Nashville at age 13. Inspired by banjoist and comedian Joel Davidson, he took up the banjo at 15. He moved to a farm near Readyville, Tennessee, and married Matilda Richardson. By 1900 Macon regularly hauled produce (and liquor) under the auspices of the Macon Midway Mule & Wagon Transportation Co., taking his banjo along to entertain folks in the towns of Woodbury and Murfreesboro and points in between. With the advent of the automobile, which he detested (Macon never learned to drive), his company went out of business. By age 53, Macon had begun performing at parties and other gatherings, and he soon received an invitation to play at a theater in Birmingham, Alabama. He began making records for the Vocalion label and, along the way, charmed audiences everywhere with his freewheeling banjo picking and wild storytelling. At 56 he joined the Opry and remained its brightest light for the next 15 years. In 1939 Macon made his motion picture debut in *Grand Ole Opry,* performing alongside his son Dorris. Legends like Uncle Dave Macon are few and far between; the quintessential showman, he was revered by those who knew him and will continue to be by those who've only heard the many stories that are told about him to this day.

what to buy: In spite of the lesser sound quality of some of its tracks, *Country Music Hall of Fame Series* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1992, prod. Country Music Foundation) contains a spectacular selection of Macon's best-loved work. The notes are thorough and entertaining.

what to buy next: *Travelin' down the Road* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1995, prod. Gary B. Reid) duplicates some tracks on the CMF set, but these were all recorded, with fiddler Charlie Arrington, during 1937–38.

the rest:
(With the Fruit Jar Drinkers) *Go Long Mule* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1972/1994)

worth searching for: Several LPs or cassette-only releases of Macon material, most on Old Homestead Records, are still floating around and may be of interest once you get hooked on Uncle Dave's music.

influences:
◀◀ Joel Davidson, Sam & Kirk McGee

▶▶ Stringbean

Stephen L. Betts

Mad Pudding

Formed 1989, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Amy Stephen, vocals, accordion, pennywhistle; Andy Hillhouse, vocals, guitar, mandolin, bouzouki; Cam Wilson, fiddle, vocals; Richard Ernst, fretless bass, vocals; Boris Favre, electric bass, piano, vocals, pieds (feet); John Hildebrand, drums & percussion (1993–present).

Many of the great bands—the Beatles, Silly Wizard, Steeleye Span, Oyster Band, Fairport Convention, Capercaillie–worked because of core members who established a special chemistry. Mad Pudding, formed around Andy Hillhouse, Amy Stephen,

and Cam Wilson who met as college students at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in the late 1980s, may be joining that illustrious company. Hillhouse and Stephen began playing as a duo but expanded to a trio when they met Wilson, who brought with him Ottawa Valley fiddle tunes he'd learned from his father. Original bassist Richard Ernst joined in 1989, but the band decided to "get serious" when drummer Hildebrand completed the quintet in 1993. With Hildebrand, Mad Pudding became a full tilt Anglo-Celtic/Canadian roots folk-rock band whose repertoire included traditional and self-penned material. That line-up completed two albums and toured throughout Canada, also visiting the United States and Great Britain. Emst left the band and was replaced by French-born Boris Favre, whose interest in French-based folk music is reflected in Mad Pudding's third album, *Rattle on the Stovepipe*, which includes his original song "Le Beaujolais Nouveau," a celebration of the arrival of the new Beaujolais wine. It's not essential, but you may enjoy the music more with a glass of same in hand.

what to buy: Mad Pudding's eclectic tastes are well showcased on *Rattle on the Stovepipe* ♪♪♪♪½ (Iona, 1997, prod. Bil VornDick), which includes hot fiddle and accordion led instrumentals, Amy Stephen's "Punjabi Marker"—which sounds like a centuries-old British ballad—and even two catchy pop country numbers: "Rowena" and "Whew Were You." Favre and Hildebrand form a swingin', funky rhythm section, and Stephen's and Hillhouse's vocals are more assured (great harmonies). This album also proves that Mad Pudding is a band whose exuberant live presence can be captured in the studio!

the rest:
Bruce's Vegetable Garden ♪♪♪½ (Fiendish Records, 1994)
Dirt & Stone ♪♪♪½ (Fiendish Records, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Capercaillie, Stan Rogers, Silly Wizard, Spirit of the West, Moving Hearts

▶▶ Seelyhoo, James Keelaghan, Sharon Shannon, Kathryn Tickell

Ken Roseman

Joanie Madden

Born May 26, 1965, in NY.

Best known in her role as leader of the group Cherish the Ladies, Joanie Madden is rapidly developing the reputation as a fine solo artist as well. Her strong and compelling Irish whistle and flute performances have inspired many to take up the instruments. Her outstanding, energetic performances and creative improvisation have earned Madden a reputation for being one of the best Irish flute players of all time. Born to Irish parents in America, Madden has called on her heritage when creating her own sense of musicality. She studied whistle with Jack Coen, and had soon earned the title of World Champion on both whistle and concert flute. In 1984 she won the Senior All-Ireland Championship, the first American ever to do so. Despite her youth, she is already recognized as a prime mover in preserving Irish heritage in America, and has won the Wild Geese award and been inducted into the Irish-American Musicians Hall of Fame. She has appeared as a guest on numerous recordings, including such artists as Sinead O'Connor, Sheila Noonan, Pete Seeger, and Eileen Ivers.

what's available: *Song of the Irish Whistle* ♪♪♪♪ (Hearts of Space, 1996, prod. Brian Keane) is an exciting collection of Irish tunes performed with passion by Madden. Filling the album with a wide variety of textures, Madden is joined by fine musicians Jerry O'Sullivan on uilleann pipes, Carol Thompson on Celtic harp, Brian Keane on guitars and keyboards, and others. From the evocative "Women of Ireland" to the fantastically rhythmic "The Legacy Jig/Tar Road to Sligo," Madden has created a picture of Ireland as varied as the landscape itself. Predominantly a whistle recording, Madden does pick up her flute for a lilting Turlough O'Carolan tune. On her earlier album, *A Whistle on the Wind* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Joanie Madden, Gabriel Donohue), Madden's flute and whistle front a wide array of instruments, including accordion, guitar, cello, and fiddle. The title track, "A Whistle on the Wind/The Jug of Punch/The Dogs among the Bushes," combines three terrific tunes into one exciting medley. Madden's personal version of O'Carolan's "Blind Mary" is quite inspired. She ends the album accompanying a touching story-poem recited by Liam Clancy.

influences:
◀◀ Joe Madden, Jack Coen, Mike Rafferty

▶▶ Emer Mayock

see also: *Cherish the Ladies*

Jo Hughey Morrison

The Maddox Brothers & Rose /Rose Maddox

Formed 1937, in Modesto, CA.

Cliff Maddox, vocals, guitar, mandolin; Cal Maddox, vocals, guitar, harmonica; Fred Maddox, vocals, bass; Don Maddox, vocals, fiddle;

folk rock in the u.s.

Bob Dylan once said folk-rock was an ugly word. It may be ugly, but it's about the only term that fits the hybrid of folk music and rock and roll that made pop stars of the Byrds, Simon & Garfunkel, Sonny & Cher, the Turtles, and Mr. D. himself. A little less danceable than rhythm and blues–derived rock and roll, folk-rock still depended on the drive of the backbeat. Two major strains emerged in the United States in the 1960s. One contingent was singer-songwriters, who came up through Greenwich Village and East Coast coffeehouses and went electric after Dylan turned on his amplifiers at the Newport Folk Festival. The West Coast contingent was more diverse and more likely to be influenced by the Los Angeles pop-music machine. They usually favored vocal harmonies and guitar-group formats—the Byrds and the Beau Brummels were among prime examples. Coming out of the same stew of influences, the Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead can rightly be called folk-rock groups, although they were known as psychedelic or acid-rock bands. There's nothing tidy about these divisions—the Mamas and the Papas and the Lovin' Spoonful had ties to both coasts. Folk-rock was the first of many hyphenated rock hybrids, and the term connotes a '60s relic. The style has never really died, though—it just goes by different names. It would be easy to make a case that Bruce Springsteen, Shawn Colvin, Ani DiFranco, and R.E.M. are folk-rockers.

Salvatore Caputo

Henry Maddox, vocals, mandolin, guitar; Rose Maddox (born August 15, 1925, in Boaz, AL), vocals, bass, snare drum.

Favorites in California from the time they formed until they finally disbanded in 1957, the Maddox Brothers and Rose were a raucous bunch who billed themselves as "the most colorful hillbilly band in America." They played a loud, infectious mix of country boogie, rockabilly, Western swing, honky-tonk, and even gospel, were famous for their outrageous outfits, and recorded for 4 Star Records and Columbia. When the band broke up, Rose, who was a mere 11 years old when the family formed its band as an alternative to the itinerant fruit-tramp life that had been their lot since they had immigrated to California from Alabama, continued to perform as a soloist, a path she continues to this day. She's recorded for Columbia, Capitol (cutting several hit duets with Buck Owens during the 1960s), Portland, Starday, Takoma, Varrick, and, most recently, Arhoolie, which has also released several volumes of Maddox Brothers and Rose reissues over the years. She is popular in the United States at bluegrass festivals and has quite a reputation in rockabilly circles in Europe. Ill health has slowed Rose down, but hasn't kept her from touring and recording extensively.

what to buy: *America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band—Their Original Recordings 1946–1951* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) and *Maddox Brothers & Rose, Volume II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Chris Strachwitz) offer the most comprehensive overview of the band at its peak.

what to buy next: *On the Air: The 1940s* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1996, prod. Chris Strachwitz) presents intriguing live broadcasts from 1940 to 1949, including the band's 1949 appearance on the Grand Ole Opry. *A Collection of Standard Sacred Songs* ♪♪♪ (King, 1960) reissues Starday gospel material.

worth searching for: *Rockin' Rollin' Maddox Brothers & Rose* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1981, prod. Richard Weize) is a German reissue of the band's more rockabillyish material. *Columbia Historic Edition* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985) is an excellent reissue of the band's Columbia material.

solo outings:

Rose Maddox:

Rose Maddox Sings Bluegrass ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1962)
Rose of the West Coast Country ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1990)
The One Rose: The Capitol Years ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1993)
Thirty-Five Dollars and a Dream ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Hoosier Hotshots, Patsy Montana

▶▶ Ranch Romance, BR5-49

Randy Pitts

Alan Mager

Born December 25, 1943, in Leominster, MA.

This Virginia-based autoharp recording artist was the 1993 International Autoharp Champion in the contest at Winfield,

Kansas. Alan Mager has also earned several top honors at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship. He's a precision player who skillfully adds "color chords" to his music in tasteful array. He is generally thought of as a chromatic autoharp player and his use of diminished seventh and suspended fourth chords is unique of his style. Mager performs and teaches at numerous folk festivals each year and regularly contributes articles and musical arrangements to various music publications.

what's available: *Hear the Colors* ♪♪♪♪ (Alan F. Mager, 1996, prod. Alan F. Mager, Russ Birch) is an instrumental recording that will appeal to a broad range of listeners. The variety of material includes "Over the Waterfall," a traditional reel; "The Hundred Pipers," a Scottish jig; "How Great Thou Art," a hymn; "Harvest Home," a hornpipe; "Polka Tsia-Tsia Lya-Lya," a Russian polka; and "Planxty Fanny Power," a Turlough O'Carolan piece. The diversity of the selection of tunes is not at all disconcerting, but is rather an interesting collection of music played expertly on the autoharp. Mager's precise melody leads are nicely supported throughout the recording by Charley Groth (guitar, mandolin, bass), Jan Milner (Appalachian dulcimer, guitar), and Doug Travers (guitar). The "Friendship Waltz" and "March of the 10,000 Autoharpers" are compositions by Groth, a talented songwriter from Florida who was named a Florida Master Artist in 1991 by the Bureau of Florida Folklife. *Hear the Colors* is available from the artist at P.O. Box 1221, Annandale, Virginia 22003.

worth searching for: *The Fairhaired Boy* ♪♪♪ (Sonority Records, 1990, prod. Alan F. Mager) is available on cassette tape and is a solo autoharp recording that includes some nice vocals.

influences:

◀◀ Mike Seeger, Bryan Bowers, Mike Fenton

▶▶ Les Gustafson-Zook, Tina Louise Barr

Heidi Cerrigione

Magical Strings

Formed 1980, in Seattle, WA.

Pam Boulding, hammered dulcimer, Celtic harp, piano, pennywhistle, lyre, harmonium, field organ; Phil Boulding, hammered dulcimer, nylon- and wire-strung harps, lyre, valiha (a bamboo harp from Madagascar), whistles.

Phil Boulding was building harps and dulcimers during the late '70s, when future wife Pam took a dulcimer class from him. Married in 1980, they started recording the same year and eventually built a formidable cottage business focused on teaching, building, and performing. They also had five children, who began performing with them too. In 1988 the Bouldings toured with Dan Fogelberg and subsequently played on his album *River of Souls*. They were the among the first to pioneer the blended "magical" harp and dulcimer string sound. Irish tunes, particularly the harp music of eighteenth-century musician Turlough O'Carolan, were their initial core sound but, like many other artist, they have since gravitated towards primarily original compositions. In 1984 they started using Windham Hill greats Michael Ó Domhnaill and Billy Oskay as producers, effectively raising the technical level of their recordings to match their always impressive musical skills. Over the years, the music of Magical Strings has matured and become much more innovative—most likely a reflection of the Boulding's musically rich and diverse lives. Their life together as a family with five children and their deep attraction to Ireland inspires much of their original material, but they also incorporate elements of harp and harp-like traditions from many cultures, with *Islands Calling* perhaps the best example. The *Washington Post* describes their music as being "warm, graceful and sonically gorgeous."

what to buy: *Crossing to Skellig* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990) opens with the classic Magical Strings sound of a cascade of ringing, rhythmic strings. Irish bodhrán great Tommy Hayes joins them on some jigs. Oskay adds fiddle, and son Brenin adds cello on a Welsh set. There is also a haunting Norwegian air that Philip skillfully plays on the whistle. The title cut, "Crossing to Skellig"—Skellig is a rock pinnacle eight miles off the coast of Ireland that was home to a sixth-century monastery—is a tone poem that begins with spacious whistle and harp tremolo, moves into a tripping jig that marks their journey, and then melts back into the open sounds of peace and wind. You can imagine them standing atop the rocks! *Islands Calling* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Earthbeat! Records, 1996, prod. Cary Black) stretches their musical directions away from Celtic towards other "island-based" musical traditions, including Hawaiian slack-key guitar, Jamaican joviality, Madagascar's harp-like "valiha" music, and Bahaman guitar.

what to buy next: For a more Celtic sound, *Above the Tower* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985) is a good selection. If the newer, world music–inspired sounds appeal to you, then definitely buy *Bell off the Ledge* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993). Also of interest to fans is *Harp* (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Billy Oskay), a Phil Boulding solo that is more of a new-age, gentle, reflective CD. Some

unique techniques he has developed can be heard on "Spiral Suspension." The sitar-like sounds and bends he gets out of the harp are amazing.

the rest:
Springtide ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1982)
On the Burren ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Good People All ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992)

worth searching for: Dan Fogelberg's CD *River of Souls* ♪♪ (Full Moon/Epic, 1993, prod. Dan Fogelberg) features the Bouldings. It is a somewhat unusual collaboration for Magical Strings and may not be of specific interest to their fans unless they also know and like Fogelberg, a singer songwriter in the vein of James Taylor or Scotland's Dougie MacLean.

influences:
◀◀ Chieftains, Jolly Boys, West African kora player Moussa Kanoute, Keola Beamer

▶▶ Ceoltoiri, Sileas, Kim Robertson

Karen Ashbrook

Magnolia Sisters

Formed 1994, in Faiquitaique, LA.

Ann Allen Savoy, fiddle, accordion, guitar, triangle, frattoir, vocals; Jane Vidrine, fiddle, guitar, vocals. Guest "sisters" have included: Tina Pilione, fiddle, guitar; Lisa McCauley, guitar, triangle; Deborah Helen Viator, guitar, vocals; Christine Balfa, guitar.

Years ago, Cajun accordion maker Marc Savoy expounded that there was much more to Cajun cuisine than just spices and that people overlooked that Cajuns consumed more than just hot and spicey foods. The same can be said for Cajun music: people expect the driving accordion or flashy fiddle or pulsing zydeco band, not the complicated old-time music in which the Magnolia Sisters specialize. The Sisters are the continuing work of Ann Allen Savoy and Jane Vidrine. They specialize in something very rare to Cajun music—harmony singing. Both women are excellent musicians, trading between guitar, accordion, and fiddle. Savoy is better known as the singer and guitar player in the Savoy-Doucet Band.

what to buy: *Prends Courage* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Chris Strachwitz) has a great tune section that pulls from all eras of Cajun music and styles and brings the songs into the present without forsaking the past. Savoy's accordion playing reminds one of Joe Falcon, whose simple direct style was extremely popular in the 1920s. Vidrine's fiddling evokes the warmth of Will Balfa, and together Savoy and Vidrine fiddles intertwine in the same manner as their voices. Their voices are front and center on the recordings, whether it's Savoy's solo voice on "Les Fils a Nonc Hilaire" and the title tune, the almost Celtic style of unaccompanied singing on "Sept Ans Sur Mer (Seven Years on the Sea)" and "Derrier chez Nous," or the hot, string-band laughter of "Un' Piastre Ici, Un' Piastre La-Bas." Each song is picked with care and placed in an arrangement that brings it to fruition—like D.L. Menard's "Il savait pas j'etais mariée," which is revealed as a Carter Family song in Cajun French!

what to buy next: *Cajun Music: A Reflection of a People, Volume I* (Bluebird Press, 1984), Ann Savoy's excellent book, brings together transcriptions of hundreds of Cajun songs, with historical photographs, discographies, biographies, and interviews with all the important makers of Cajun and zydeco music.

worth searching for: The documentary *Marc and Ann* (Flower Films, 1991), directed by Les Blank, Maureen Gosling, and Chris Simon, takes an in-depth look at Marc and Ann Savoy and their musical friends.

influences:
◀◀ Cleoma Falcon, Wallace Cheese Read, Dewey Balfa

▶▶ California Cajun Orchestra, Balfa Toujours, Horace Trahan

Jared Snyder

Magpie

Formed 1973, in Kent, OH.

Greg Artzner, guitar and vocals (born July 16, 1952 in Canton, OH); Terry Leonino, dulcimer, harmonica, mandolin, rhythm guitar, vocals (born September 23, 1951 in Akron, OH).

In September of 1973 Terry Leonino and Greg Artzner began to play music together in their home base in industrial Ohio. They chose the name Magpie for their band originally on a whim, but through all the lore they collected, the name grew in personal significance for them as years went by. Leonino was a student in her senior year at Kent State University in the fall of '73, and when she graduated the following spring the couple piled into Artzner's VW bus and moved to the Washington, D.C. area where they've resided ever since. Magpie has traveled and toured extensively, playing at folk clubs and festivals throughout the United States and Canada, touring Mexico twice in a cultural exchange program through the USIA and the Mexican government, and touring throughout England and

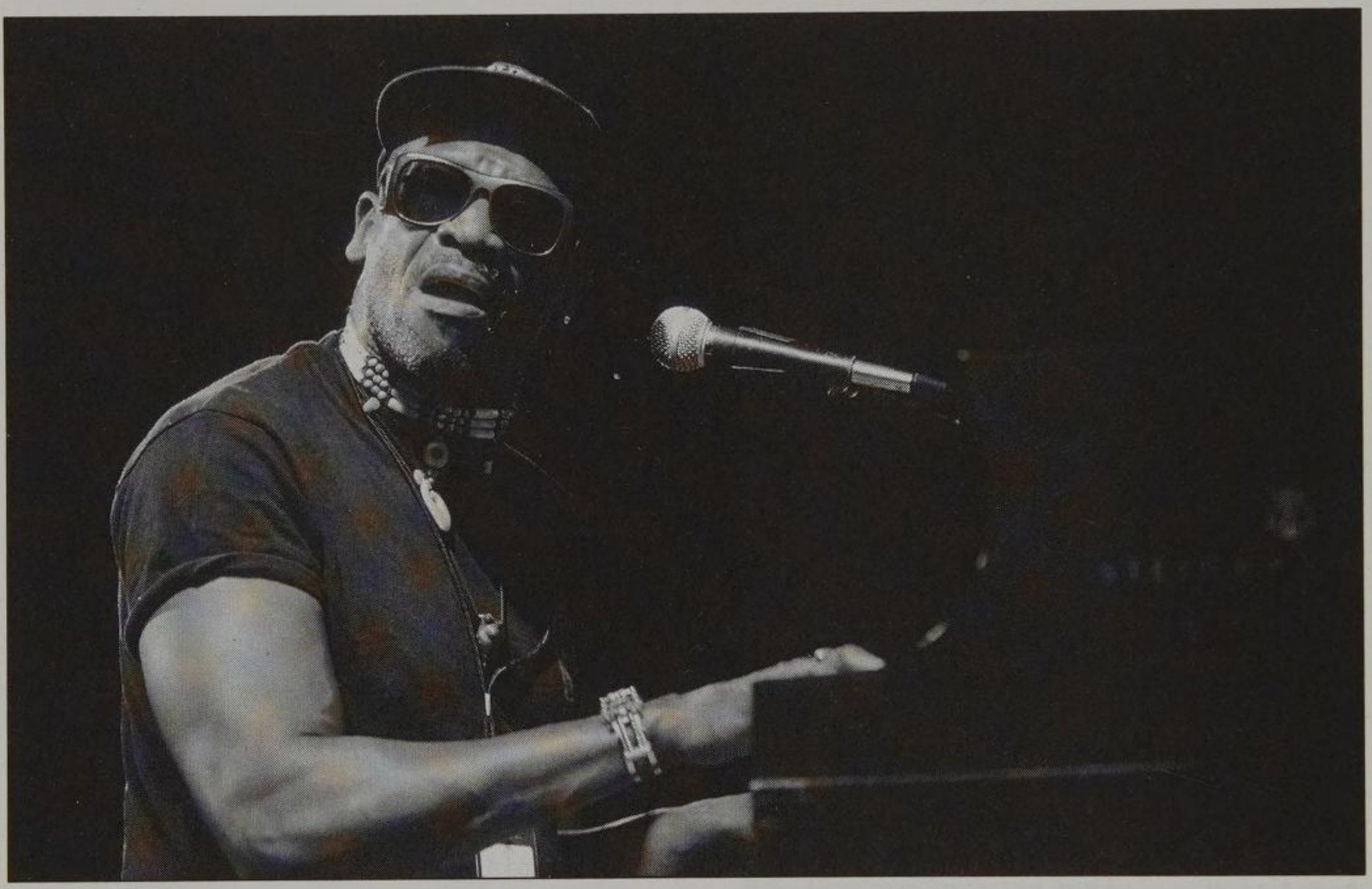
Scotland five times. From the beginning, the duo's interest in various musical styles has led them to be eclectic in their repertoire. Rather than confine themselves to a single style, Magpie has always embraced a musical rainbow, and with impressive proficiency in each different genre. From classic country, swing, and blues of the 1920s and '30s, to contemporary songs written by themselves and others, they cover a lot of musical ground. With the power of their delivery, Magpie is well known for lending their voices to struggles for justice, whether it be for the rights of Native peoples, the quest for peace, on behalf of the homeless, or to help heal our environment. They walk their talk, and their performances of hard-hitting topical songs are second to none. Leonino's voice is a truly impressive instrument, not only because of its natural power, but also because of her versatility. She is a gifted singer of jazz and blues in the tradition of Connie Boswell and Billie Holiday, but is equally comfortable with the subtle beauty of traditional folk and contemporary songs. Add to this her uncanny ability to find the perfect harmony line, and, in a powerful blend of two voices, you have a real treat for the ear. As if this weren't enough, she also plays excellent harmonica, mandolin, fretted dulcimer, and rhythm guitar. Artzner is a truly outstanding guitarist whose fingerstyle approach owes a lot to his heroes, guitar legends such as Reverend Gary Davis, Big Bill Broonzy, Nick Lucas, and Rolly Brown. His playing is the solid foundation of Magpie's sound, providing a hard-driving rhythm or a ringing lyrical beauty as needed. From a slow Scots air or a plaintive ballad to rollicking ragtime blues or infectious swing, he covers it all and his high baritone voice has equal range, giving power and beauty to a growling blues, a Chilean lament, or a sweet croon. Over the years, Magpie has produced thematic programs of music for museums (including many for the Smithsonian Institution), schools, and other special events. They are master artists with the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts, and have many years of experience working in schools, performing for children and families. Magpie has released six recordings. Their first, *Magpie & Friends*, and their third, *If It Ain't Love*, showcase their broad range of styles and themes. Their second album, *Working My Life Away*, is an excellent collection of songs about working people. Their fourth and fifth albums, *Living Planet* and *Circle of Life*, address the subject of the earth and the need for environmental healing. *Circle of Life* is Magpie's first album for children, and has been greeted with great acclaim by children, parents, educators, and such environmental notables as the National Audubon Society. A portion of the proceeds from both these albums is donated to environmental action groups. Magpie's sixth album, *Seed on the Prairie*, is a showcase for their songwriting. CDs and tapes can be ordered direct from Magpie at P.O. Box 5467, Takoma Park, Maryland 20913.

what to buy: *Seed on the Prairie* ♪♪♪♪ (Long Tail Records, 1994, prod. Greg Artzner, Terry Leonino, Ronnie Freeland) is full of songs that tell stories and weave a spell. There are stories of struggle and celebration, songs of the political and the spiritual, of love, loss and rebirth, songs of Mother Earth. It's also the first album on their own label, Long Tail Records, and marks 20 years of joint music-making for the duo. Although each song is contemporary, virtually every one has a somewhat traditional feel and most are oriented to political, humanitarian, or community concerns.

what to buy next: *Circle of Life* ♪♪♪ (Long Tail Records, 1997, prod. Terry Leonino, Greg Artzner, Jim Ebert) is Magpie's children's album originally released in 1992 and re-released on the group's own label. No Magpie album is neutral on subjects such as the environment, and this is no exception. Songs like "Habitat," "It Really Isn't Garbage," and "Song of the Whales," will educate as well as entertain. *Spoken in Love* ♪♪♪ (Long Tail Records, 1995, prod. Reggie Harris, Terry Leonino, Chris Andersen) was recorded in concert with longtime Magpie collaborators Kim and Reggie Harris at the Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse. The "quartet" has been in great demand at festivals and this album will give you a chance to hear why. Pete Seeger describes it as "a wonderful group of new and old songs woven together by four wonderful singers. They'll have you singing along with them."

the rest:
Magpie & Friends ♪♪½ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1978) (cassette only)
Working My Life Away ♪♪♪ (Collector, 1983)
If It Ain't Love ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1986)
Living Planet ♪♪½ (Collector, 1990)

worth searching for: Magpie contributed the original music to *Out of the Egg*, a children's video that follows the adventures of three curious junior rangers who set out, with Ranger Bill, to solve the mystery of what's inside an egg that the children find hidden in the grass. Could it be a box turtle or a barn owl? How about a snake? *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle* ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1994, prod. various) is a compilation of songs of the Mississippi Civil Rights movement with artists such as Eric Andersen, Judy Collins, Richard and Mimi Fariña, Bob Dylan, and Tom Paxton. Magpie has one cut. Similarly, *The Long Walk to Freedom Reunion Concert* ♪♪½ (Revolt in Records, 1996, prod. Susie Erenrich, Cultural Center for Social Change) was recorded live



Taj Mahal **(© Ken Settle)**

at a reunion concert for singer-songwriters from the civil rights movement. Magpie has two cuts on this album. Magpie's first LP *Live at the Dunham Inn* 𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯 (Folkways, 1978, prod. Randy Knapp) is an early example of the Magpie sound. It's probably impossible to find, but completists will want it. Long Tail Records' CDs and tapes can be ordered direct from Magpie at P.O. Box 5467, Takoma Park, Maryland 20913.

influences:

⏪ Phil Ochs, Boswell Sisters, Billie Holiday, Victor Jara

⏩ Kim & Reggie Harris, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer

Neal Walters

Taj Mahal

Born Henry St. Claire Fredericks, May 17, 1942, in New York, NY.

Although he grew up in Brooklyn and went to college in Massachusetts, Taj Mahal extends his hands to other musical cultures and soaks them up like a sponge. His father was a jazz musician, his mother a gospel singer, and his 30-plus years of exploring the blues, ragtime, and Caribbean rhythms show those and many other influences. If his music seems like a history lesson at times, those didactic leanings are matched by his boundless enthusiasm and a formidable instrumental versatility. Mahal's journey began during the mid-1960s with the equally eclectic Ry Cooder in a short-lived assemblage called the Rising Sons. Mahal's first albums dug into standard blues in a manner that presented him as a guardian of tradition, then abruptly veered toward African rhythms, Caribbean reggae, and even children's music before venturing into the then-untested waters of world music. Uncharacteristically quiet during the 1980s, Taj returned to a blues approach in the '90s. Whether he's with a full band playing pop arrangements or stripped-down roots, Mahal has asserted himself yet again as a keeper of the faith and a still vital force that continues to roam past musical boundaries.

what to buy: Two albums on one disc, *Giant Step/De Old Folks at Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969, prod. David Rubinson) tosses up distinctively different sides of the blues coin, the former lightly rocking with a down-home band while the rural solo blues of the latter reveal a surprisingly adept multi-instrumentalist and vocalist. For a harder-edged entry into his early work, *Taj's Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1992, prod. David Rubinson, Taj Mahal) is a handy sampler of some of his more celebrated moments, such as the classic stomper "Statesboro Blues" and "Dust My Broom."

what to buy next: The ease with which Mahal slips into third-world rhythms is disarming, as the easy-fitting reggae beats of *World Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1993, prod. Lawrence Cohn) demonstrate. Since it contains nearly all of *Mo' Roots* plus other tracks in re-mastered form, it gets the slight edge over *Mo' Roots* itself. In a welcome paradoxical twist, the Grammy-winning *Phantom Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1996, prod. John Porter) deserves the attention it received. Save for the rolling, country soul of the opening cut, he didn't pen a single tune, instead paying a charging homage to mentors like Fats Domino and Ray Charles, his vocals as muscular as ever. His clear love for the material provides an extra shot of energy.

what to avoid: If you have kids, by all means go for *Shake Sugaree—Taj Mahal Sings and Plays for Children* ♪♪½ (Music for Little People, 1988, prod. Taj Mahal). If your largest responsibility is a goldfish, there are plenty of others to get first.

the rest:
Mo' Roots ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1974)
Best of Taj Mahal, Volume I ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1981)
The Natch'l Blues ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987) (cassette only)
Like Never Before ♪♪♪½ (Private Music, 1991)
Live & Direct ♪♪½ (Thunderbolt, 1991)
Mule Bone ♪♪½ (Gramavision, 1991)
Dancing the Blues ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1993)
The Rising Sun Collection ♪♪½ (Just a Memory, 1994)
Taj ♪♪♪ (Gramavision, 1994)
An Evening of Acoustic Music ♪♪♪ (Ruf, 1996)
Live at Ronnie Scott's, London ♪♪½ (DRG, 1996)
Señor Blues ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1997)

worth searching for: The divergence that led to the band's split is spelled out on *Rising Sons Featuring Taj Mahal and Ry Cooder* ♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1992, prod. Amy Herot, Bob Irwin), a collection of the fledgling group's only recordings. Half the time is devoted to Mahal and Cooder's raw-boned blues temperament, while a good portion contains pop and folk sunshine brought by the group's other half. And *Mumtaz Mahal* ♪♪♪♪ (Water Lilly Acoustics, 1995, prod. Kavichandran Alexander), a jam session with master Indian string musicians V.M. Bhatt and Narasimhan Ravikiran, offers strong evidence that all blues didn't come from the Delta.

influences:
◀◀ Robert Johnson, Fats Domino, Howlin' Wolf, Ray Charles
▶▶ Robert Cray, Eric Clapton, Ry Cooder

Allan Orski

Tommy Makem

Born 1932, in Keady, Country Armagh, Ireland.

In the annals of folk, Tommy Makem is generally associated with the Clancy Brothers, the group that gave Irish and Celtic music a face on U.S. soil. But Makem is an accomplished performer in his own right, a singer and multi-instrumentalist who plays banjo, pennywhistle, piccolo, and guitar. Makem has also embraced several areas of the entertainment world, starring in theatrical productions in New York and even dabbling in management for a time. By the time he was 15, he had already formed his own Irish county dance band. Around the time of the early 1950s, Pat Clancy had asked his brother Liam to collect material for Tradition Records, a label he was starting. That led Liam to Makem, and, in 1953, the two new-found friends came to the United States. Makem began as a solo act, securing an early break by playing at Greenwich Village's famed Circle in the Square. He also supported himself with theatrical roles on Broadway, *A Hatful of Rain* and a revival of the musical *Finian's Rainbow* among them. In 1961, with brothers Liam, Pat, and Tom Clancy all living in New York, Makem was asked to join the Clancy Brothers act. That same year, he performed on two albums, the first a solo effort on the Tradition label titled *Songs by Tommy Makem*. The second, *The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem*, was produced on a much more prestigious label, Columbia, which had signed the Irish boys to a contract. Makem appeared with the Clancy Brothers on several more Columbia albums, including *Hearty & Hellish* (1962), *In Person* (1963), *First Hurrah* (1964), and *The Irish Uprising* (1966). The act forged its success through performances on American television, mainly the weekly folk series *Hootenanny* and the *Ed Sullivan Show*. They were also featured in concerts all over the world. From the late 1960s to the early 1970s, Makem returned to solo performing and released one album, *Tommy Makem, Love Is Lord of All*, on GWP Records. For a brief period during the late 1970s, Makem and Liam Clancy formed a duo, which was short lived until they reunited for a pair of albums during

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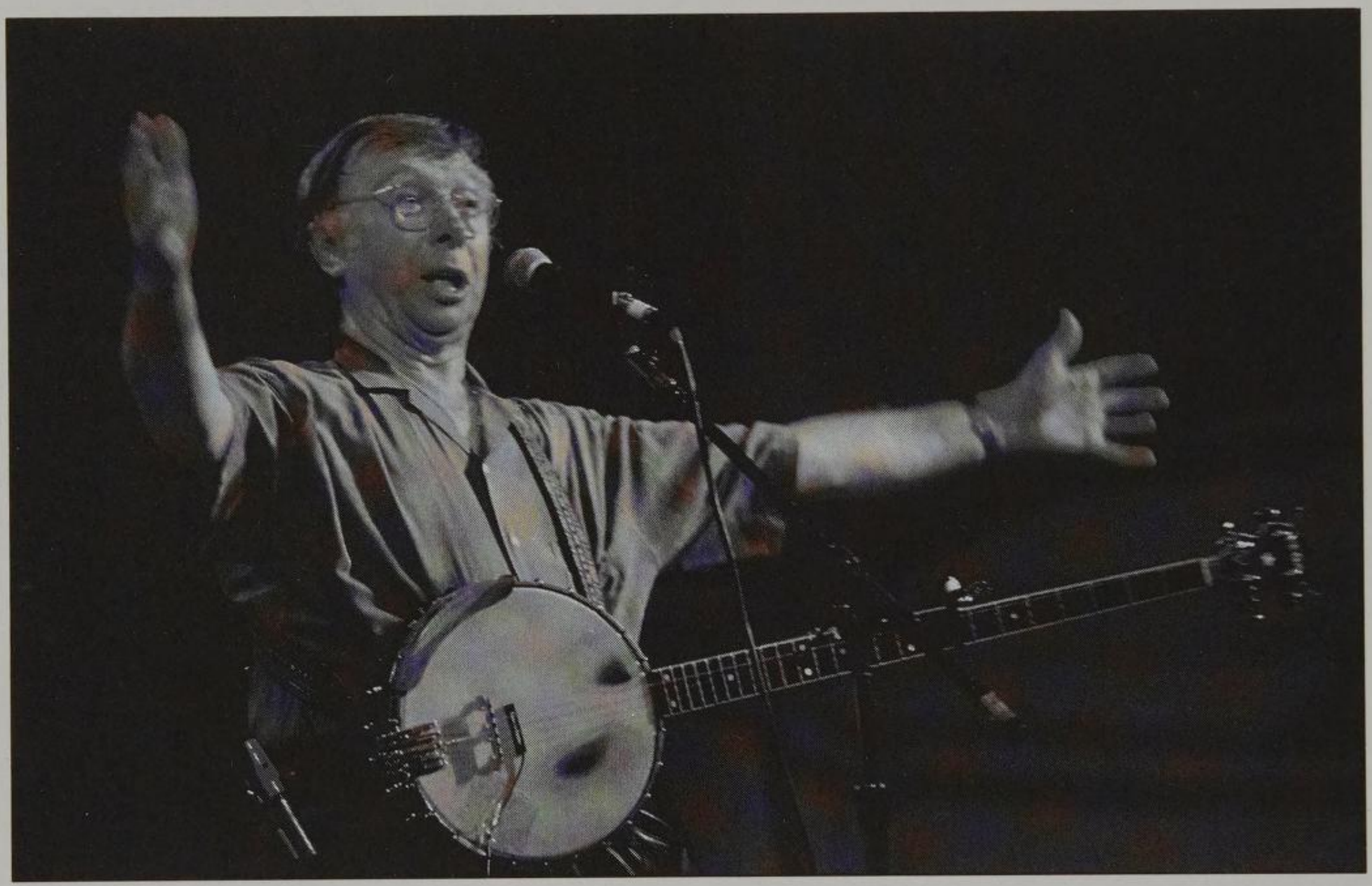
2 *david mallett*



Tommy Makem **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

the mid-1980s. Makem's more recent recordings have been with the Shanachie label. Both as single performer and member of the Clancy Brothers, Makem has been a welcome, unique addition to the American folk scene; he is certainly among the best-known purveyors of traditional Irish and Celtic music. By helping introduce audiences to the Celtic legacy, Makem forged a strong contribution.

what to buy: *Songs of Tommy Makem* ♪♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1997) is the obvious starting point. It's particularly known for the depth and quality of recording, considering that Makem was playing most of the instruments in a small studio.

what to buy next: *Evening with ...* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)

the rest:
(With Liam Clancy) *Tommy Makem & Liam Clancy* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1987)
(With Liam Clancy) *Two for the Early Dew* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1987)
Rolling Home ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1990)
Songbag ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1991)
Live at the Irish Pavilion ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)
Lonesome Waters ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1993)
From the Archives ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995)
Tommy Makem's Christmas ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Clancy Brothers
▶▶ Irish Rovers, Chieftains

see also: *The Clancy Brothers*

Bob Paxman

David Mallett

Born 1951, in Sebac, ME.

The cool winds of northern Maine are reflected in the Gordon Lightfoot–like vocals and well-crafted songs of David Mallett. His best known tune, "The Garden Song," has become a mod-

ern folk classic with more than 100 cover versions, including recordings by Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Liam Clancy and Tommy Makem, John Denver, Dolores Keane, and the Muppets, and even inspired a children's book, *Inch by Inch*, that was published by HarperCollins. Mallett's songs have also been covered by Emmylou Harris, who recorded his romantic ballad, "Red Red Rose," and Kathy Mattea, who interpreted his plaintive tune, "Summer of My Dreams." Mallett began his musical career at an early age. By the time he was 11, he was already attracting attention with the songs he sang in a sibling country band, the Mallett Brothers. As a student at the University of Maine, he became enchanted by singer-songwriters and began to perform as a soloist. He was encouraged by Noel Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul & Mary, who produced his first three albums. During the early 1990s, Mallett sought success as a songwriter in Nashville. Although he co-wrote songs with such Nashville songwriters as Hal Ketchum and recorded several memorable albums including the Jim Rooney–produced *This Town*, he returned to his childhood home in Sebac, Maine, in 1993.

what to buy: Mallett's first live album, *Parallel Lives* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1997, prod. David Mallett, Rich Adler), surveys his recording career. In addition to new interpretations of "The Garden Song," "My Old Man," "Daddy's Oldsmobile," "Summer of My Dreams," and "When the Battle's Over," the album introduces new six songs.

what to buy next: *Inches & Miles 1977–1980* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Noel Paul Stookey) reprises songs from Mallett's first three albums, including the original recordings of "The Garden Song" and "The Last Time I Saw Annie."

the rest:
Dave Mallett ♪♪½ (Neworld, 1978)
Pennsylvania Sunrise ♪♪½ (Neworld, 1979)
Hard Light ♪♪½ (Neworld, 1981)
Open Doors and Windows ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1983)
Vital Signs ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1986)
For a Lifetime ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)
This Town ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1993)
In the Falling Dark ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Peter, Paul & Mary, Gordon Lightfoot, Leonard Cohen, John Denver, Pete Seeger

▶▶ David Massengill, Kathy Mattea, Tim O'Brien

Craig Harris

The Mamas & the Papas

Formed 1965, in New York, NY. Disbanded 1968. Reunited 1971, 1981.

John Phillips, vocals, guitar; Dennis Doherty, vocals; Michelle Phillips (born Holly Michelle Gilliam), vocals; Cass Elliot, vocals (died July 29, 1974); Mackenzie Phillips, vocals (1981–present); Elaine "Spanky" McFarlane, vocals (1981–present).

It's ironic that the original vision for what was to become the Mamas and Papas was a New York folk act named the Journeymen, since the Mamas and the Papas were second only to the Beach Boys in their celebration, with glorious harmonies, of the freewheeling fun and romance of the California lifestyle. Beginning in 1966 the hits rolled in like a Pacific coast surf: "California Dreamin'," "Monday, Monday," "I Saw Her Again," "Look through My Window," "Dedicated to the One I Love," and "Creeque Alley." Just as quickly, the sun set on the group's career. Most recently John and Michelle Phillips published their confessional memoirs, while John Phillips and Dennis Doherty stage occasional tours with a new version of the Mamas and the Papas featuring Phillips's daughter Mackenzie and Elaine McFarlane, formerly of Spanky and Our Gang. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998.

what to buy: *Creeque Alley: The History of the Mamas and the Papas* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1991) is a comprehensive two-disc set that includes all the hits and good selections from their albums, plus earlier work from the Mugwumps and Elliot's group Cass and the Big Three.

what to buy next: *If You Can Believe Your Eyes and Ears* ♪♪♪♪ (Dunhill/MCA, 1966) and *Deliver* ♪♪♪♪ (Dunhill/MCA, 1967) contain sparkling harmonies, superb arrangements, and terrific songs.

what to avoid: *People like Us* ♪ (Dunhill/MCA, 1971) is devoid of any redeeming value. *Sixteen of Their Greatest Hits* ♪½ (Dunhill/MCA, 1969) is plagued by terrible digital transfers. For a few bucks more, buy the definitive *Creeque Alley*.

the rest:
Monterey International Pop Festival ♪♪ (One Way, 1969)
Best of the Mamas & the Papas ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1987)
The Papas & the Mamas ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989)
California Dreamin' ♪♪½ (MCA Special Products, 1994)
EP Collection (See for Miles, 1994)

worth searching for: John Phillips's *John the Wolfking of L.A.* ♪♪ (Dunhill, 1969), an eclectic solo debut, provides some inspiring moments, uneven songwriting, and quirky indulgences. Given his past writing style, it's a true oddity.

5/4 *mamou playboys*

influences:

Rick Nelson, Weavers, Everly Brothers, Beatles

Manhattan Transfer, Wilson Phillips

Patrick McCarty

Mamou Playboys

See: Steve Riley

Mando Mafia

Formed May 1989, in Charlottesville, VA.

Kelly Perdue, mandolin, fiddle, mando-cello, mandola, vocals; Lewis Prichard, mandolin, octave mandolin; Bill Giltinan, mandolin, guitar, mandola; Pete Marshall, octave mandolin, mandolin; Rick Friend, guitar, fiddle, banjo-mandolin, vocals; Vaughan Mairs, bass, vocals.

The Mando Mafia is a group of musicians that takes traditional string-band music from North America, Ireland, Europe, and elsewhere and adapts the arrangements to fit into their band of mandolins, mandola, octave mandolin, bass, and guitar (with an occasional mando-banjo and fiddle thrown in for good measure). The ensemble sound of this group is quite exhilarating. The two lead mandolins bob and weave around each other like prize fighters, sometimes taking the lead and other times dropping in some beautiful harmonies.

what to buy: *Mando Liniment* ♪♪♪♪ (Black Rose, 1997, prod. Mando Mafia), their first recording to be put on CD, catches the band at their best. With all the energy of one of their powerful live performances the band tackles some traditional tunes such as "Lost Indian," "Booth Shot Lincoln," "Glory in the Meeting House," and "Rye Straw" and adds in some of their own compositions such as the fabulous "Split the Ticket/Dark Clouds." One of the band's trademarks is taking an old fiddle tune and transforming it into an ensemble situation with mandolins taking the lead, instead of a fiddle, and never letting the audience think for a second that it should be done any other way.

what to buy next: *Take Two* ♪♪♪♪ (Black Rose, 1993, prod. Mando Mafia) (cassette only)

worth searching for: Worth a hunt for Mando fans is *Mando Mafia*, a cassette of out-of-print live recording.

influences:

David Grisman, Clark Kessinger, Bothy Band

Steve Gardner

Cindy Mangsen

See: Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

Bob Margolin

Born May 9, 1949, in Boston, MA.

Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin very self-consciously bears the stamp of Muddy Waters—that nickname, for example—but Margolin has a better claim to the legacy than most. He spent seven years as a sideman in Waters's band, appearing on nine of his albums as well as alongside him in the Band's 1978 concert movie *The Last Waltz*. He has since parlayed that into a decent journeyman's career, seemingly content to keep Muddy's memory alive.

what to buy: While Margolin has always been a fine guitarist, his first two albums suffer from vocals too similar to old mentor Muddy—and they can't help but suffer by comparison. His more recent work is vastly better, especially *My Blues & My Guitar* ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1995, prod. Bob Margolin, Mark "Kaz" Kazanoff). He's not much of a roarer, but he can croon just fine. On the instrumental side, *My Blues & My Guitar* shows some unexpected range with the jazzy overtones of the amusing original "Maybe the Hippies Were Right."

what to buy next: *Down in the Alley* ♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1993, prod. Bob Margolin, Mark "Kaz" Kazanoff) isn't far behind *My Blues & My Guitar*, a solid meat-and-potatoes effort and also Margolin's first real attempt to get beyond Waters's daunting shadow, with seven originals among its 15 songs.

the rest:

The Old School ♪♪½ (Powerhouse, 1989)
Chicago Blues ♪♪♪ (Powerhouse, 1991)
Up & In ♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1997)

influences:

Muddy Waters, Eric Clapton, Freddie King

Carl Weathersby

David Menconi

Marley's Ghost

Formed 1986, in Santa Barbara, CA.

Ed Littlefield Jr., steel and six-string guitars, Highland pipes, keyboards, vocals; Mike Phelan, fiddle, guitar, vocals; Dan Wheetman, fiddle, banjo, guitar, harmonica, bass, vocals; Jon Wilcox, mandolin, guitar, vocals.

The eclectic folk quartet Marley's Ghost cuts a wide musical swath. Trying to define this baby-boomer folk-rock party band's style is impossible; suffice to say that Marley's Ghost specializes in well-crafted, soulful arrangements of rock, reggae,

Celtic, folk, country, and bluegrass songs and tunes, infusing each with a wry combination of sincerity and lightheartedness. In addition, three of the four (Dan Wheetman, Jon Wilcox, and Mike Phelan) are excellent songwriters who draw freely from all of these influences. Marley's Ghost took its present form when Wheetman, recording at Ed Littlefield's Washington studio, brought in two friends from Santa Barbara, California—Wilcox and Phelan—to play and sing on his solo album. The foursome hit it off so well that Wheetman's album ended up getting put on hold while the four men instead recorded the first Marley's Ghost album, *Haunting Melodies*. Prior to this, Wheetman had played with the Colorado-based folk group, Liberty, and was a mainstay of John Denver's band from the late '70s until the mid-'80s. Wilcox had graduated from Stanford Law School, but left his work as an attorney for VISTA to become a traveling folksinger. During the early 1970s, he made a critically acclaimed album for the tiny Connecticut label Folk-Legacy. Littlefield spent five years on the cowpoke circuit with the western swing outfit Lance Romance, while Phelan was a veteran of countless gigs with various bluegrass, country, and rock bands in the San Francisco Bay area.

what to buy: *Four Spacious Guys* ♪♪♪♪ (Sage Arts, 1996, prod. Nick Forster) taps old-time country, Celtic, reggae, and folk sources and includes some terrific originals, the most compelling of which is Wheetman's "Sugar Trade," a chilling song that subtly links together the businesses of dealing in sugar, drugs, and sex. Richard Thompson's "How Will I Ever Be Simple Again" (which has been subjected to some awful scenery-chewing covers by other artists) is sung unpretentiously by Wilcox, perfectly backed by Celtic superstars the Boys of the Lough. The a cappella rendition of Mark Graham's "I Can See Your Aura" showcases the quartet's vocal strength (and also their fun-loving spirit).

what to buy next: *Haunting Melodies* ♪♪♪ (Sage Arts, 1989, prod. Marley's Ghost, Ed Brooks) is the group's debut album, and reflects the newfound joyful friendship of the four musicians. Highlights include a powerful unaccompanied vocal quartet on Dylan's "Lay Down Your Weary Tune," toe-tapping folk-reggae covers of Jimmy Cliff's "Sitting in Limbo" and Bob Marley's "One Love," and an extremely affecting rendition of "Bob Dylan's Dream" sung by Wheetman. There's some lighthearted material as well, including an over-the-top version of the old Delta blues standard, "I'm a King Bee," complete with screaming slide guitar. *Let de Groove Rise Up* ♪♪♪½ (Sage Arts, 1989, prod. Marley's Ghost, Ed Brooks) focuses on a Caribbean theme, with reggae-inflected songs like Wheetman's "Streets of Babylon" (which could have come straight from a Jimmy Cliff record), the New Orleans standard "Meet Me Boys on the Battlefront," and Sarah Elizabeth Campbell's evocatively wistful "Mexico." *How Can I Keep from Singing* ♪♪♪ (Sage Arts, 1992, prod. Marley's Ghost, Daniel Protheroe) won Honorable Mention for Best Gospel Album of 1992 from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors' Indie awards. Marley's Ghost gives a wide interpretation to the spiritual theme, with far-flung sources ranging from the Soulstirrers to Ralph Stanley to the Golden Gate Quartet to the Carter Family. Also included are sacred songs unattached to any particular religious tradition, such as the anthemic "How Can I Keep from Singing," a staple of '60s folk revivalists, and "Amazing Grace," featuring Ed Littlefield Jr.'s droning Highland pipes.

worth searching for: Wheetman's solo album, *Honey Be There* ♪♪♪♪ (Sage Arts, 1992, prod. Dan Wheetman), which was put on the shelf for years when Marley's Ghost began recording, is a great showcase for his skills as a multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, and mellow-voiced singer. It includes many excellent original songs, with stellar backup by many of the industry's finest studio musicians, including James Burton, Pat Flynn, and Glen D. Hardin.

influences:

- Ralph Stanley, Jesse Winchester, Van Morrison, Bob Marley, Boys of the Lough, Bob Dylan, Hank Williams, John Landry, Golden Gate Quartet, Grateful Dead, Toots & the Maytals, John Starling, Bob Wills
- Tim O'Brien, Nashville Bluegrass Band, Blue Flame String Band, Rincon Valley Ramblers

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Evan Marshall

Born in Los Angeles, CA.

California-based Evan Marshall is a mandolin player with astonishing technique. A performer who moves easily between orchestral concerts and folk festivals, Marshall started studying classical violin as a child. He changed instruments at 14 when he heard his first mandolin. He's been a frequent guest on *A Prairie Home Companion*, and guitarist Chet Atkins calls him "one of the few great musicians of our time."

what's available: Both of Marshall's albums available on CD contain solo performances of mostly familiar tunes ranging from the Beatles to Brahms. For *Mandolin Magic* ♪♪♪½

(Rounder, 1990, prod. David Grisman) that's "Do You Want to Know a Secret?," "Mother Nature's Son," "Michelle," "You Won't See Me," and "Hungarian Dances" #5 and #6. On *Evan Marshall Is the Lone Arranger* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Evan Marshall) it's "P.S. I Love You," "Here, There, and Everywhere," and "Hungarian Dance #7." Additionally, each album contains standards, movie themes, and assorted transcriptions of a European nature—all well-suited to Marshall's instrument. *Mandolin Unlimited* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Mark O'Connor), now available only on cassette, is a more ambitious project with an *extremely* live sound, as Marshall plays both solo and multitracked. Sam Bush and Mark O'Connor play mandolins on one track; John Knowles plays guitar on two others.

worth searching for: Marshall appears along with fellow mandolinists David Grisman, Radim Zenkl, and others on *Rudy Cipolla: Portrait of an American Original* (Acoustic Disc, 1997).

influences:

◀◀ David Grisman, Dave Apollon, Jascha Heifetz, Chet Atkins

▶▶ Chris Thile, Peter Mix

Brian Mansfield

Mike Marshall

In 1979, as a teenager, Mike Marshall moved from Florida to California to take the second mandolin/guitar slot in the David Grisman Quintet. During his four years with Grisman, he established a partnership with violinist Darol Anger that has continued through groups like Montreux and Psychograss. In 1987 he founded the Modern Mandolin Quartet. His most recent aggregations are Choro Famoso, a sextet specializing in Brazilian music, and a trio also featuring Edgar Meyer and Béla Fleck. Marshall has also produced albums by the likes of Tony Furtado, Tony Elman, and Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum.

what to buy: *Brasil (Duets)* (Earthbeat! Traveler, 1996, prod. Mike Marshall) emphasizes Marshall's current passion, Choro, the dynamic and emotional instrumental music of Brazil. As the title suggests, it consists of a series of duets with long-time collaborators including Fleck, Andy Narell, Edgar Meyer, and Kaila Flexer. The program consists mostly of Choro classics that Marshall and company attack with verve.

what to buy next: Recorded with his Modern Mandolin Quartet, *Pan American Journeys* also reveals Marshall's infatuation with Latin American music, both through covers of pieces by Gershwin ("Piano Preludes 1–3"), Piazzola, and Jacob de Bandolim, as well as guest percussionist Tom Miller's breezy "Redonda."

the rest:

(With Darol Anger) *The Duo* (Rounder, 1983)
Gator Strut ♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
(With Montreux) *Live at Montreux* (Windham Hill, 1984)
(With Darol Anger) *Chiaroscuro* (Windham Hill, 1985)
(With Montreux) *Sign Language* (Windham Hill, 1986)
Modern Mandolin Quartet (Windham Hill, 1987)
(With Montreux) *Let Them Say* (Windham Hill, 1988)
(With Modern Mandolin Quartet) *Intermezzo* (Windham Hill, 1989)
(With Modern Mandolin Quartet) *Nutcracker Suite* (Windham Hill, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ David Grisman, Bill Monroe, Tony Rice

▶▶ Matt Flinner, Chris Thile

see also: *David Grisman, Psychograss*

Michael Parrish

Jimmy Martin

Born August 10, 1927, in Sneedville, TN.

Despite the fact that his impetuous stage behavior often overshadows his considerable musical skills, guitarist Jimmy Martin is almost universally recognized as among the finest lead singers and most influential bandleaders in bluegrass music. His unabashedly brash "good 'n' country" approach to his material and penchant for corny novelty fare can sometimes obscure the fact that he has contributed to many classic bluegrass records over the years, first as lead singer with Bill Monroe, later with the Osborne Brothers, and, since 1955, with his own Sunny Mountain Boys, a band that has employed such up and coming talents as J.D. Crowe, Bill Emerson, Alan Munde, Doyle Lawson, and Paul Williams. From 1956 to 1974 Martin recorded many classic tracks for Decca; since then he has recorded for Starday/Gusto, mostly revisiting old hits.

what to buy: *You Don't Know My Mind* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Ken Irwin, Hazel Dickens), a collection of material licensed from MCA, is the best one-disc overview of Martin's genius, featuring the original versions of 14 of his classic hits and bands that include a young J.D. Crowe on banjo and Paul Williams on mandolin.

what to buy next: The handsomely boxed, 146-song, five-CD set *Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994, prod. Paul Cohen, Owen Bradley, Harry Silverstein, Steve Sholes) is the fanatical Jimmy Martin fan's dream,

containing all the material he cut with the Osborne Brothers for RCA and everything he cut for Decca between 1956 and 1974. The box also contains a lavishly produced, comprehensively annotated, 42-page book with a complete discography of the years covered.

the rest:

Me 'n' Ole Pete ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1978)
Greatest Bluegrass Hits ♪♪ (Hollywood, 1978)
One-Woman Man ♪♪ (Hollywood, 1995)
Will the Circle Be Unbroken ♪♪♪½ (Hollywood, 1995)
Jimmy Martin & Ralph Stanley—First Time Together ♪♪♪♪½ (Hollywood, 1995)

influences:

Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe

John Duffey, Little Roy Lewis

Randy Pitts

Dave Mason

Born May 10, 1946, in Worchester, England.

An excellent guitarist with a smoothly distinctive voice that has just enough strain to suggest emotional intensity, Dave Mason quit Traffic in 1968 (returning briefly in 1971) and eventually moved to California. After hooking up with Delaney and Bonnie for their 1969 tour, he went into the studio the next year with them, fellow tour member Leon Russell, Traffic drummer Jim Capaldi, and others and made by far his best album, *Alone Together*. The same year he made a forgettable duet album with Cass Elliot of the Mamas and the Papas; in 1971 he appeared in George Harrison's benefit Concert for Bangladesh. But he did little to build on the success of *Alone Together* aside from touring with his crack quartet. Switching to Columbia, Mason's albums appeared more regularly, but the music was so mellow that it left little impression even when it was well done. Despite several catchy tunes on *Let It Flow*, his style had come to seem irrelevant, and during the '80s he could be heard singing in Miller beer commercials. Mason continued touring but has released just one album of new material since 1980. In 1994 he joined the revolving cast of the post-Buckingham/Nicks Fleetwood Mac, joining Delaney and Bonnie's daughter Bekka and performing on the 1995 album *Time*, which includes two songs he co-wrote.

what to buy: *Alone Together* ♪♪♪♪½ (Blue Thumb, 1970, prod. Tommy Li Puma, Dave Mason) is a bit deficient in the lyric department (always a Mason problem) but offers music so perfect that here, for once, that shortcoming can be overlooked.

editor's choice
20 bluegrass albums

Stanley Bros. & the Clinch Mountain Boys, *1953–1958 & '59* (Bear Family)

Bill Monroe & the Bluegrass Boys, *The Music of Bill Monroe 1936–1994* (MCA)

Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs & the Foggy Mountain Boys, *Complete Mercury Sessions* (Mercury)

Joe Val, *Diamond Joe* (Rounder)

Peter Rowan & Jerry Douglas, *Yonder* (Sugar Hill)

Gibson Brothers, *Spread Your Wings* (Hay Holler)

Front Range, *Ramblin' on My Mind* (Sugar Hill)

Longview, *Longview* (Rounder)

Kate MacKenzie, *Age of Innocence* (Red House)

Rickie Simpkins, *Dancing on the Fingerboard* (Pinecastle)

Johnson Mountain Boys, *Let the Whole World Talk* (Rounder)

Country Gentlemen, *Joe's Last Train* (Rebel)

Hot Rize, *Take It Home* (Sugar Hill)

Alison Krauss & Union Station, *Two Highways* (Rounder)

Seldom Scene, *Old Train* (Rebel)

Lynn Morris, *The Lynn Morris Band* (Rounder)

Nashville Bluegrass Band, *Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go* (Sugar Hill)

Del McCoury, *A Deeper Shade of Blue* (Rounder)

Tony Rice, *Tony Rice Plays and Sings Bluegrass* (Rounder)

Traditional Grass, *Songs of Love and Life* (Rebel)

There's more forward momentum here than on all his Columbia work combined.

what to buy next: Some of Mason's Columbia albums are decent, but *Long Lost Friend: The Best of Dave Mason* ♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1995, prod. various) contains all the high points you'll need.

what to avoid: *The Best of Dave Mason* ♪ (Blue Thumb, 1973, prod. Tommy LiPuma, Dave Mason) is a shameless rehash of far too much of *Alone Together* when what's really needed is *Headkeeper* ♪♪♪½ (Blue Thumb, 1972, prod. Tommy Li Puma, Dave Mason) and *Dave Mason Is Alive* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1972, prod. Tommy LiPuma, Dave Mason) combined on one CD (they'd fit easily).

the rest:
Dave Mason & Cass Elliot ♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1971)
It's Like You Never Left ♪♪ (Columbia, 1973)
Dave Mason ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1974)
Split Coconut ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975)
Certified Live ♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
Let It Flow ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Mariposa de Oro ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1978)
Old Crest on a New Wave ♪♪ (Columbia, 1980)
Very Best of Dave Mason ♪½ (MCA, 1987)
Two Hearts ♪♪ (MCA/Voyager, 1988)

worth searching for: The half-studio, half-live *Headkeeper* and *Dave Mason Is Alive* may be a bit redundant, but Mark Jordan's electric piano work and Mason's electric guitar solos are very sharp, and both versions of Mason's Traffic classic "Feelin' Alright" cook.

influences:
◀◀ Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Stephen Stills, Eric Clapton
▶▶ Joe Cocker, Delaney & Bonnie

Steve Holtje

David Massengill

Born 1951, in Bristol, TN

Singer, guitarist, and dulcimer player David Massengill has played an important role in the growth of folk music in New York's Greenwich Village since the mid-1970s, and can be heard on many albums produced by the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. On his own, however, Massengill has been far from prolific. Although he recorded two self-produced cassettes—*The Great American Bootleg Tape* in 1987 and *Kitchen Tape* in 1987, he didn't release his first commercially available album, *Coming up for Air*, until 1992. Born in the border town that separated Bristol, Tennessee, and Bristol, Virginia, Massengill was raised on the Tennessee side. Although he studied piano and French horn, he was drawn more to sports as a youngster. It wasn't until he began attending the University of North Carolina that he learned to play the dulcimer. He subsequently added acoustic guitar. After honing his skills during college jam sessions, Massengill moved to New York with hopes of becoming a musician. Arriving in Greenwich Village, he found a thriving acoustic music scene. Becoming a regular performer at open mics, he began to attract attention with his southern-tinged balladry. When the Songwriter's Co-Op evolved into the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, Massengill became one of its most frequent contributors.

what to buy: Massengill spent more than a decade hoping for a major-record label contract. After finally agreeing to sign with indie label Flying Fish, he threw everything that he had held back into a memorable, award-winning debut, *Coming up for Air* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992, prod. Steve Addabbo). Produced by Suzanne Vega's producer Steve Addabbo, Massengill sparkled in the studio with long-awaited treatments of such songs as "On the Road to Fairfax County," which had previously been covered by the Roches and Joan Baez, and "My Name Joe," a modern ballad of worker solidarity.

what to buy next: Massengill's second nationally released album, *The Return* ♪♪♪♪ (Plump, c. 1995), is less produced than *Coming up for Air*. But Massengill's melodic dulcimer and acoustic guitar playing prove a fitting instrumental setting for his songs, while his Southern-tinged vocals are enhanced by harmonies sung by the Roches and Jane Siberry. The high point of the album is a solo rendition of one of Massengill's most popular tunes, "The Great American Dream."

the rest:
The Great American Bootleg Tape ♪♪♪½ (Bowser Wowser, 1986)
The Kitchen Tape ♪♪♪ (Bowser Wowser, 1987)

worth searching for: Although Massengill didn't record a nationally released album until 1992, he made frequent appearances on editions of *The Fast Folk Musical Magazine*. While he's subsequently re-recorded such songs as "On the Road to Fairfax County," "The Great American Dream," and "Number One in America," others, including "Sightseer" and "Derry Down," remain buried treasure.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Jack Hardy, Steve Forbert
▶▶ Roches, John Gorka, Cliff Eberhardt

Craig Harris

Kathy Mattea

Born June 21, 1959, in Cross Lanes, VA.

Originally a bluegrass singer and guitarist, Kathy Mattea's music found a home on country radio during the 1980s' return to traditional sounds. A double Grammy winner, Mattea also was twice named female vocalist of the year by the Country Music Association. With her bluegrass-shaded country increasingly leaning on Scottish and Celtic influences, Mattea also organized the *Red, Hot & Country* AIDS benefit album project in the mid-1990s.

what to buy: *A Collection of Hits* ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1990, prod. Allen Reynolds) features most of her early hits, including her versions of Nanci Griffith's "Love at the Five and Dime" and Tim O'Brien's "Untold Stories" and "Walk the Way the Wind Blows."

what to buy next: *Walk the Way the Wind Blows* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1987, prod. Allen Reynolds), Mattea's first real breakthrough, includes the title cut, "Train of Memories," and "Love at the Five and Dime." Other tracks include the big hits "Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses" and "Goin' Gone."

the rest:

Kathy Mattea ♪♪ (Mercury, 1984)
From My Heart ♪♪ (Mercury, 1985)
Untasted Honey ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1987)
Willow in the Wind ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1989)
Time Passes By ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1991)
Lonesome Standard Time ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1992)
Walking away a Winner ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1993)
Good News ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1994)
Love Travels ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Nanci Griffith

▶▶ Suzy Bogguss, Deana Carter

Bill Hobbs

Matthews Southern Comfort

See: Iain Matthews

Iain Matthews /Matthews Southern Comfort /Plainsong /Hamilton Pool

Born Iain Matthew MacDonald, June 16, 1946, in Lincolnshire, England.

Iain Matthews has had two careers, really. The first began during the late '60s when he co-founded the influential British folk group Fairport Convention. He left Fairport after two records and in 1970 started Matthews Southern Comfort, which recorded three albums and had a Top 40 hit with Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock" (a year after Crosby, Stills and Nash's version had charted). In 1971 Matthews embarked on a moderately successful and quite prolific solo career as a singer (and occasional songwriter) of easygoing folk/country-pop songs; he released 10 albums in 10 years, plus a couple with the singers' collective Plainsong. He then vanished from the record bins for eight years, though he spent some time in Seattle playing in a band called Hi-Fi with David Surkamp. His second career began in 1988 with the release of *Walking a Changing Line*, an album of Jules Shear covers that was Windham Hill's first all-vocal project. Counting various retrospectives and live collections, Matthews has released over 12 records since then, including a new disc with a reunited Plainsong and a one-off with a band called Hamilton Pool (named after a swimming hole just outside Austin, Texas, where Matthews has lived since 1990).

what to buy: CD retrospective collections have been a welcome development for both Matthews and his fans, as his extensive '70s catalog is rather spotty in quality. *The Soul of Many Places: The Elektra Years, 1972–1974* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1993, prod. Iain Matthews, Michael Nesmith, Sandy Roberton) gathers the best tracks from what was probably his strongest artistic period; included are richly melodic covers of classics such as Tom Waits's "Ol' 55" and Jesse Winchester's "Biloxi," as well as Matthews's own hauntingly beautiful "For the Second Time" and "You Fell through My Mind." Documenting the best tracks from a slightly earlier period in his career is *The Best of Matthews Southern Comfort* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1992, prod. various). As for actual albums, his most recent efforts are his best; their cohesiveness reveals a significant artistic growth from the hit-and-miss nature of his '70s records. Particularly strong is *The Dark Ride* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1994, prod. Mark Hallman); a close second is *Skeleton Keys* ♪♪♪ (Mesa, 1992, prod. Mark Hallman).

what to buy next: *Walking a Changing Line* ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1988, prod. Mark Hallman) is an intriguing attempt to bring mainstream accessibility to the brilliant pop songs of Jules Shear, though the record didn't quite live up to its potential. Also of interest to serious fans are four collections of demos and live tracks from throughout Matthews's career: *Orphans and Outcasts Volume I: Demos 1969–1979* ♪♪♪ (Dirty Linen, 1991), *Orphans and Outcasts Volume II: Demos 1981–1989* ♪♪♪ (Dirty Linen, 1993), *Intimate Wash* ♪♪♪ (Perfect Pitch, 1993), and *Camouflage* ♪♪♪ (Perfect Pitch, 1996).

what to avoid: *Stealin' Home* ♪♪ (Mushroom, 1978) contains "Shake It," Matthews's highest-charting hit single to date, but that song is also one of the shallowest things he's ever recorded and is indicative of the lack of creativity in his late '70s work—which likely led to his extended sabbatical during the '80s.

the rest:

(With Matthews Southern Comfort) *Matthews Southern Comfort* ♪♪♪ (Sire, 1970)
(With Matthews Southern Comfort) *Second Spring* ♪♪♪ (Decca, 1970)
(With Matthews Southern Comfort) *Later That Same Year* ♪♪♪ (Decca, 1970)
If You Saw thro' My Eyes ♪♪♪ (Vertigo, 1971)
Tigers Will Survive ♪♪♪ (Vertigo, 1972)
(With Plainsong) *In Search of Amelia Earhart* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1972)
(With Plainsong) *Plainsong II* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1972)
Valley Hi ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1973)
Some Days You Eat the Bear and Some Days the Bear Eats You ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1974)
Journeys from Gospel Oak ♪♪♪ (Mooncrest, 1974)
Go for Broke ♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
Hit and Run ♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Siamese Friends ♪♪ (Mushroom, 1979)
Spot of Interference ♪♪ (RSO, 1980)
Pure and Crooked ♪♪♪ (Gold Castle, 1990/Watermelon, 1995)
(With Plainsong) *Dark Side of the Room* ♪♪ (Mesa, 1993)
(With Hamilton Pool) *Return to Zero* ♪♪ (Watermelon, 1995)
God Looked Down ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1996)
Seattle Years 1978–1984 ♪♪ (Varese Sarabande, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Simon & Garfunkel, Peter & Gordon, Jimmy Webb

▶▶ Seals & Crofts, England Dan & John Ford Coley, America

see also: *Fairport Convention*

Peter Blackstock

June Maugery

Born October 1948, in Des Moines, IA.

June Maugery is a superb autoharp player and vocalist who began performing during the late '70s in Seattle as part of the group Mountain Oysters. She worked and traveled in both Thailand and Africa over the years and is now settled in France where her husband is a physician. Maugery spends each summer in the United States, attending, teaching, and performing at various music festivals. In July of 1996 Maugery won first place in the contest at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering. *Autoharp Clearinghouse* credits her with "beautiful and unique approach to playing, full of rich chord textures, expressiveness and virtuosity." Her unique style includes playing up close to the bridge pins as well in as the full body of the 'harp. Her warm vocals draw the listener close and her autoharp accompaniment is full of improvisation, warm counterpoint harmonies, and open pentatonic chords.

what's available: *Shining Bright Like Gold* ♪♪♪♪ (Studio du Mont-Blanc, 1997) features an excellent mix of vocal and instrumental selections. On all but a few cuts, Maugery is joined by Betsy Doriss, her longtime friend and an incredible English horn and oboe player. Their interaction on such tunes as "Beaucatcher Farewell" and "Farewell to the Hollow" are quite literally worth the price of the CD, as they develop achingly rich harmonies on the somewhat unusual combination of autoharp and oboe. Doriss also lends some clear vocal harmonies, nicely evident on "Rivers Keep Rolling," a beautiful Maugery original. Ronnie Crutchley adds guitar and vocals, Peter Even contributes guitar and banjo, and Yves Cassagnettes completes the sound with bass. Traditional favorites such as "Shady Grove" and "Big-Eyed Rabbit" display Maugery's talent for playing fiddle tunes, and her slower, lyrical playing of "Midnight on the Water" shows off her use of suspended and pentatonic chords. *Shining Bright Like Gold* is available from the Corliss Institute, 292 Main Street, Warren, Rhode Island 02885.

influences:

◀◀ Marty Schuman

▶▶ Judy Austin

Heidi Cerrigione

Mac McAnally

Born July 15, 1957, in Belmont, MS.

Most country fans know Mac McAnally as the composer of such hits as Alabama's "Old Flame," Sawyer Brown's "All These Years," Shenandoah's "Two Dozen Roses," and Linda Davis's "Company Time," to name but a few. But before his behind-the-scenes Nashville success, the former Muscle Shoals session guitarist with the James Taylor–like baritone and Randy Newman–like wit was on the cutting edge of the singer/songwriter movement. McAnally became the first artist David Geffen signed to his then-fledgling Geffen Records roster during the early 1980s, but he proved to be a hard sell: The Mississippi-reared redhead delivered his Southern small-town character studies and biting examinations of life's unfair, ever-changing rules with a droll delivery and a melodic breeziness that

cloaked the irony and darkness of his deliciously devious sense of humor. Among his early subjects were the revenge of a rape victim ("Bad Boy"), society's indifference to death ("Real People"), how guilt can be assuaged by writing a check ("Hush Money"), and a definition of life as "nothing more than to eat and excrete and die" ("Cuttin' Corners"). In between session stints with longtime supporter Jimmy Buffett (who covered his "It's My Job" on 1981's *Coconut Telegraph* and hired him to play in his Coral Reefer Band), McAnally continues to write disarmingly lovely hit songs for Nashville's gold and platinum elite. Even though age has tempered his edge, he remains one of country music's warmest, most insightful clutch composers.

what to buy: All of his pre-MCA albums for Ariola, RCA, Geffen, and Warner Bros. are out of print, but *Knots* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1994, prod. Mac McAnally, Tony Brown) is an accurate snapshot of his humanity and humor. It includes a remake of "Miracle," originally recorded on his 1980 album, *Cuttin' Corners*. *Live and Learn* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Tony Brown, Mac McAnally) features his own version of "All These Years." The polite production and introspective ruminations on mortality are livened up by two colorful road songs, "Socrates" (about a philosophy-spewing mechanic) and the chugging "Junk Cars."

worth searching for: McAnally's best albums never made it to CD, so used record stores are the most likely place to uncover his marvelous 1977 debut *Mac McAnally* ♪♪♪♪½ (Ariola America, prod. Clayton Ivey, Terry Woodford). It is highlighted by his Top 40 hit, "It's a Crazy World," and the bittersweet "Barney," perhaps the weirdest and most accurate song ever written about the aging process.

influences:

◀◀ John Prine, Randy Newman, James Taylor

▶▶ Sawyer Brown, Beth Nielsen Chapman

David Okamoto

Kimberly M'Carver

Born December 16, 1957, in Dallas, TX.

Kimberly M'Carver seems to know her Mesquite, Texas upbringing has provided her with a mother lode of material and experience as big as the Lone Star State itself, but, like fellow Texan Nanci Griffith, she has the rare ability to write songs from that experience that resonate well beyond the shores of the Sabine, the Pecos, and the Rio Grande. Moreover, like San Antonio's Tish Hinojosa, she delivers them in a clear soprano that carries home the poetry and emotion of her music. In the liner notes for her debut Philo release she writes lovingly of the grandfather at whose knee she came to know and love "the finer things in life"—M&M's, the Three Stooges, good strong coffee, and the sound of a train whistle going just about anywhere—and it shows in her songwriting. She loves to write songs that tell the stories of people who travel the road, ride the range, dance their dances, and follow the wind wherever it takes them. What makes M'Carver stand out from the pack of modern-day singer-songwriters is that her songs are remarkably absent of cliché, and where many modern writers tend to write the same song over and over with little more than slight variation, M'Carver never writes the same song twice—each one takes a fresh look at something different. Both of her current releases are decidedly on the mellow end of the spectrum, the tempo never so fast that the poetry of each song can't be savored, with instrumentation and arrangements that make this some of the better acoustic country music available on record. Since her backup musicians are top-notch, this is no surprise, but their willingness to appear with her is also a good sign that M'Carver is not just another run-of-the-mill singer.

what to buy: Although both her currently available releases are strong statements, her more recent effort *Inherited Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994, prod. Ken Irwin) shows substantial growth as both a writer and vocalist in the four years following her debut. From the opening title track, a fond recalling of the wanderlust of her grandfather and father that made its way into her own being, the 12 tracks of the album are deeper and more varied than her previous recording, and none stand out as a weak link. The three-song sequence of "This Cold Night," "Dancin' Fools," and "Blue Norther" is especially rewarding. With the exception of the final track, "San Luis" (written by husband Dennis M'Carver), all the songs are Kimberly M'Carver originals. Both albums feature a core of backup musicians who are among the best and most respected acoustic musicians around: Stuart Duncan (fiddle), Jerry Douglas (Dobro), Jeff White (guitar), Dennis M'Carver (guitar), Barry Bales (bass), and Viktor Krauss (bass). With the people involved with this album on both sides of the glass (Irwin and engineer Steve Chandler), *Inherited Road* could hardly miss.

what to buy next: *Breathe the Moonlight* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1990, prod. Ken Irwin) is not quite as assured and confident as *Inherited Road*, but her talent for telling a good story is demonstrated on cuts like "Borrowed Time," "Carnival Man," and the opening track, "Silver Wheeled Pony," a poignant tale of a one-time rodeo cowboy now wheelchair-bound and left with only memories of the glory days. M'Carver wrote all 11 tracks. With

essentially the same backup cast (the late Roy Huskey Jr. on bass, the well-respected Bill VornDick engineering), this can't help but be a solid album, and Kimberly shows the promise realized later on *Inherited Road*.

influences:

◀◀ Nanci Griffith, Guy Clark, Kate Wolf, Bev Doolittle

▶▶ Terri Allard, Tish Hinojosa

John Lupton

Cormac McCarthy

Born in OH.

There are two famous Cormac McCarthys. One is a critically acclaimed author; the other is a singer-songwriter on the Green Linnet label. The singing McCarthy, born in Ohio and now living in New England, plays harmonica and piano and sings in a classic country style. A lifelong music fan, he sang "Davy Crockett" on Cincinnati Radio at the age of three. His college roommate was the similarly talented Bill Morrissey. Known for his humorous stage presence, McCarthy headlined at the Somerville Theatre's Night of Humor and Songwriters in Boston in 1996.

what to buy: *Picture Gallery Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Peter Gallway) is beautifully produced and creates a somber yet vibrant mood, but it could use more grit and less mellowness. "Map of Your Heart," with clever lyrics and upbeat bluegrass backing, suggests McCarthy's richest gifts. The title song is a slow, atmospheric blues that brings out the depth of McCarthy's voice.

the rest:

Troubled Sleep ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1998)

influences:

◀◀ Stan Rogers, Bill Morrissey

▶▶ Stephen Fearing

Pamela Murray Winters

Mary McCaslin

Born December 22, 1946, in Indianapolis, IN.

Mary McCaslin was making musical Americana—in her case, a beguiling mix of mountain music and singer/songwriter folk—long before the term became the name of a catch-all radio format. McCaslin's dulcet soprano and lilting acoustic guitar-based melodies are the perfect foil for her wry, incisive social commentary.

what to buy: *Way out West* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1974, prod. Mary McCaslin, Bill Schubart) features three-quarter-time ballads and clear-eyed proto-feminist explorations of the lure of the Western frontier. It also boasts the definitive version of Randy Newman's "Living without You."

what to buy next: *Things We Said Today* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1992) is an almost flawless career retrospective even though it doesn't supplant the near-classic *Way out West*.

the rest:

Prairie in the Sky ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1976)
Old Friends ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1977)
(With Jim Ringer) *The Bramble and the Rose* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1978)
Sunny California ♪♪½ (Mercury, 1979)
Broken Promises ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994)

influences:

◀◀ Marty Robbins, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Anne Hills, Priscilla Herdman

see also: *Jim Ringer*

Bill Friskics-Warren

Debby McClatchy

Born 1945, in San Francisco, CA.

Debby McClatchy grew up influenced by many diverse regional heritages. Her mother, originally from the Smoky Mountains near Knoxville, Tennessee, traces her family back seven generations to Thomas Jefferson's sister, sang Carter Family songs as lullabies, and yodeled after too much creme de menthe. Her great, great grandfather on her father's side was originally from Northern Ireland and immigrated to the United States during the potato famine, ending up a 49er in the gold rush. He was also the founder of Sacramento's leading newspaper, the *Sacramento Bee*. In 1968 impromptu musical sessions with friends in college led to the formation of the Sunshine Ceili Band and the beginnings of McClatchy's professional music career. After three years of working in pubs and a one-year tour to Stockholm and back, she heeded the call of "Go east, young woman" and moved to New York City where she ran the Focus II Traditional Coffee House and worked for such national agencies as Young Audiences and Hospital Audiences. She was awarded a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to bring music to the public schools of New York. After 12 years of touring full time, McClatchy moved to the Appalachian mountains of central Pennsylvania in 1980. She now splits her time evenly between performing and the *Trails End Kitchen*, her

own catering business for folk festivals and camps. She also spends an increasing amount of time in Great Britain, fueled by the country's fervent interest in the old-time banjo and a steadfast respect and popularity for her work based largely on the release of three critically acclaimed albums on U.K. labels. McClatchy is an expert entertainer, equally at home with old-time mountain music and contemporary material, all of which she performs with wit and imagination. An outstanding songwriter, she is also an accomplished instrumentalist. Known primarily as one of the finest banjo players in the old-time "frailing" style, she also excels on flat top guitar and concertina, as well as such "lost" folk instruments as the ukelin, tremaloa, and marxaphone. The *Boston Globe* called her "one of a vanishing breed, a bona fide American folk singer, accompanying her lovely, honest voice with an array of acoustic instruments, spicing her repertoire of old-time country music with her own witty and moving topical writing."

what to buy: *Light Years Away* ♪♪♪½ (Plant Life, 1994/Marimac, 1995, prod. Martha Duffy) and *'Til the Good Times Come* (Trail's End, 1998, prod. Debby McClatchy) are the only CDs available of her work. *Light Years Away*, like most of McClatchy's best work, is a mixture of old-time songs and tunes coupled with newer material by the likes of Si Kahn, the Red Clay Ramblers' Tommy Thompson, and one of her own compositions. Her fine banjo playing allows her to stretch out on tunes like "Abe's Retreat" and "Big Siota" (also commonly called "Big Scioty" after the Scioto River in Central Ohio) and her singing is first rate as usual.

what to buy next: *Radio Land* ♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1988, prod. Paul James) and *Someday Cafe* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1986, prod. Dakota Dave Hull) are both available only on cassette and are probably the only other McClatchy recordings you're likely to find still in print. These may be purchased directly from McClatchy at Sunhearth, R.D. 1, Box 74, Roaring Spring, Pennsylvania 16673.

worth searching for: All of McClatchy's LPs are worth searching for, particularly if you're interested in songs of the California Gold Rush, a recurring theme in her work. Of particular interest are *Debby McClatchy with the Red Clay Ramblers* ♪♪♪ (Innisfree/Green Linnet, 1976, prod. Lisa Null), *Lady Luck* ♪♪♪ (Innisfree/Green Linnet, 1979, prod. Debby McClatchy, Lisa Null), and *Off to California* ♪♪♪ (Wildebeest, 1981, prod. Vaughn Lofstead). *Apples in Winter* ♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1983, prod. Debby McClatchy, Lisa Null) is a compilation of *Debby McClatchy with the Red Clay Ramblers* and *Lady Luck*. *Homemade Goodies* ♪♪♪½ (Fretless, 1974), her first album, while worth searching for, is nearly impossible to find.

influences:

◀◀ Robert W. Service, Bob Coltman, Red Clay Ramblers

▶▶ Cathy Fink, Anne Hills

Neal Walters

Carol McComb

Born December 16, 1944 in Baltimore, MD.

Carol McComb's talent as a singer and songwriter is clearly no secret to those who have heard her work with the Gryphon Quintet in the 1980s and as a solo performer with a critically acclaimed album on Kaleidoscope. By the age of 19, she had already recorded an album on Elektra Records—*Kathy and Carol*—with high school chum, Kathy Larisch, and subsequently went on to tour with Mimi Fariña and perform in concert with folk icons James Taylor, Arlo Guthrie, and Pete Seeger. Over the years both her voice and guitar playing have matured. She is at ease with gentle love songs, classic country, bluegrass, and swing, and her songs have been recorded by Bill Staines, Laurie Lewis, the Good Ol' Persons, and many others. She toured with the Gryphon Quintet for eight years as lead singer and primary songwriter, as well as playing terrific guitar and Dobro. She's a nationally known guitar teacher and has taught more than 7,000 people to play guitar through her workshop series in Palo Alto, California. In 1986 Klutz Press published her *Country and Blues Guitar for the Musically Hopeless* and it's now sold over 100,000 copies and is still going strong. In 1991 she formed the California Coast Music Camp with several other like-minded people from the Bay area, and has also been on the staff at the Puget Sound Guitar Workshop. McComb and long-time musical cohort Ed Johnson have led the Gryphon Carollers now for over two decades, and she scored the music for two award-winning documentary films: *Quilts in Women's Lives* and *Moonchild*. Laurie Lewis described her as "a songwriter and a singer whose songs don't mess around—they're filled with clean, strong, sinewy lines, a lean and fluid use of imagery and melodies that cry to be given voice . . . she doesn't just sing, she communicates."

what to buy: *Tears into Laughter* ♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1990, prod. Carol McComb, Nina Gerber) is a terrific album that *Billboard* described as "remarkably well written, well played, and emotionally moving. McComb is wise without being preachy,

and she sings with quiet conviction and urgency." The backup band includes Nina Gerber, Ed Johnson, Barbara Higbie, Sally Van Meter, David Balakrishnan, and Laurie Lewis.

what to buy next: Any of McComb's albums with the Gryphon Quintet are worth a listen. Try *Undecided* ♪♪♪♪ (Mayfield Records, 1985, prod. Gryphon Quintet) for a healthy sampling of hot licks and cool vocals, including McComb's own "Secret Garden," which Bill Staines covered to popular acclaim.

the rest:

Love Can Take You Home Again ♪♪♪ (Bay Records, 1975)

(With the Gryphon Quintet) *They All Laughed* ♪♪♪½ (Mayfield Records, 1983)

(With the Gryphon Quintet) *Gryphon Quintet Live* ♪♪♪½ (Mayfield Records, 1987)

worth searching for: *Kathy and Carol* (Elektra Records, 1965, prod. Jac Holzman) is a classic album that deserves to be released on CD—listen up, Elektra! You can hear what you're missing on *Folk Music Newport Part One* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1995, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) which has one cut—the Fariña's "Swallow Song"—by the duo.

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Mike Seeger, Joan Baez, John Renbourn, Pierre Bensusan

▶▶ Nanci Griffith, Cheryl Wheeler

Neal Walters

Billy McComiskey

Born December 21, 1951, in NY.

Brooklyn-born Billy McComiskey is one of the leading Irish button-accordion players of our time, known not only for his skillful interpretations of dance tunes but also for his tasteful use of harmony, in particular in the accompaniment of songs. McComiskey grew up musically on the recordings of Martin Mulhaire (now himself a New York resident), Joe Burke, and Bobby Gardiner. Gardiner's stay in the United States in the early 1960s was a chance for the young McComiskey to hear and observe his playing of the B/C box in person. But it was the arrival in New York of accordionist Sean McGlynn, from Tynagh, County Galway, that would prove most influential on McComiskey's musical development. McComiskey credits McGlynn for having introduced him to the music and "logic" of Tipperary accordion legend Paddy O'Brien, and for having instilled in him an appreciation for understated interpretation in the Galway style. In the mid-1970s, McComiskey, together with fiddle player Brendan Mulvihill and singer/guitarist Andy O'Brien, moved to Washington, D.C., to start performing as the Irish Tradition at the Capitol Hill–area pub, the Dubliner. The band's constant presence there for several years was a decisive factor in the emergence of a local Irish music scene. After three albums and many years of performing together, Irish Tradition parted ways and McComiskey moved to nearby Baltimore, where he has lived since. While he continues to perform locally, he also appears at festivals and in concert far and wide. Since the early 1990s, he has been touring and recording with the group Trian, accompanied by dazzling Chicago fiddle player Liz Carroll and Donegal-born singer and guitar player Dáithí Sproule.

what's available: *Makin' the Rounds* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Mick Moloney, Billy McComiskey) was recorded at the height of the Irish Tradition heyday. McComiskey's playing is typical of his high standard of performance: technically perfect, with great attention to detail, but rarely flashy and always tasteful. An especially thrilling track is McComiskey's duet with his former teacher Sean McGlynn on the classic Galway reel medley "Johnny Allen's/Sporting Nell." Irish Tradition colleague Andy O'Brien provides the guitar accompaniment in his usual understated way. Also appearing on the album are New York fiddle player Pat Keogh and celebrated dancer Donny Golden. McComiskey is heard solo and in duet with Chicago fiddle player and Trian member Liz Carroll on the excellent *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America* ♪♪♪♪ (Nimbus, 1992, prod. Mícheál O' Súilleabháin, Robin Broadbank), recorded live on the occasion of the eighth annual *Éigse na Laoi* festival of traditional music at University College, Cork.

worth searching for: McComiskey is one of many great Irish musicians featured on *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from the East Coast of America, Volume I* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1977, prod. Mick Moloney) and *Ed Reavy* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979, prod. Mick Moloney), two "must have" albums for anyone interested in Irish music in America.

influences:

◀◀ Martin Mulhaire, Joe Burke, Bobby Gardiner, Sean McGlynn, Jack Coen

▶▶ Irish Tradition, Trian, Ellis Island

see also: *The Irish Tradition, Trian*

Philippe Varlet

The Del McCoury Band /The McCoury Brothers /Ronnie & Rob McCoury

Formed as Del McCoury & the Dixie Pals, 1967, in TN; changed name to Del McCoury Band in 1987.

Del McCoury (born Delano Floyd McCoury, February 1, 1939, in Baker-sville, NC), vocals, guitar; Ronnie McCoury, mandolin, vocals (1981–present); Rob McCoury, banjo (1987–present); Jason Carter, fiddle (1992–present); Mike Bub, bass (1992–present); others.

They don't get any more bluegrass than Del McCoury. With a voice that will unhinge every last good nerve within, Del takes "high lonesome" to a whole new level. Watching him perform with his young band is an education in how to sing with pure conviction, and how to wring the most out of every note, every phrase. Del is a genius, and if there's any justice, he will someday (very soon) be held in the same high regard as Bill Monroe. McCoury spent most of his growing up years in York County, Pennsylvania. As a teenager he worked in a quartet with his brother, playing banjo with the Blue Ridge Ramblers and the Virginia Playboys during the 1950s and 1960s. A move to the Blue Grass Boys in 1963 found Del thinking he'd be playing banjo for lead man Monroe—until he learned that Bill Keith had been hired at the same time, leaving Del with guitar-playing and vocal duties instead. However, McCoury's real talent came through once he joined Monroe and started singing lead. His voice, the very epitome of "high lonesome," has aged like the finest of wines. Today, McCoury is probably the most soulful singer on the planet, although his own son Ronnie, who joined his father's band in 1981, is running a close second. Ronnie, a multi-award winning mandolin player, has every bit of his father's bluesy voice, and shows even more control and emotion than his Dad did at his age. The talent hardly stops there, however, as another acclaimed instrumentalist rounds out the McCoury clan. Rob, who made his debut with his Dad in 1987, is a banjo player every bit as skillful as his older brother, and as dedicated to his craft as any of the McCourys. The tradition continues with young Jacob, Ronnie's preschool-aged son, who frequently steps on stage with Dad, Uncle, and Granddaddy McCoury, to "play" a small toy fiddle. The band's real fiddler, Kentuckian Jason Carter, is an amazing young player who is expected to begin making his own solo recordings soon. The group is immeasurably aided by Mike Bub, their bass player from Arizona.

The current configuration of the Del McCoury Band has been together since 1992 when the group was signed to Rounder, but the bandleader's recording career stretches way back into the early 1960s. Several Del McCoury albums are available, as is a duet album with brother Jerry McCoury and some by his former band, the Dixie Pals. Ronnie and Rob have also recorded their own album, and Ronnie was previously a member of the Nashville Station Inn–based Sidemen. The International Bluegrass Music Association awards the band has racked up, the perfectly constructed and executed records they've released, and the impression they've left with countless fans have gone a long way toward keeping the Bill Monroe–based bluegrass tradition alive, even when the Del McCoury Band dares to include some non-bluegrass tunes in its uniformly excellent performances.

what to buy: *A Deeper Shade of Blue* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Ronnie McCoury) contains one great track after another, including Del's not-soon-forgotten take on "What Made Milwaukee Famous." For an intense understanding of the everlasting between the blues and bluegrass, start here. The early years of Del & His Dixie Pals are distinctly documented in *Classic Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1991, prod. various), an 18-song set covering Del's 11 years with the Rebel label.

what to buy next: The young brothers McCoury have taken their roles seriously as keepers of the bluegrass flame passed down from Dad. But they're individuals, too, as *Ronnie & Rob McCoury* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Ronnie McCoury) shows. Well-chosen covers and kicking originals; this is fantastic stuff! And with Tom Petty and Robert Cray covers to fan the flames, *Cold Hard Facts* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Jerry Douglas, Ronnie McCoury) is a real barn-burner.

the rest:
Live in Japan ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1980/1992)
Don't Stop the Music ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
Blue Side of Town ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)

worth searching for: The Del McCoury Band, along with Doc Watson, Mac Wiseman, and Dobroist Gene Wooten, created a country version of the dance hit "Macarena" (Imprint, 1996, prod. Scott Rouse) ♪♪♪ as the Groovegrass Boys. It's good, strange fun hearing McCoury sing the tune, and, what's more, it actually sold pretty well.

solo outings:
Del McCoury:
I Wonder Where You Are Tonight ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1968)
Livin' on the Mountain ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1971/1992)
(With the Dixie Pals) *High on a Mountain* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1972/1995)
(With the Dixie Pals) *Sawmill* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, c. 1975)

5 2 6 *the del mccoury band*

The McCoury Brothers:
The McCoury Brothers ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978/1995)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe
▶▶ Sidemen

see also: *Jason Carter*

Stephen L. Betts

John McCutcheon

Born August 14, 1952, in WI.

A fixture on the folk scene for more than 25 years, John McCutcheon has been called "Virginia's rustic Renaissance Man" by the *Washington Post*. A multi-instrumentalist who plays virtually every stringed instrument well, he is particularly adept at the hammered dulcimer, fiddle, and five-string banjo played in the clawhammer style. He grew up in the Midwest and attended college at St. John's University in Minnesota. Even before he had graduated, he headed for the hills, foregoing the college lecture hall for the classroom of the eastern Kentucky coal camps, union halls, country churches, and square dance halls. An excellent singer and prolific songwriter, he began as a string-band musician performing traditional music that he learned directly from various Appalachian musicians. After several all-acoustic albums of mostly traditional music on the June Appal, Front Hall, and Green Hays labels, he joined Rounder Records and began to focus on his own compositional skills and a continuing collaboration with grass roots activist and songwriter Si Kahn. Subsequent releases range from award-winning and Grammy-nominated children's material to social commentary on issues ranging from Central America, the plight of rural farmers, and the lives of working people everywhere. His last several projects lean towards more pop-oriented, world-music arrangements in a successful effort to reach a broader audience.

what to buy: *Sprout Wings and Fly* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. John McCutcheon, Bob Dawson) is not McCutcheon's most recent release but it did mark his return to an all-acoustic format. The arrangements are somewhat eclectic, "marrying Aboriginal didgeridoo with old-time banjo, African drums, and mountain dulcimer." Joined by an all-star cast of Iris DeMent, Tim and Mollie O'Brien, and Robin and Linda Williams, this is a very fresh and musically satisfying performance of traditional Appalachian material.

what to buy next: *Water from Another Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder 1989, prod. Paul Reisler) is a retrospective of McCutcheon's career featuring the best of his early albums as well of some of his children's material. *Winter Solstice* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1984, prod. Paul Reisler) is an outstanding sampling of holiday music on hammered dulcimer. *Howjadoo!* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983, prod. Paul Reisler) is perhaps the best example of his children's material and even contains a coloring book.

the rest:
How Can I Keep from Singing ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1975)
The Wind That Shakes the Barley ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1977)
Wry Straw ♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1978)
Barefoot Boy with Boots On ♪♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1980)
Fine Times at Our House ♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1982)
(With Si Kahn) *Signs of the Times* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986)
Nothing to Lose ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986)
Step by Step ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986)
Gonna Rise Again ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Mail Myself to You ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
What It's Like ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
Live at Wolf Trap ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Family Garden ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)
Between the Eclipse ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Summersongs ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)
Wintersongs ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)
Bigger than Yourself ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997)
Doing Our Job ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Si Kahn, Trapezoid, Paul Van Arsdale
▶▶ David Holt, Tom Chapin

Neal Walters

Country Joe McDonald

See: Country Joe and the Fish

Megon McDonough

See: Four Bitchin' Babes

Mississippi Fred McDowell

Born January 12, 1904, in Rossville, TN. Died July 3, 1972, in Memphis, TN.

One of the last of the great Mississippi Delta bluesmen, Fred McDowell's moaning vocals were the perfect companion to his

The Del McCoury Band **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

528 mississippi fred mcdowell

concertinas

A small but special member of the free-reed family is the concertina. This portable musical powerhouse was developed in 1830 by Charles Wheatstone, whose company sold concertinas for the next 150 years. The concertina became popular because of its portability. It was especially useful for accompanying dancers and for traveling groups such as Salvation Army bands. It could be played everywhere, from music hall to sailing ship to camp meeting. The British folk revival brought a new interest in the instrument. The two main types of concertinas are the Anglo-German, or Anglo, and the English. All concertinas are played by pressing buttons, or keys, and expanding and compressing the bellows. English concertinas are fully chromatic: that is, they can play all the notes of the chromatic scale. Their sound is relatively smooth. They are often used for parlor music. Anglo concertinas are a bit larger and quite a bit livelier. They depend on the push and pull of the bellows to play different notes. They have the bouncy sound desired for polkas, morris dance, and other lively steps. Enjoy the sound of the Anglo concertina on the many albums by John Kirkpatrick, especially the dance-oriented *Plain Capers* (Free Reed, 1976/Topic, 1996).

Pamela Murray Winters

eerie bottleneck slide guitar. McDowell grew up a sharecropper toiling in various parts of the Delta. In 1928 he was at a work camp near Cleveland, Mississippi, where he saw Charley Patton perform and was impressed by what he heard. He began to learn how to play the guitar, but was too poor to afford his own until his boss gave him an instrument in 1941. McDowell continued to work in the fields but on weekends he played dances and country suppers near his Como, Mississippi, home for a few dollars and a bottle. In 1959 folklorist Alan Lomax "discovered" McDowell and recorded several of his songs, which were released on the Southern Folk Heritage LP series. These recordings installed McDowell on the folk circuit and led to mid-1960s recordings on Arhoolie and Testament. Unaffected by his fame, by the early 1970s McDowell had visited Europe several times and had recorded extensively, playing the same blues he heard as a youth in the Delta.

what to buy: Straight-up blues recorded in 1964 and 1965, *Mississippi Delta Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1989, prod. Chris Strachwitz) also includes two tracks from McDowell's mentor, Eli Green. *I Do Not Play No Rock 'n' Roll* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996, prod. Tommy Couch) won a Grammy in 1971 and features McDowell on electric guitar with a small band. *Amazing Grace* ♪♪♪♪ (Testament, 1995, prod. Pete Welding) features the Hunter's Chapel Singers and presents the spiritual side of McDowell's repertoire. *Mississippi Fred McDowell* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1984) consists of some of the earliest McDowell recordings.

what to buy next: *My Home Is in the Delta* ♪♪♪♪ (Testament, 1995, prod. Pete Welding) includes some vocals by McDowell's wife, Annie Mae. *Good Morning Little School Girl* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz) and *This Ain't No Rock 'n' Roll* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Chris Strachwitz) consist of mid-1960s recordings. *Standing at the Burying Ground* ♪♪♪½ (Sequel, 1996, prod. Pete Gibson, Alex Hooper) is a live recording of McDowell in London dating from 1969. Never one to slack on stage or in the studio, other interesting McDowell CD releases include *Steakbone Slide Guitar* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1996), *Long Way from Home* ♪♪♪♪ (OBC, 1968), and *Mississippi Fred McDowell* ♪♪♪♪ (Flyright, 1990).

what to avoid: The poor sound of *Ain't Gonna Worry* ♪½ (Drive Archive, 1994) makes this collection dramatically inferior to others featuring the same recordings.

the rest:
Mississippi Blues (Black Lion, 1993)
This Train I Ride (New Rose, 1993)
Live at the Mayfair Hotel (Warner Bros., 1995)
Wat's the Matter with Papa's Little Girl (Iris, 1996)
First Recordings (Rounder, 1997)

worth searching for: The original "Southern Folk Heritage Series" LP anthologies *The Blues Roll On* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1959, prod. Alan Lomax) and *Roots of the Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1959, prod. Alan Lomax) introduced McDowell to the masses. He can also be heard on several blues anthologies.

influences:
◀◀ Charley Patton, Eli Green, Sid Hemphill, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, John Lee Hooker
▶▶ R.L. Burnside, Bonnie Raitt, Jo Ann Kelly, Junior Kimbrough

Jeff Hannusch

John McEuen

See: Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Eleanor McEvoy

Born in Dublin, Ireland.

That the roots of country and Celtic music are entwined is well known, although contemporary exponents of both Irish and Nashville sensibilities are few and far between. Eleanor McEvoy is one such artist, combining the Celtic-tinged pop/rock of her homeland with the brand of smart, singer/songwriter country-pop in the Mary Chapin Carpenter mold. Her overall sound may be too rockish for country radio, but someone in Nashville should seriously consider covering her songs, particularly the feminist anthem (and huge Irish hit) "Only a Woman" from her debut album.

what's available: On *What's Following Me?* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1996, prod. Kevin Moloney, Eleanor McEvoy), the guitars are revved up a little too much for Nashville tastes, but adventurous country fans will find an album that they can certainly understand and appreciate. The soaring "A Glass Unkissed" crystallizes heartbreak as well as any honky-tonk song. And the vulnerable ballad "My Own Sweet Bed Tonight" offers pertinent commentary on the subjects of sleeping single and drinking doubles. Her promising debut, *Eleanor McEvoy* ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1993), offers plenty of good songs that the performances don't quite deliver.

influences:

R.E.M., Bob Dylan, Mary Black

Daniel Durchholz

Eileen McGann

Born 1959, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

In an age when "folk singers," male or female, tend to be more and more idiosyncratic, post-modern, and unpolished, Calgary's Eileen McGann is that rarest and most welcome of exceptions, a young singer with a keen sense of and pride in the traditional music of her Celtic and British ancestors, combined with the ability to write movingly about the beauties of life and nature around her, and blessed with a strong, crystal clear soprano voice that stops people in their tracks and commands attention. Following the path blazed by fellow Canadian singer/songwriters such as Stan Rogers and Gordon Lightfoot, the last decade has seen McGann establish herself as one of the finest singers, songwriters, and interpreters of traditional music on either side of the Atlantic. A first-generation Irish-Canadian, McGann was captivated by the music of Rogers, Lightfoot, and Don McLean in her teenage years. While working toward a degree in medieval history, she was asked by one of her professors to perform at a St. Patrick's Day banquet, and the embarrassing (by her own description) realization dawned on her that despite her Celtic heritage, she didn't know a single Irish song. In listening then to her mother's records of Irish operatic singers doing traditional songs, she was drawn to the underlying beauty of the music and the stories it was telling. Since emerging on the folk music scene during the late 1980s, McGann's recordings and live performances have highlighted her stunning ability to deliver traditional fare as well as her own intelligent, finely honed songs. While her melodies are beautiful, she excels at writing thoughtful, well-crafted lyrics that, as clearly as she sings them, express her thoughts on the environment ("Requiem for the Giants"), politics ("Too Stupid for Democracy"), social justice ("Reservations"), and many other contemporary themes. She can also write ballads ("Isabella Gunn," "The Knight of the Rose") that have a timeless sound, as if they have been around for hundreds of years—the mark of a superior minstrel. Her first three albums feature a solid mix of both traditional and original music, while newer releases have responded to her fans' many requests for an all-traditional recording. More than most singers in the world of folk music today, though, her entire catalog is of top-level quality, making it very difficult to pick favorites. These days, McGann spends much of her time on the road away from her beloved Calgary, on the slope of the Canadian Rockies. Traveling and performing as a duo with her long-time musical (and life) partner, David K. (Knutson), she continues to win rave reviews and new fans wherever she goes, still in the early years of what should be a long and fulfilling career. As she sings in one of her most popular songs, "I See My Journey."

what to buy: It's a close call between *Turn It Around* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dragonwing, 1991, prod. Eileen McGann) and her 1995 effort, *Journeys*, and either will be immensely satisfying. *Turn It Around* features "Requiem for the Giants," "The Knight of the Rose," and the title track, but the real head-turner is her version of the traditional "The Fair Flower of Northumberland." Overall, the album matches four traditional cuts with seven original songs.

what to buy next: *Journeys* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dragonwing, 1995, prod. Eileen McGann) opens with "I See My Journey" and includes "Reservations," "Too Stupid for Democracy," and "In the Si-

lence." Traditional songs include "Braw Sailin' on the Sea," "Bonny Portmore," and "Jock O'Hazeldean," and an added bonus is a rendition of Pete Morton's "Another Train."

the rest:
Elements ♪♪♪♪ (Dragonwing, 1987)
Heritage ♪♪♪♪ (Dragonwing, 1997)

worth searching for: *Two Thousand Years of Christmas* ♪♪♪♪ (Dragonwing, 1996, prod. Eileen McGann) features McGann, David K., and Cathy Miller performing as Trilogy, harmonizing on a variety of songs from the Celtic and British Yuletide tradition. Something unique and worthwhile to add to the Christmas music section of the record collection.

influences:
◀◀ Stan Rogers, Gordon Lightfoot
▶▶ Joan Baez, Janet Russell, Trilogy

John Lupton

Kate & Anna McGarrigle

Kate McGarrigle, born 1944, in Canada; Anna McGarrigle, born 1946 in St. Sauveur, Montreal, Canada.

These Canadian sisters gained critical attention with their mid-'70s releases because they played a perfectly pitched type of folksy music that combined their beautifully trilling vocals with a wide-eyed sensual purity that was downright refreshing at a time when punk rock was fermenting (the Patti Smith Group's debut came out the same year as the McGarrigles'), FM-radio album rock was bottoming out, and rock as an industry was becoming a pop commodity. As an antidote, here were two intelligent, whimsical, and decidedly quirky women who wrote often-witty, often-wrenching songs that shot straight for the heartstrings without a hint of cheap hamming. In fact, it was songwriting that snared the McGarrigles their record deal after Maria Muldaur recorded "Work Song" and Linda Ronstadt covered "Heart Like a Wheel." Unfortunately, their own records—liberally laced with the wheezy, evocative fiddles and accordions of their French-Canadian culture (and songs sung in French)—never were meant to be huge hits. After a couple of fabulous albums, the songwriting was obscured in efforts to "produce" them for better commercial advantage. But those efforts failed, of course, and the McGarrigles disappeared from the scene for the better part of a decade (a couple of their albums are out of print; *French Record* collects all the songs over their discography recorded in French). Their 1990 "comeback" release, *Heartbeats Accelerating*, was a beautiful, though emotionally downbeat, return. *Matapedia* proved the sisters still have the goods, but couldn't expand their audience beyond a devoted coterie.

what to buy: *Dancer with Bruised Knees* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1977, prod. Joe Boyd) remains a thrilling recorded moment that transcends its period despite (or because of) its fearless use of goofy sonic elements, from a cornball voice-over on the opening title track to oompah music. Country, folk, gospel, and rock all come into play, and songs such as "No Biscuit Blues," "Be My Baby," and "Kitty Come Home" are all indelible melodies written with the very rare combination of smart, funny, and touching lyrics.

what to buy next: *Kate & Anna McGarrigle* ♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1975, prod. Joe Boyd) got rave reviews upon release, but its songs don't have the timeless ring that the material on *Dancer* does. It's still a startling record for its time, featuring "Heart Like a Wheel" and a lively take of Loudon Wainwright III's hilarious "Swimming Song" (Kate was married to Wainwright). The Hannibal/Carthage label has done a terrific job of re-releasing the sisters' catalog on CD; the latest to be resurrected is *Love Over and Over* ♪♪♪½ (Hannibal/Carthage, 1982).

the rest:
French Record ♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1980)
Heartbeats Accelerating ♪♪♪½ (Private Music, 1990)
Matapedia ♪♪♪ (Hannibal/Carthage, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Carter Family, Joni Mitchell, Maria Muldaur
▶▶ Roches, Iris DeMent, Nanci Griffith

Gil Asakawa

Dennis McGee

Born January 26, 1893, in Bayou Marron, LA. Died October 3, 1989, in Chataignier, LA.

If there was someone about which it could be said that God threw away the mold after his creation, it was Dennis McGee. He was born into a family of fiddlers, from whom he learned his craft. He grew up and worked in the Eunice area, a hotbed of Cajun music. There, he met Sady Courville, with whom he played an archaic style of two-fiddle music until Courville's death in 1988. There, he also began the important collaborations with Creole accordionist Amédée Ardoin that would forever change the face of Cajun music. McGee had huge hands and wrenched up the bow of his fiddle hard, a technique necessary for a fiddler in an unamplified era. He had a vast reper-

kate & anna mcgarrigle

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Kate (r) and Anna McGarrigle **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

toire of tunes and a high, piercing voice. Although he fell away from music for a spell after his initial recordings (1929–34), he returned to music during the 1960s and began to perform with Courville and young accordion phenomena Marc Savoy. McGee never lost his vigor for life or for playing and is the major influence on the music of both Savoy and Michael Doucet.

what to buy: On *The Complete Recordings 1929–1930* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1994, prod. Richard Nevins), McGee's fiddling is just a thing of beauty, and there is almost no comparison to his music. Here European country dances are tinged with blues and syncopated Cajun bow strokes, and sung in a voice that is part Celtic, part Native American, part Acadian. These pieces seem to be so ancient, but also still sound very modern, especially when McGee hooks up with Ernest Fruge as the second fiddler. Instead of the steady beat of Courville, Fruge plays almost a counterpoint to McGee and just takes the breath away.

what to buy next: On *La Vielle Musique Acadienne* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1983, prod. Floyd Soileau) McGee and Courville demonstrated that although they weren't as fast as they once were, they still could really play. McGee's fiddling is just superb—you can hear his impact on Dewey Balfa, Leo Soileau, and Doucet throughout this extraordinary set of tunes.

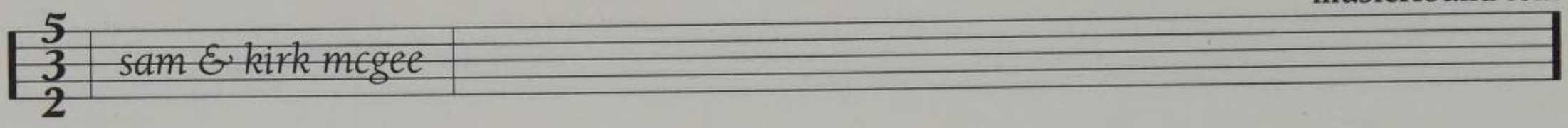
worth searching for: *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1994, prod. Lawrence Cohn), a compilation, contains McGee and Amédée Ardoin's six truly classic recordings. Like the stonework of the Incas, you can't slip a knife blade between the playing of the two men. They play with an empathy that has rarely been equaled.

influences:

- Wallace Cheese Read, Michael Doucet, Balfa Brothers, Leo Soileau

see also: *Amédée Ardoin*

Jared Snyder



Sam & Kirk McGee /The Fruit Jar Drinkers /The Dixieliners

Formed c. 1900, in Franklin, TN.

Sam McGee (born May 1, 1894 in Franklin, TN; died August 21, 1975 in Franklin, TN), guitar, vocals; Kirk McGee (born November 4, 1899 in Franklin, TN, died October 21, 1983 in Franklin, TN), banjo, fiddle, vocals.

The Tennessee-born McGee brothers were early members of the Grand Ole Opry. As the Fruit Jar Drinkers, Sam and Kirk McGee toured and performed with Uncle Dave Macon as early as 1924. They made their debut two years later on the WSM Barn Dance, the predecessor of the Grand Ole Opry. They continued to make their presence felt for the next 60 years. Although Kirk died in a tractor accident in 1975, Sam performed on the Opry until his death in 1983. Born and raised on a family farm, where they continued to work the rest of their lives, Sam and Kirk McGee inherited their love of music from their father, an amateur fiddler. Inspired by the syncopated rhythms they heard played by local Black musicians, they played banjo at dances as teenagers. The McGee's recording debut came in April 1926 when they recorded several tunes with Macon. The following year, they returned to studio with Macon and fiddler Mazy Todd, and recorded what have been called "some of the best examples of string band ensemble playing ever recorded." Forming a band, the Dixieliners, with fiddler Arthur Smith, in 1930, the brothers spent most of the 1930s and early '40s touring with a comedy act, "Sara and Sally." In the late '40s, the brothers performed with Bill Monroe and His Bluegrass Boys. While they mostly performed solo during the 1950s, they periodically renewed their partnership in Fruit Jar Drinkers for appearances on the Grand Ole Opry. They continued to remain active in music into the 1970s.

what to buy: Recorded between 1926 and 1934, *Old Time Songs & Guitar Tunes* ♪♪♪½ (Old Homestead, 1985) focuses on Sam and Kirk McGee's early recordings and includes influential renditions of "Salty Dog Blues," "C-h-i-c-k-e-n," "Easy Rider," and "Buck Dancer's Choice."

what to buy next: *Stars of the Grand Ole Opry* ♪♪ (Diplomat, 1969) includes Sam and Kirk's McGee's blues-flavored interpretations of such songs as "Sittin on Top of the World," "Roll on Buddy," and "Milk Cow Blues."

worth searching for: David Freeman's County Records released a couple of LPs in the 1970s that featured the McGee brothers as the Dixieliners in support of Fiddlin' Arthur Smith, titled *Fiddlin' Arthur Smith & His Dixieliners, Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1978). These should be difficult to find but not impossible, and they feature great tunes by great old-time musicians.

solo outings:

Sam McGee:

Grand Dad of the Country Guitar Pickers ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1971/1997)

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, Gid Tanner & the Skillet Lickers

▶▶ Bill Monroe, Doc Watson, Norman Blake

Craig Harris

Brownie McGhee

See: Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee

Roger McGuinn

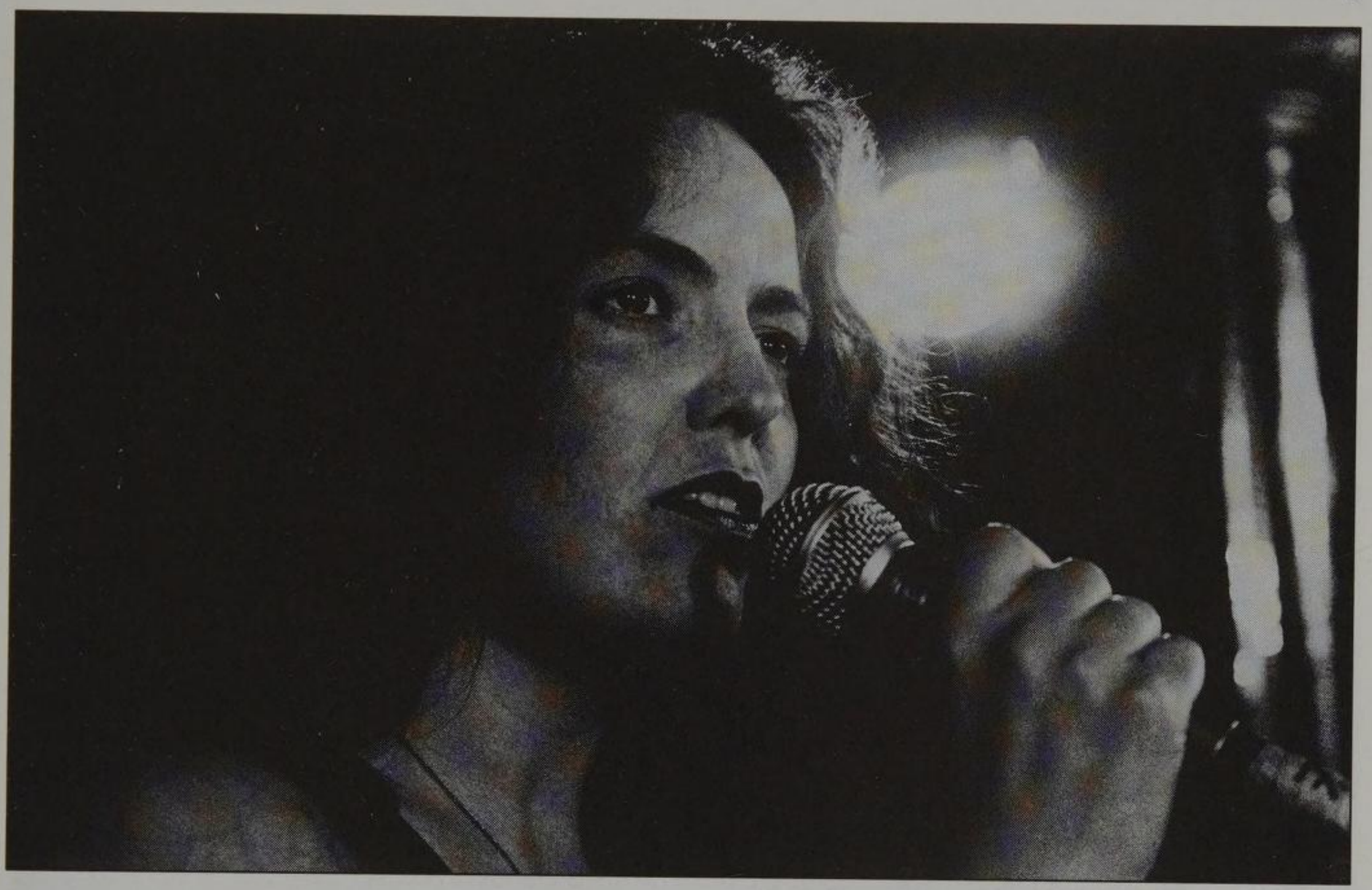
See: The Byrds

Loreena McKennitt

Born February 17, 1957, in Morden, Manitoba, Canada.

Loreena McKennitt isn't so much a folk singer as a swirling, ethereal musician who uses elements of folk and Celtic music to enhance the atmosphere. Though the singer-harpist is more rooted in traditional songcraft than her new-age contemporary, Enya, McKennitt's music aims for the spiritual much more than the straightforward. She initially planned a career as a veterinarian, but wound up performing in folk clubs and working as a composer, actor, and singer at the Shakespearean Festival in Stratford, Ontario. (This would account for her dabbling in nineteenth-century poetry, such as the version of Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" she set to music in 1992.) Soon, she began producing and distributing her own albums, finally catching on during the late 1980s when New Age was beginning its run as a music-industry commercial force. McKennitt's soaring voice, and the ability to turn any sort of traditional folk tune into an angelic hymn, launched her subsequent albums past gold level with very little radio or video play. Though she uses her considerable talent to mix all kinds of lofty musical traditions together, McKennitt's music is best experienced while sleeping, having sex, or otherwise trying to avoid distractions.

what to buy: "All Souls Night," the opening track of *The Visit* ♪♪♪ (Quinlan Road/Warner Bros., 1992, prod. Loreena McKennitt), is a spooky Celtic tune propelled by rolling percussion and McKennitt's voice blending with a tamboura, balalaika, cello, and accordion. The album is impeccably crafted, well



Susan McKeown **(© Brendan Jamieson)**

thought out (there's a version of the traditional "Bonny Portmore"), and there's nary a bump in the road.

what to buy next: McKennitt can sing with emotional power, as on the soft, fragile folk song "The Dark Side of the Soul," which is a nice break from the swirling New Age music that otherwise colors *The Mask and Mirror* ♪♪♪ (Quinlan Road/Warner Bros., 1994, prod. Loreena McKennitt).

what to avoid: "Over a number of years spent ruminating on the distinctive characteristics of the Celts . . . ," begins McKennitt's introduction to *The Book of Secrets* ♪♪ (Quinlan Road/Warner Bros., 1997, prod. Loreena McKennitt), which despite these lofty pretensions manages to sound pretty good for background music.

the rest:
Elemental ♪♪♪ (Quinlan Road, 1985)
To Drive the Cold Winter Away ♪♪♪ (Quinlan Road, 1987)
Parallel Dreams ♪♪♪ (Quinlan Road, 1989)
A Winter Garden: Five Songs for the Season ♪♪ (Quinlan Road/Warner Bros., 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Lao Tzu, Johnny Clegg, Peter Gabriel, Alfred Lord Tennyson
▶▶ Enya, Yanni, Erykah Badu, Deep Forest

Steve Knopper

Susan McKeown & the Chanting House /Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner

Born February 6, 1967, in Rathfarnham, Dublin, Ireland.

With numerous guest appearances on stage and CD and a deafening buzz in folk circles, Irish chanteuse Susan McKeown gained attention as a singer and songwriter before she

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4 *sarah mclachlan*

recorded her first solo album. A measure of her success is due to her collaborations with other gifted musicians. McKeown has a startling dynamic range that's more evident in concert than on recordings. In composing and covering songs, she is drawn toward stories of women and mysticism, but she doesn't quite fit the "women's music" pigeonhole, nor is she a New Age artist. Sarah McLachlan has made heaps of money for doing something close to what McKeown does, but not exactly the same; McKeown's songs are richer, harder to grasp, and ultimately more satisfying. Of late, McKeown has appeared in Johnny Cunningham's production of *Peter and Wendy* and has been touring in duos and trios with other musicians. Another album with Lindsey Horner (bass guitar, bass clarinet, whistle) will be released in 1998. She's done vocal work on albums by rockabilly humorists Five Chinese Brothers, dance-trance project Arthur Loves Plastic, and pop-spiritual writer Thomas Moore. She's adept at slipping into the backing-singer role, but when she's up front, she rules the room.

what to buy: McKeown and the Chanting House's *Bones* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sheila-na-Gig, 1995/1-800-PRIME-CD, 1996, prod. Jimi Zhivago) is an extraordinary debut, an album that grows on the listener over time. A superb blend of originals and covers, it's a cogent and compelling debut album. Traditionally oriented listeners will be drawn to "Westron Wynde/Westlin Winds," which combines a ninth-century anonymous poem with Robert Burns's paean to hunting, and "Gorm," a chilling Gaelic lament. The more adventurous will be tantalized by the erotic "Curiouser" and the spooky title track. "Jericho" and "Snakes" are toe-tappers with spiritual guts, and "I Know I Know" would make Billie Holliday envious. Augmented by the artful sounds of cello, fiddle, hurdy-gurdy, percussion, bass, guitar, and pipes, McKeown's voice sails, moans, murmurs, and rings through it all like she's been at it for centuries.

what to buy next: *Bushes and Briars* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Alula, 1998, prod. Jamshied Sharifi, Akira Satake, Susan McKeown) gives traditional music the McKeown touch, with brooding vocals and moody instrumentation. *Through the Bitter Frost and Snow* ♪♪♪♪½ (PRIME CD, 1997, prod. Lindsey Horner, Susan McKeown, David Seitz) is a fine seasonal offering with the Celtic folk-jazz style found on much of *Bones*.

worth searching for: *Snakes* ♪♪♪♪ (PRIME CD, 1997, prod. various), McKeown's CD single, contains an in-concert recording of "Daddy's Little Girl" that suggests the passion of her live performances. Johnny Cunningham's *Peter and Wendy* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Alula, 1997, prod. Akira Satake), the music from Mabou Mines's stage production of J.M. Barrie's stories, includes luscious vocals from McKeown as well as vigorous Celtic instrumentals.

influences:

- Sandy Denny, Fotheringay, Pentangle, Mary Black, Johnny Cunningham
- Loreena McKennitt, Sarah McLachlan, Tori Amos, October Project

Pamela Murray Winters

Sarah McLachlan

Born January 28, 1968, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Sarah McLachlan grew up in Halifax, Nova Scotia, studying classical guitar and piano. At age 17, Nettwerk Records took notice—particularly of her stunning, dramatic vocals that tiptoe between her normal range, a throaty push, and a soprano falsetto (kind of like Enya without sounding too New Agey). McLachlan mixes that with an ethereal combination of layered guitars, keyboards, and ambient percussion, while her lyrics create almost visual images out of feelings and emotions. It's a unique sound that's allowed McLachlan to stand apart from the scores of female singers that long-negligent labels brought to the pop mainstream during the mid-90s.

what to buy: Her second album, *Solace* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arista/Nettwerk, 1991, prod. Pierre Marchand), is the deepest and most mesmerizing of her three releases, from the ambient-Celtic-folk mix of "Drawn to the Rhythm" to the gutsy guitar drive of "Into the Fire."

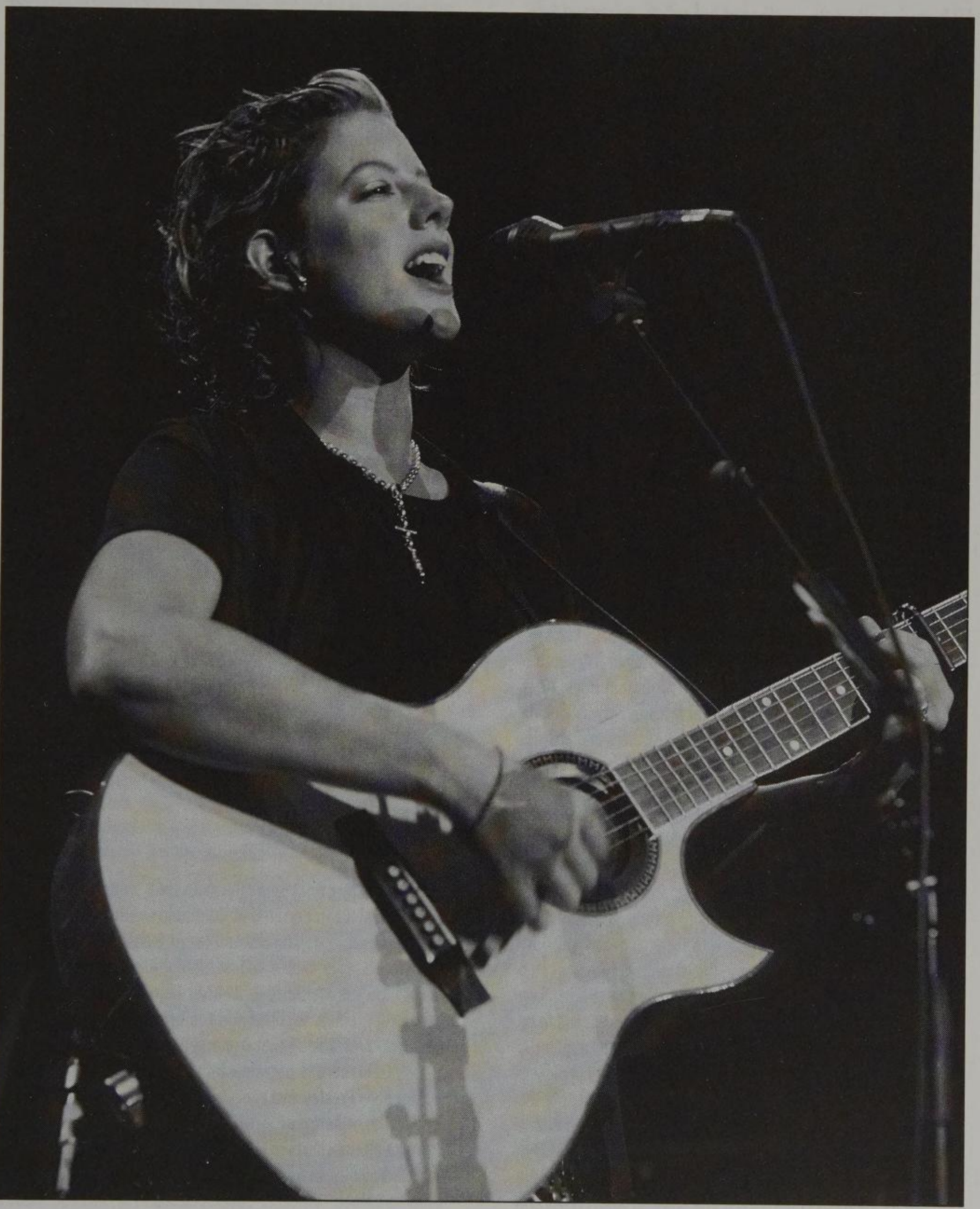
what to buy next: *Fumbling towards Ecstasy* ♪♪♪♪ (Arista/Nettwerk, 1993, prod. Pierre Marchand) adds some dance rhythms, drum machines, and a more straightforward pop tone to the songs, while *Touch* ♪♪ (Arista/Nettwerk, 1988, prod. Greg Reely)—despite gems such as "Vox" and "Ben's Song"—is definitely the work of a 20-year-old who hasn't quite caught her stride yet. *Live* ♪♪♪½ (Arista/Nettwerk, 1992) covers mostly "Solace" songs and shows McLachlan can replicate all the textures and layers of her studio albums onstage.

the rest:
Surfacing ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1997)

worth searching for: Multimedia fans should check out *The Freedom Sessions* ♪♪♪½ (Arista/Nettwerk, 1994), an eight-song

Sarah McLachlan **(© Ken Settle)**

sarah mclachlan



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6 *peter mclaughlin*

EP featuring alternate versions of her songs, a cover of Tom Waits's "Ol' 55," and CD-ROM footage of interviews, videos, and concerts.

influences:

◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Tom Waits, Natalie Merchant

▶▶ Paula Cole, Jewel, Lisa Loeb

Joshua Zarov

Peter McLaughlin

Born November 14, 1955, in Washington, DC.

Sometimes superlative instrumental and vocal performers are reluctant to surround themselves with backup musicians of comparable caliber, their insecurities or ego problems preventing them from sharing the spotlight with musical peers. Not so with Laurie Lewis, who in the dozen or so years of her career as a headline act on the folk and bluegrass circuit has consistently stocked her band, Grant Street, with some of the finest acoustic musicians to be found. Since the early '90s, she has come to rely heavily on the guitar talents of Peter McLaughlin, a native of the Washington, D.C. area who now lives in Tucson, Arizona. From his youth, he was raised in a family environment that stressed a passion for music—his father introduced him to bluegrass music at an early age, and his brother, David McLaughlin, is also a superb guitarist, as well as the longtime mandolin player for the legendary neo-traditional bluegrass revival band Johnson Mountain Boys. After graduating from college in Arizona, Peter McLaughlin was looking forward to a career as a geologist among the buttes and arroyos he had come to love in Northern Arizona, with music as a sideline. Soon, though, he found himself playing bluegrass in a local band called Flying South, one of whose members, mandolinist Tom Rozum, became a good friend. Rozum later left to join Grant Street, and when that band found itself in need of a guitarist during the early '90s, Rozum recommended McLaughlin to Lewis. Peter has been a fixture in the band since, though he still finds time to do several shows each year with Flying South as well. Top-rate flatpickers are a scarce breed; the relatively few names that make most everyone's list are Doc Watson, Norman Blake, Tony Rice, and Dan Crary, but on the basis of his work on stage and on record as a solo artist and with Laurie Lewis, McLaughlin is mighty close to joining that list. While there are plenty of pickers who can play fast (usually sounding staccato and choppy in the process), McLaughlin is one of the blessed few who can dazzle with speed, yet maintain a sense of tone, timing, and fluidity in his playing that adds immeasurably to the music, particularly the mixture of bluegrass, country, jazz, and swing at which Lewis and Grant Street excel. He also contributes to the vocal harmony of the band (in addition to Lewis and Rozum, Todd Phillips on bass), and his solo CD *Cliffs of Vermilion* gives him an opportunity to demonstrate his abilities as a lead vocalist as well. A former champion at the annual Flatpick Guitar competition at Winfield, Kansas, McLaughlin is, quite simply, one of the most accomplished and satisfying guitar pickers in the folk music world today.

what's available: *Cliffs of Vermilion* ♪♪♪♪ (Dog-Boy, 1996, prod. Laurie Lewis) is a collection of 13 tunes both traditional and original, from classic instrumentals like "St. Anne's Reel/Fisher's Hornpipe," to his own compositions (the title cut), to expressive vocalizations on standards like "Cole Younger."

worth searching for: McLaughlin appears on three cuts on Laurie Lewis's *True Stories* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Mike Marshall, Laurie Lewis). His work is stellar, but pay close attention to "Swept Away." Also, he appears in the album's showpiece cut, Lewis's award-winning rendition of Kate Long's "Who Will Watch the Home Place." On the album of duets released by Lewis and Rozum, *The Oak and the Laurel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Laurie Lewis, Tom Rozum), McLaughlin can be found on three tracks, including the rousing, high energy medley "Sleepy-Eyed John/Tom and Jerry."

influences:

◀◀ Doc Watson, Clarence White, Tony Rice

▶▶ David McLaughlin, David Grier, Scott Nygaard, Nina Gerber

see also: *Laurie Lewis*

John Lupton

Don McLean

Born October 2, 1945, in New Rochelle, NY.

After graduating from Iona College in 1968, folk-singing troubadour Don McLean enrolled at Columbia Graduate School, but didn't attend, choosing instead to work dates with childhood hero Pete Seeger. McLean's first album, *Tapestry*, was released in 1970 on the Mediarts label after being turned down by 34 other companies. It contained the original version of "And I Love You So," a song that became a moderate country hit for Bobby Goldsboro, a pop smash for Perry Como, and an album cut for Elvis Presley. McLean's breakthrough came with his second album, *American Pie*, which spent nearly two months atop the pop album charts in late 1971 and 1972 and was dedicated to Buddy Holly. In addition to the epic title song, that album also contained "Vincent." After *American Pie*, McLean made a

series of inspired folk-rock albums, but never recaptured the magic of his eight-and-a-half minute blockbuster, though he was the inspiration for the song "Killing Me Softly with His Song," a chart-topping smash for Roberta Flack and, more recently, the Fugees. McLean, whose lengthy list of influences includes Hank Williams and Johnny Cash, traveled to Nashville in 1978 to record *Chain Lightning*, the album yielding his only Top 10 country hit, a remake of Roy Orbison's "Crying" that didn't chart until 1981. In 1981 he released another Nashville album, *Believers*, which, like *Chain Lightning*, was engineered by Billy Sherrill and featured some of Music City's prime players. He had one of his last hits with "He's Got You," a remake of Patsy Cline's "She's Got You," in 1987.

what to buy: *The Best of Don McLean* ♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1988, prod. various) is a 10-song career overview containing all of his key tracks as well as his loving remake of hero Buddy Holly's "Every Day."

what to buy next: *American Pie* ♪♪♪♪ (EMI-Manhattan, 1971, prod. Ed Freeman) is the original breakthrough album that made such a big noise during the winter of 1971, the pure and unpretentious work of a troubadour who had no idea that a chart-topping classic was in his future.

the rest:

Tapestry ♪♪♪♪ (Mediarts, 1970/Capitol, 1996)
Primetime ♪♪♪ (Arista 1977/Hip-O, 1997)
Believers ♪♪♪ (Millenium 1982/Hip-O, 1997)
For the Memories ♪♪♪♪ (Gold Castle, 1989/Hip-O, 1997)
Greatest Hits Live! ♪♪♪♪ (Gold Castle, 1990/Hip-O, 1997)
Head Room ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1991)
Don McLean Christmas ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1991)
Classics ♪♪♪♪ (Curb, 1992)
American Pie & Other Hits ♪♪♪ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
The River of Love ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1995)
Favorites & Rarities ♪♪♪ (Alliance, 1997)
Don McLean's Christmas Dreams ♪♪♪ (Hip-O, 1997)

worth searching for: *Chain Lightning* ♪♪♪♪ (Millennium, 1978/Hip-O, 1997, prod. Larry Butler) features his compassionate vocals on material like "Crying" and "Your Cheating Heart," recorded in Nashville. A country singer he's not, but with his impassioned but tasteful deliveries, McLean makes you believe every word he sings.

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams

▶▶ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Steve Forbert

David Sokol

Jeannie McLerie

See: Bayou Seco

James McMurtry

Born March 18, 1962, in Fort Worth, TX.

With a novelist's sense of detail and texture and a rocker's sense of rhythm, James McMurtry spins musical tales rich in imagery and emotion. His songs, like those of his first producer, John Mellencamp, examine the lives of disenfranchised Americans, those for whom the good life is just another myth, or those who had it and pissed it all away. It just so happens he does it with great guitar work and musical backing. To him, though, there's an important distinction between what he does and the work of a poet. Asked once if his lyrics, vivid as they are, could stand alone as poetry, he vehemently insisted they could not. "I just don't like poetry all that much," he said. It's just one more surprising admission from a guy any listener would swear had poetry in his blood. The son of Larry McMurtry, author of such renowned novels as *Lonesome Dove*, James has a solid storytelling pedigree, but where he learned to mix the detachment of a cynical observer with the mournful resignation of a wizened elder with a deadpan nasal twang is anybody's guess. (By the way, his English professor mom taught him to play guitar, though it was his dad's work on the screenplay of the Mellencamp film *Falling from Grace* that got the kindred troubadours connected.) Though he sounds like an authentically dust-covered, sweat-soaked Texan, McMurtry grew up in Virginia. He returned to Texas, first to San Antonio, during the '80s, then settled in Austin. A winner of the 1987 Kerrville Folk Festival's New Folk Contest, he was brought to Columbia by Mellencamp.

what to buy: *Too Long in the Wasteland* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989, prod. John Mellencamp) is a terrific debut from an artist who knows both the beauty of a single voice and guitar and the depth of a rock 'n' roll band. It's a deep examination of the heartland by someone whose gift for detailed observation is instinctive. *Candyland* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1992, prod. Michael Wanchic) blurs the distinctions between folk and rock, as McMurtry employs a Mellencamp-like sensibility to relay such little gems as "Safe Side," "Don't Waste Away," and "Good Life."

what to buy next: If the *Where'd You Hide the Body* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1995, prod. Don Dixon) single "Fuller Brush Man" doesn't make you relive your childhood, you didn't have one. And if "Levelland" doesn't make you stop what you're doing to pay attention, you've got no pulse. McMurtry didn't sell

enough discs for Columbia, so he wound up on Sugar Hill, without sacrificing any of the quality that drew the big guys to him in the first place. Catch the funky "Sixty Acres" and "Paris" in *It Had to Happen* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1997, prod. Lloyd Maines), then sit back and drift into McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* kind of world, one in which he's older and wiser, but still wonderful.

influences:

⏪ Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, John Hiatt, Band, Randy Newman, Bob Dylan, John Mellencamp, Bruce Springsteen, John Prine

⏩ Chris Whitley, Jesse Winchester, Joe Ely

Lynne Margolis

Brian McNeill

Born 1950, in Falkirk, Scotland.

Brian McNeill began his musical training in his early teens with formal violin lessons, and at the same time became an electric guitarist. During his college years, he discovered Celtic music and began to play traditional fiddle tunes. In 1969, along with Alan Reid and Ricky Starr, he formed the Battlefield Band, with which he played and sang for 21 years. During his years with the Battlefield Band, McNeill became one of Scotland's most noted musicians and songwriters. He plays fiddle, viola, mandolin, cittern, bouzouki, guitar, concertina, bass, and hurdy-gurdy, and his songs, including "The Yew Tree," "The Lads o' the Fair," and "The Snows of France and Holland," were among the best-loved of the Battlefield Band's repertoire. In addition to the many albums he recorded with the Battlefield Band, McNeill has recorded several solo projects. In 1990 he left the Battlefield Band, partly to put energy into his second career as a novelist. Since then, he has continued to perform, write songs, tour, and record as a solo artist and with various duos and groups.

what to buy: One of McNeill's most exciting projects, *The Back o' the North Wind* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1991, prod. Brian McNeill) is a concept album about Scottish emigration. Some of these songs are about important characters in history, including Flora MacDonald, who helped Prince Charlie Stuart escape the redcoats before immigrating to North Carolina, where her husband and son became redcoats themselves and fought against the United States in the Revolution; Andrew Carnegie, who left a dirt-poor childhood in Scotland to become one of America's most legendary tycoons; and John Muir, who survived an authoritarian Calvinist upbringing to become America's leading conservationist, the founder of both the Sierra Club and the National Parks system. Others are about more obscure figures, including McNeill's uncle Jim. In addition to the wonderfully worded songs, there are several sets of tunes both upbeat and sad. McNeill has also performed these songs as part of a multimedia presentation, but they hold together beautifully as an album.

what to buy next: This will depend a bit on your taste in music. If topical songs are your bag, try *No Gods* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1995, prod. Brian McNeill). Uncompromising songs like "Any Mick'll Do," about racism and bigotry of all sorts, and "Bring Back the Wolf," about harebrained schemes for Scotland's future, stand out on this release. On the other hand, it also features more personal songs, and quite a few good new fiddle tunes as well. If you like a mix of traditional and original songs and tunes, try McNeill's duo albums. *Horses for Courses* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1993, prod. Brian McNeill), recorded with Tom McDonagh, mixes traditional Irish songs from McDonagh with some of McNeill's songwriting, and traditional Celtic tunes with McNeill's compositions. McNeill takes a similar, but more purely Scottish, approach on *Stage by Stage* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1995, prod. Brian McNeill), which he recorded with singer and multi-instrumentalist Iain MacKintosh. This features traditional Scottish songs, some modern American and English ones, as well as tunes of various mongrel breeds. If traditional instrumentals excite you, McNeill's very first solo album, *Monksgate* ♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1978, prod. Brian McNeill), explores the musical traditions of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Northumbria with a wealth of musical guests, and if new tunes are what you're after, try *Unstrung Hero* ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1985, prod. Robin Morton), on which McNeill plays an astonishing variety of instruments and even sings a few songs. Another mixed bag album, *The Busker and the Devil's Only Daughter* ♪♪♪ (Temple, 1990, prod. Brian McNeill), is loosely based on the idea of busking, and on McNeill's first novel. Though it's not his greatest work, a lot of it is very good.

worth searching for: The LP *Sidetracks* ♪♪½ (Topic, 1980, prod. Robin Morton) has some nice material from McNeill and his Battlefield partner Alan Reid. It includes an unusual version of Stan Rogers's "Barrett's Privateers," collected orally in Scotland.

influences:

⏪ Archie Fisher, Dick Gaughan

⏩ Billy Bragg, Old Blind Dogs

see also: *The Battlefield Band*

Steve Winick

Michael McNevin

Northern California resident Michael McNevin constructs finely crafted story songs with intricate guitar accompaniment and direct, intimate lyrics.

what's available: *Secondhand Story* (Mudpuddle, 1993, prod. Michael McNevin) ♪♪♪½, McNevin's only full CD to date, is a minor masterpiece, with one memorable song after another. Highlights include the moving title tune, which recounts verbatim a letter McNevin found in a goodwill backpack, and "Jersey Jail," a depiction of a memorable, if demeaning, encounter he had with the law. McNevin has one otherwise unavailable song, "Adolescent Jinx," which appears on the anthology *Memorial Day: American Impressionist Songwriters Part II* (Waterbug, 1996).

influences:
◀◀ Chuck Brodsky, Richard Shindell

Michael Parrish

Jesse McReynolds

See: Jim & Jesse

Blind Willie McTell

Born William Samuel McTell, May 5, 1901, in Thomson, GA. Died April 19, 1959, in Milledgeville, GA.

A pathetic figure to strangers who listened to him sing for coins on the streets of Atlanta, Blind Willie McTell was a blues giant—a stirring guitarist, a composer of stunningly moving songs, and an interpreter of the first rank. Like John Lee Hooker, he blithely moved from label to label, scattering gems everywhere he recorded. He was Blind Sammie for Columbia, Georgia Bill on OKeh, Barrelhouse Sammy for Atlantic, Pig 'n Whistle Red on Regal. Whatever McTell's aliases, the snapping of his 12-string guitar and his sly voice were unmistakable. No song was out of his range. His repertoire included his own classic songs, obscure folk performances, sprightly rags, and dignified gospel laments. He was capable of launching off on a rollicking version of "Pinetop's Boogie Woogie" one moment, then stepping back with a haunting reading of the folk ballad "Delia." McTell's rolling "Statesboro Blues" became fodder for both the Allman Brothers Band and Taj Mahal. But he alone performed his vast arsenal of songs best, and it is hardly surprising that 40 years after McTell's death, few artists have tried to adapt him. McTell was born in deep Georgia cotton country, about 30 miles west of Augusta. His last name at birth was reportedly McTear or McTier. How it became corrupted to McTell is unknown. Blinded soon after birth, he compensated by relying on his memory and his acutely developed senses of hearing and touch. Legends grew around his exploits: McTell reportedly was able to lead sighted people around Atlanta's streets and even navigated New York's subway system; friends said he once picked off a threatening dog with a handgun. But McTell was most at home as a singer, often accompanied by his Atlanta colleague Curley Weaver. After performing with traveling shows, McTell enrolled in the state's school for the blind in Macon. There he learned Braille and obscure crafts like broom making and leather work. He attended blind academies in New York and Michigan before returning to Atlanta in 1927, where his long recording career started. His first nine sessions for Victor were among his most lasting, producing "Statesboro Blues" and the powerful "Dark Night Blues." He moved to Columbia, an association that lasted four years before McTell moved on in 1933. On more than 40 recordings McTell gave the widest view of his talents, from the jaunty "Razor Ball" to the chilling "You Was Born to Die." He

editor's choice
10 cajun albums

Bois Sec Ardoin & Canray Fontenot, *La Musique Creole* (Arhoolie)

Various Artists, *Le Gran Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology* (CMF)

D.L. Menard, Dewey Balfa, Marc Savoy, *Under the Green Oak Tree* (Arhoolie)

Nathan Abshire, *French Blues* (Arhoolie)

Harry Choates, *Fiddle King of Cajun Swing* (Arhoolie)

The Balfa Brothers, *The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music, Vols. 1 & 2* (Swallow)

Amédée Ardoin, *I'm Never Comin' Back: The Roots of Zydeco* (Arhoolie)

Dennis McGee, *The Complete Recordings, 1929–1930* (Yazoo)

Various Artists, *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do* (Columbia)

Iry LeJeune, *Cajun's Greatest: The Definitive Collection* (Ace)

recorded briefly with Decca, then dropped from sight until 1940, when archivist John Lomax recorded him for the Library of Congress. The heyday of urban R&B should have spelled the end for McTell's lonely minstrelsy, yet he was recording again stunningly in 1949 for Atlantic Records, despite its emphasis on brass-driven R&B. He and Weaver followed up with sessions for Regal beginning in 1950. Drinking heavily, McTell still had enough verve left for one last session with Prestige in 1956. His death of a brain hemorrhage in 1959 was so ignored that blues researchers were still trying to find him a decade later. Their obsession was understandable. "Nobody," Bob Dylan sings in his barren tribute to the blind street performer, "sings the blues like Blind Willie McTell."

what to buy: The title *The Definitive Blind Willie McTell* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1994, prod. Lawrence Cohn) exaggerates only slightly. This two-CD set omits only McTell's Victor sides in its comprehensive culling of his classic early work. It is still indispensable, both for its respectful mastering and top-notch research by blues historian David Evans. Tipped off by a distributor that McTell was alive and well in Atlanta, record mogul Ahmet Ertegun lost no time in recording the street singer on *Atlanta 12 String* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1991, prod. Ahmet Ertegun, Herb Abrahamson). Even if the released single sank like a stone, McTell's performance is a tour de force, ranging from the dooming "On the Cooling Board" to the infectious "Kill It Kid."

what to buy next: For those who have to have everything, there is *Blind Willie McTell: Complete Recorded Works (1927–35), Volumes I-III* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1990, prod. Johnny Parth). Among Austrian archivist Parth's finest sets, these three separate CDs will not lose their luster until BMG and MCA put out their own McTell on disc. *Complete Library of Congress Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1990) contains both songs and recorded monologues, including a wary McTell's careful discourse on race relations in the South, but for some reason, the four songs seem just a cut below his 1930s works. On *Last Session* ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1991), McTell's voice is frayed and his fingers have lost some of their dexterity, but there is still haunted dignity in these final works. Not to be overlooked, either, is *Blind Willie McTell, 1927–35* ♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1990), a decent primer for those new to McTell but overshadowed in recent years by the Columbia and Document sets. The Victor classics included here complement the Columbia set nicely.

what to avoid: *Doing That Atlanta (1927–1935)* ♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1991), a representative sampling of McTell's busiest years, has been mostly superseded by the Columbia two-CD set, which features cleaner masters and better sound. There are a few decent McTell efforts on Decca—but all of those duplicate the comprehensive Document releases.

worth searching for: *Pig 'n Whistle Red* ♪♪♪♪ (Biograph, 1993) is a delicately remastered reissue of McTell's 1950 flirtation with Regal. The 20 tracks are a mixed bag, including a revamped "Savannah Mama" and a reprise of 1933's "Good Little Thing." The session is watered down by some weak hokum and three throwaways by McTell's running buddy, Curley Weaver.

influences:

◀◀ Blind Blake, Curley Weaver

▶▶ Taj Mahal, Allman Brothers Band, Bob Dylan

Steve Braun

Ralph McTell

Born Ralph May, December 3, 1944, in Farnborough, Kent, England.

Ralph McTell is known best for one song. His "Streets of London" has been recorded by over 200 artists and five times by McTell himself. The third song he wrote, it reached number two on the charts when he recorded it for the second time in 1974. McTell is another product of the fecund musical atmosphere of postwar England. He's been working the folk circuit in England and worldwide since the late 1950s. The deep-voiced, socially conscious singer's most unusual occupation was as a children's show host. He's known to British youth from "Alphabet Zoo" and "Tickle on the Tum" from 1983.

what to buy: A highlight of *From Clare to Here: The Songs of Ralph McTell* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1991) is McTell's "The Girl from the Hiring Fair." Also recorded by Fairport Convention (several of whose members appear on McTell's version), it's a richly romantic song with a traditional sound and a happy ending. The album also includes "Summer Girls" and "Streets of London."

best of the rest:

Slide Away the Screen (Road Goes on Forever, 1979)
Silver Celebration (1994)
Stealin' Back (Castle, 1996)
Sand in Your Shoes ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1998)

worth searching for: The GP's: *Saturday Rolling Around* ♪♪♪♪ (1981/Woodworm, 1991) documents the six-gig life of the country-rock supergroup comprising McTell, Richard Thompson, Dave Pegg, and Dave Mattacks. The CD includes McTell's "Zimmerman Blues" and "Love Grows" as well as songs by Hank

Williams, Woody Guthrie, and Bob Dylan. The performances are enthusiastic and sloppy, and the CD makes fun traveling music.

influences:

⏪ Gordon Lightfoot, Bob Dylan

⏩ Simon Nicol, Huw & Tony Williams

Pamela Murray Winters

Melanie

Born Melanie Safka, February 3, 1947, in Queens, NY.

A guitar-wielding flower child with a sultry rasp of a voice, Melanie combined the winsome folk of late-'60s Joni Mitchell with the folk-naif girlishness of England's Mary Hopkin. Somehow, she managed to crack the mainstream in a way neither of those artists did. From 1969 to 1971, Melanie landed on pop charts both at home and abroad, establishing herself in the vein of other nonpolitical folk artists (Donovan, John Sebastian) with pleasant sing-alongs such as "What Have They Done to My Song, Ma?" and the chart-topping "Brand New Key." Her music has enjoyed an element of crossover success thanks to covers by Barbra Streisand, Ray Charles, and Mel Torme, among others. Comebacks during the late '80s and again during the mid-'90s showed she hasn't lost her audience or her touch. She remains a sophisticated songwriter of humane and healing themes.

what to buy: *The Best of Melanie* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990, prod. various) is certainly the right choice to make. The 18 tracks include all six of her Top 40 hits, as well as her compelling cover of the Rolling Stones' classic "Ruby Tuesday."

what to buy next: *Candles in the Rain* ♪♪♪ (Buddah, 1970, prod. Hank Hoffman) is Melanie's premiere album, featuring deft and inspired songwriting ("Lay Down," "Ruby Tuesday," "What Have They Done to My Song, Ma?") and glorious backup vocals from the gospel chorus (and Buddah labelmates) the Edwin Hawkins Singers.

what to avoid: Melanie tried to shed her girlish image on *Ballroom Streets* ♪♪ (RCA, 1979/Rhino, 1994), and while the songs are more sophisticated than on previous efforts, nothing here is as strong as her early hits.

the rest:

Leftover Wine (Buddah/One Way, 1970)
Freedom Knows My Name (Lonestars, 1993)

worth searching for: *Gather Me* ♪♪♪♪ (Neighborhood, 1971, prod. Peter Schekeryk), the first release on the label founded by Melanie and husband Schekeryk, was a winning effort that housed "Brand New Key" and the equally wonderful "Ring the Living Bell."

influences:

⏪ Joan Baez, Odetta, Ronettes, Dusty Springfield

⏩ Olivia Newton-John, Alanis Morissette, Jewel

Christopher Scapelliti

Memphis Jug Band /Picaninny Jug Band /Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Formed 1927, in Memphis, TN. Disbanded 1935.

Charlie Burse, guitar, mandolin, vocals; Jab Jones, piano, vocals, jug; Charlie Pierce, violin; Will Shade, harmonica, vocals; Vol Stevens, mandolin, vocals; Will Weldon, guitar, vocals; Charlie Polk, vocals, jug; Tewee Blackman, guitar; Hattie Hart, vocals; Jab Jones, jug; Charlie Nickerson, piano, vocals; Ben Ramey, kazoo, vocals; Milton Robie, violin; Memphis Minnie, guitar, vocals; Hambone Lewis, jug.

Jug bands were found in nearly every city in the South during the 1920s and '30s, but they were most popular and prolific in Memphis, Tennessee. The Memphis Jug Band was the first (and some consider the best) of many to record. Between 1927 and 1934, the group recorded close to 100 sides. Led by multi-instrumentalist Will Shade, the Memphis Jug Band performed at every conceivable type of venue: street corners, backwater juke joints, city nightclubs, political rallies, private parties at elegant homes and hotel ballrooms, openings of stores, medicine shows, and even on excursion trains and riverboats. Their repertoire had to include a wide range of styles in order to entertain all these different sorts of audiences, so they could and did play everything from the latest popular ragtime pieces to old-time waltzes and breakdowns, raucous bawdy blues songs, and humorous vaudeville routines. This seminal jug band went through numerous configurations during its seven years of recording; the consistent element was the band's organizer, Will Shade (who sometimes used the pseudonym "Sun Brimmer," a local name for a parasol, which "will shade"). The group stopped recording in 1934, but in 1956 Sam Charters recorded a recreation of the Memphis Jug Band with two of its original members, Shade and Charlie Burse, joined by Gus Cannon (of Cannon's Jug Stompers).

what to buy: *Memphis Jug Band* ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1991) provides a comprehensive introduction to the good-time party music

played by this genre-defining aggregation of Memphis's finest musicians and spans their entire recorded output from 1927 to 1934. It includes all their classics: their most well-known song, "Stealin," the achingly beautiful vocal harmonies of "K.C. Moan," Hattie Hart's down-home "Cocaine Habit," the raunchy duet "Cave Man Blues," and much, much more. The Memphis Jug Band provided a benchmark for all future jug bands, and this material shows why: an entertaining, danceable fusion of blues, pop music, and old-time music featuring a thundering jug in place of a bass, melodic kazoo and harmonica duets anchored by two thumping guitars, vocals that are by turns lighthearted, lewd, melancholy, and comical. It's a must-have for anyone interested in jug band music.

what to buy next: Once you're hooked on the Memphis Jug Band sound, invest in the three Document CDs, *Complete Recorded Works, Volume I (1927–1928)*, *Complete Recorded Works, Volume II (1928–1929)*, and *Complete Recorded Works, Volume III (1930)* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, compilation prod. Johnny Parth). This will give you everything recorded by the Memphis Jug Band during its heyday, from 1927 to 1930, in chronological order. You'll hear some gems that don't appear on the Yazoo reissue, including the raucous "It Won't Act Right," and the enigmatic double-entendre "Papa's Got Your Bath Water On" (both on *Volume III*). *Volume III* also contains two wonderful songs featuring Memphis Minnie backed by the Memphis Jug Band: a remake of her hit, "Bumble Bee Blues," plus "Meningitis Blues." On *Volume II* are curiosities like "Jug Band Waltz" and "Mississippi River Waltz," among the very few waltzes recorded by any jug band; these were probably commonly played for both blacks and whites at the parties where the Memphis Jug Band entertained. *Volume I* includes an interesting laid-back rendition of "Kansas City Blues," recorded only nine days after Jim Jackson's hit version.

the rest:

Complete Recorded Works (1932–1934) ♪♪♪ (Document, 1990)

Associates and Alternate Takes (1927–30) ♪♪♪ (Wolf, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Gus Cannon, Charlie Jordan, Ma Rainey, Whistler Jug Band, Beale Street Sheiks, Furry Lewis, Dixieland Jug Blowers, Tampa Red, Sleepy John Estes

▶▶ Jim Kweskin's Jug Band, Lovin' Spoonful, Grateful Dead, Maria Muldaur, Even Dozen Jug Band, Hot Tuna, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Del Rey, Arlo Guthrie, Youngbloods

see also: *Memphis Minnie*

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Memphis Minnie

Born Lizzie Douglas, June 3, 1897, in Algiers, LA. Died August 6, 1973, in Memphis, TN.

A tough lady, Memphis Minnie had to fight vigorously to make her niche in a men's world and establish herself as one of the greatest blues artists of all times. Raised in Walls, Mississippi, she learned to play banjo and guitar and moved, alone, to Memphis in 1910 (at age 13!). She played on the streets and toured the South with medicine shows and circuses and lived with Casey Bill Weldon, who tutored her. In 1929 she married guitarist "Kansas" Joe McCoy, with whom she formed a marvelous, inventive duo with a rural flavor. She recorded some masterpieces of guitar playing ("Hoodoo Lady"), and her style became more urbanized. She kept evolving, and in 1938 formed a duo with her new lover, guitarist Ernest "Little Son Joe" Lawlars, whose compositions ("Digging My Potatoes," "Me and My Chauffeur," "I'm So Glad") and delicate accompaniment combined with stunning guitar interplay helped to increase Minnie's popularity and success ("In My Girlish Days"). In the late 1940s and early 1950s she tried several come-backs, but asthma and new trends in African-American music forced her to retire in Memphis in 1957. Memphis Minnie will remain one of the most influential blues personalities, a powerful voice, prolific composer, and outstanding guitar stylist with a legacy of more than 250 recordings, some of which are still widely performed by contemporary artists.

what to buy: *Hoodoo Lady (1933–37)* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Roots 'n' Blues, 1991, prod. Lawrence Cohn) is an 18-track collection of the best songs recorded in that period—"Hoodoo Lady," "If You See My Rooster," "Black Cat Blues," and "Good Morning" among them. *Me and My Chauffeur 1935–46* ♪♪♪♪♪ (E.P.M. Blues Collection, 1997, prod. Jean Buzelin), a 20-track collection, includes "Diggin My Potatoes," "I'm So Glad," "Down in New Orleans," and other masterpieces with some overlap from *Hoodoo Lady*. Minnie's electric guitar work combines nicely with Joe's acoustic playing on *I Ain't No Bad Gal 1941* ♪♪♪♪♪ (CBS/Portrait Masters, 1988, prod. Bob Thiele); its 12 tracks from two 1941 sessions include four previously unissued selections.

what to buy next: *Memphis Minnie & Kansas Joe—1929–34 Recordings in Chronological Order, Volumes I–IV* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. Johnny Parth) is for completists but comes highly recommended.

the rest:

Memphis Minnie: Complete Recorded Works 1935–41 Volumes I–V ♪♪♪♪ (RST, 1991)

Memphis Minnie: The Complete Post-War Recordings in Chronological Order 1944–53 Volumes I–III ♪♪♪♪ (Wolf, 1991)
Early Rhythm & Blues 1949 (Biograph, 1992)
Hot Stuff (Collector's Edition, 1996)
Queen of the Blues ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1997)

worth searching for: *Memphis Minnie's Blues—Woman with Guitar* (Da Capo Press, 1992) offers a fascinating read and look at Minnie's importance. Written by Paul and Beth Garon, the first part, a biography with selected lyrics, is essential reading. Part two, a surrealistic analysis of Minnie's personality and lyrics, is more controversial.

influences:

◀◀ Frank Stokes, Furry Lewis, Beale Street Sheiks, Robert Wilkins, Jim Jackson, Casey B. Weldon

▶▶ Baby Boy Warren, Johnny Shines, J.B. Hutto, J.B. Lenoir

Robert Sacré

Doris "D.L." Menard

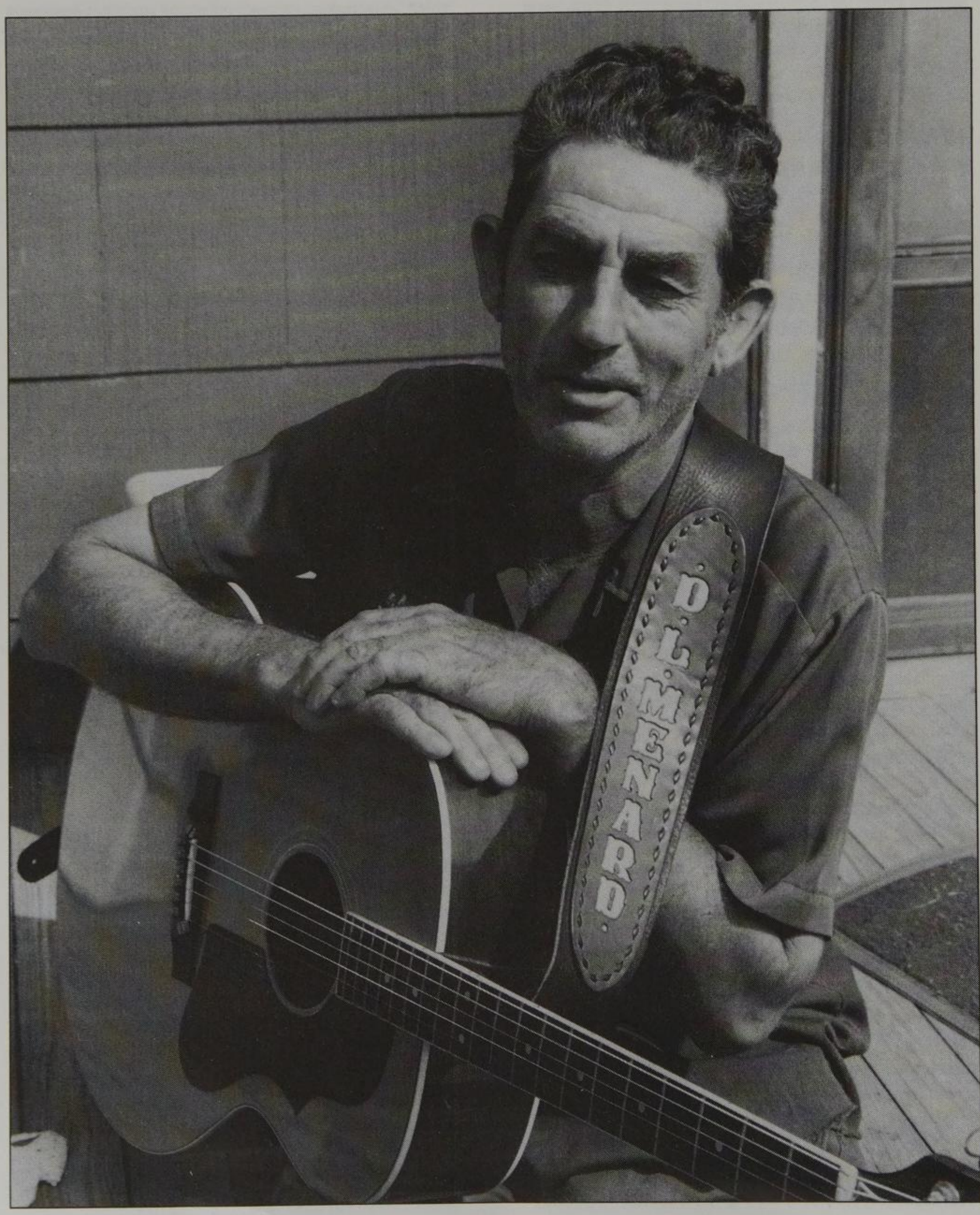
Born April 14, 1932, in Erath, LA.

Cajun singer and songwriter D.L. Menard, known as the "Cajun Hank Williams," has penned some of the most enduring modern Cajun songs, including his biggest hit, "The Back Door," which has been recorded by countless bands both in and out of Louisiana. His vocal style is nasal, intense, and immediately identifiable. Another of Menard's sobriquet's is the "Cajun rhythm machine," referring to his crisp, driving style of rhythm guitar playing. D.L. Menard still lives in Erath, Louisiana, the small town where he was born and raised, where he and his wife Louella run a chair factory, producing handmade rockers with caned seats. His father, Ophy, played Cajun music on the harmonica, and, at age 16, D.L. ordered his first guitar from Montgomery Ward. A few months later he began to play in Cajun dance halls with Elias Badeaux's band, the Louisiana Aces. During the postwar era, Menard says, "country music was pretty popular and a Cajun band that couldn't play country music with the Cajun music didn't have too many jobs." So the teenaged D.L. made a specialty of singing the popular country hits of Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams, in addition to traditional Cajun French songs. During the early '50s, inspired by a chance meeting with his idol, Hank Williams, Menard began to make up his own songs in Cajun French. His first, "The Jolly Roger Waltz," sold moderately well, but the second, "The Back Door," was a huge regional hit, inspiring dozens of cover versions. During the '60s Menard began traveling outside southwest Louisiana, eventually touring in five continents. His outgoing, wisecracking style of performing combines humorous Cajun anecdotes with excellent traditional Cajun French music, making him a favorite at festivals and concerts. In addition, he continues to attract brilliant younger musicians as sidemen, including many of the finest accordion and fiddle players in Cajun music: Horace Trahan, Eddie LeJeune, Marc Savoy, Paul Daigle, Dewey Balfa, and Ken Smith. In 1994 Menard won a National Heritage Award, the National Endowment for the Arts' highest honor for a traditional artist.

what to buy: *Under the Green Oak Tree* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1976, prod. Chris Strachwitz) is a paradigm of traditional Cajun music by three undisputed masters of the genre. Marc Savoy's ornate accordion stylings and Dewey Balfa's haunting, soulful fiddling are anchored by the Cajun rhythm machine on standards of Cajun music, including great versions of "Lake Arthur Stomp" and "Un Gros Erreur." In addition, Menard sings several of his own hits, including "The Back Door" and the lovely title cut, which is a beautiful waltz. Highly recommended as an introduction to traditional Cajun music, this album sounds exactly like what it is: a relaxed yet intense musical conversation between three friends sitting around playing the music they love. *Cajun Memories* ♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1995, prod. Floyd Soileau) is a compilation of Menard's earliest Swallow recordings, including influential classic versions of "The Back Door," "Jolly Roger Waltz," and "She Didn't Know I Was Married," as well as many other Menard originals.

what to buy next: Out of all of D.L. Menard's albums, *Cajun Saturday Night* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Jerry Douglas) is probably the least Cajun-influenced. Produced by Nashville Dobro whiz Jerry Douglas, the album features Cajunesque honky tonk numbers, sung entirely in English and backed by Nashville session men Buck White, Ricky Skaggs, and Jerry Douglas. Although *Cajun Saturday Night* is not by any means traditional Cajun music, it might serve as a good introduction for those timid listeners who are reluctant to dive into the heady and strange gumbo that is REAL down-home Cajun. *No Matter Where You Are, There You At* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. D.L. Menard, Ken Irwin) offers a more traditional treatment of Cajun standards, and a few non-Cajun standards as well (such as "Wildwood Flower," usually a guitar showcase but here presented as an exuberant Cajun two-step!). Eddie LeJeune and Blackie Forestier take turns on the Cajun accordion, combining with Ken Smith's Texas-tinged fiddling to provide a perfect foil for Menard's unique vocal style. *Le Trio Cadien* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Eddie LeJeune, Ken Irwin) is an excellent offering of Cajun standards, featuring the Menard-LeJeune-Smith triumvi-

doris "d.l." menard



rate, which unfortunately ended shortly after *Le Trio Cadien* was released. LeJeune's pyrotechnic accordion playing has to be among the hottest in Cajun music, and Smith, with his background in Texas contest-style fiddling, has the chops to match him in speed and virtuosity. As always, Menard provides rock-solid rhythm guitar, requiring neither bass nor drums to be strong and thoroughly danceable.

influences:

◀◀ Hank Williams, Harry Choates, Iry LeJeune, Marc Savoy, Balfa Brothers

▶▶ Eddie LeJeune, California Cajun Orchestra, Savoy-Smith Cajun Band, Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys, Balfa Toujours

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Metamora

See: Malcolm Dalglish, Pete Sutherland, Grey Larsen

Richard Meyer

Born September 6, 1952, in New Rochelle, NY.

A constant fixture on the Greenwich Village coffeehouse circuit since the 1980s, Richard Meyer's songwriting is intensely personal and reflective, with songs that speak from the heart and soul of urbania. A master of blues, folk, and pop styles, Meyer provides glimpses into personalities and experiences that transcend the everyday ("All My Ex-Girlfriends (Are Married)" from *Laughing/Scared* and "The Empress of Clowns" from *The Good Life!*). An editor and writer for *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, Meyer has produced more than 60 albums with various folk artists and recorded a number of live radio broadcasts and concerts of established and emerging American singer-songwriters. He is also an acting consultant to Gadfly Records and Shanachie Records. In addition to his musical endeavors, Meyer is a professional designer of scenery and lighting for the theater, with hundreds of productions to his credit. Two of his three albums of "cinematic songs," *The Good Life!* and *A Letter from the Open Sky*, have been released nationally on the Shanachie label.

what to buy: *A Letter from the Open Sky* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994, prod. Richard Meyer) features bittersweet existential lyrics on "Century's End," "Blind October," and the title cut.

D.L. Menard **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what to buy next: *The Good Life!* ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Richard Meyer) paints an abstract watercolor of Meyer's private universe with "Je Ne Sais Pas" and "Uneasy Nights." Both albums feature ace New York session musicians Howie Wyeth (drums), Mark Dann (bass), and Andrew Hardin (guitar) who deliver the right amount of subtle brilliance to Meyer's lyrics.

worth searching for: *Laughing/Scared* ♪♪ (Old Forge Records, 1988, prod. Richard Meyer) is Meyer's first effort on vinyl, and it's certainly worth the effort to locate. Order from Old Forge Records, 21 Schofield Street, City Island, New York 10464; telephone (718) 885-3268.

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Bobby Darin, Paul Simon, Doc Watson, Ella Fitzgerald

▶▶ Richard Shindell, Richard Goldman, Rod MacDonald

TJ McGrath

Walt Michael

Born June 20, 1946, in Bethesda, MD.

Multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Walt Michael encountered traditional folk music in the mid-'60s and began a career in string-band music. Michael heard his first hammered dulcimer being played in 1970 at the Fox Hollow Festival in Petersburg, New York. A year later he helped form Bottle Hill, one of the pioneer groups in "newgrass" music. In 1977 he formed the trio of Michael, McCreesh, and Campbell (with Tom McCreesh and Tom "Harley" Campbell) who toured throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. In 1978 they collaborated with the Pilobolus Dance Theater in creating "Molly's Not Dead"—a dance piece that was performed on Broadway, on television, and throughout the world. In 1980 the trio was selected by the National Fine Arts Committee as "Official Minstrels of the 13th Olympic Winter Games" and performed some 14 concerts during the games. During ABC's broadcast of the closing ceremonies, the trio performed Michael's tune "Snowblind" to an audience of an estimated 900 million world television viewers. In 1982 Michael formed "Walt Michael and Company," an ensemble of gifted instrumentalists and singers that has included John Kirk, Frank Orsini, Mark Murphy, Evan Stover, and Tom Wetmore. In 1995 he founded the traditional music and arts center, Common Ground on the Hill, on the campus of Western Maryland College in Westminster, Maryland, where he serves as artistic director.

what's available: *Music for the Hammered Dulcimer/Bermudaful* ♪♪♪♪ (MCE Records/Eastwick, 1983, prod. Walt Michael) is a

collection of new and traditional acoustic music featuring his expressive hammered dulcimer playing. Walt's original "Bermudaful" and "Snowblind" are included on this recording, as well as such traditional pieces as "Planxty Erwin" (Turlough O'Carolan) and "The Dark Island," a Scottish tune that is played in some interesting variations. Michael has several wonderful musicians assisting on these recordings, many of which appear elsewhere on his Walt Michael and Company recordings. *Smoky Mountain Gospel* ♪♪♪♪ (Brentwood, 1994, prod. Walt Michael) is another fine example of Walt Michael's inventive playing and arranging. Any of Michael's recordings can be ordered from Common Ground on the Hill, Western Maryland College, Westminster, Maryland 21157.

worth searching for: There are two out-of-print recordings of Walt Michael as part of Bottle Hill, *A Rumor in Their Own Time* ♪♪♪ (Biograph, 1972, prod. Arnold S. Caplin) and *Light Our Way Along the Highway* ♪♪♪ (Biograph, 1975, prod. Arnold S. Caplin) that include musicians Lewis London (vocals, banjo, guitar), Rexford Hunt (Dobro), Barry Mitterhoff (vocals, mandolin), and Fraser Shaw (vocals, string bass).

solo outings:

Walt Michael and Tom McCreesh:
Dance, like a Wave of the Sea ♪♪♪ (Front Hall Records/Eastwick, 1978)

Michael, McCreesh & Campbell:
The Host of the Air ♪♪♪ (Front Hall Records/Eastwick, 1980)

Walt Michael and Company:
The Good Old Way ♪♪♪ (Front Hall Records/Eastwick, 1985)
Live! ♪♪♪ (MCE Records/Eastwick, 1985)
Step Stone ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Spence, Bill Monroe, Christian Bailey, Cripple Cleve Cline

▶▶ Steve Schneider, Tina Bergmann, Madeline MacNeil

Heidi Cerrigione

Lynn Miles

Born September 29, 1958, in Sweetsburgh, Quebec, Canada.

Lynn Miles is a singer-songwriter whose lyrics are simple and familiar but whose melodies and harmonies conjure up something rich and mysterious. And she has the perfect voice for such mysteries—a reedy mezzo soprano that rises into a piercing chime and then relaxes into a comforting hum. She grew up in Ottawa, Ontario, where she studied classical violin, flute, piano, and voice and eventually gave voice lessons to a young Alanis Morissette. She had solid pop instincts in the vein of such heroines as Carole King and Laura Nyro, but during the '80s and '90s it was easier to make a living as a singer-songwriter on the folkie coffeehouse circuit than anywhere else, so Miles became a folk singer. In 1995, still based in Ottawa, she signed a songwriting deal with Criterion Music, the publisher that discovered Lyle Lovett. Criterion got Miles a record deal with Rounder subsidiary Philo in 1996 and convinced Joni Mitchell's ex-husband and collaborator Larry Klein to produce Miles's third album, due in 1998.

what's available: *Slightly Haunted* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1996, prod. Jeffrey Lesser) is an album where the rise of great hopes and the fall of great disappointments are conveyed through the captivating melodies and chord changes more than the lyrics. When Miles confronts a lover with the suspicion that "You Don't Love Me Anymore," the dramatic chorus with its big, sustained notes captures all the courage and fear of such a showdown. When she reminds a disappointed lover that she always warned him not to count on her, there's a finger-snapping jauntiness to the punch line, "I Always Told You the Truth." On "The Ghost of Deadlock," the verses describe a relationship stalemated in silence, but the chorus articulates the singer's unspoken feelings in a big, unleashed melody that Miles belts out with impressive power. The heart of each song is Miles's voice and her acoustic rhythm guitar, but most of the tracks are dressed up by Ian LeFeuvre's Knopfleresque electric guitar and a tasteful rhythm section.

worth searching for: Miles's first CD, *Chalk This One up to the Moon* ♪♪½ (Snowy River Records, 1991, prod. Bill Stunt, Lynn Miles) is an inconsistent effort, but its high points hint at the tremendous breakthrough she would make five years later. "It's Hockey Night in Canada," with its mixture of gentle mocking and genuine affection for the national pastime, became a local favorite, and "I Can't Tell You Why" is a love song with a gorgeous refrain.

influences:
◀◀ Carole King, Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Patty Larkin, Fred Eaglesmith

Geoffrey Himes

Michael Miles

Chicago resident Michael J. Miles is one of the world's most adventurous clawhammer style banjo players, as well as an accomplished fingerstyle guitarist. An administrator at the Old

Town School of Folk Music, Miles has made music education an important part of his career, producing numerous books and instructional tapes for banjo and guitar. For much of the last decade he has been engaged in an in-depth adaptation of Bach's cello works for the clawhammer banjo, as well as producing a solo theater piece, *The Magic Banjo.*

what to buy: *American Bach* ♪♪♪♪ (Right Turn on Red CD, 1997, prod. Michael J. Miles) is a remarkable recording featuring only Miles on banjo and Al Ehrich on standup bass. The work consists of three suites: Bach's first and third cello suites and Miles's own "Suite for the Americas." Miles's painstaking, inventive arrangements capture the nuances of the Bach pieces admirably, and his own ambitious composition is a finely crafted evocation of Americana.

what to buy next: *Counterpoint* ♪♪♪½ (Right Turn on Red CD, 1990, prod. Michael J. Miles, Robert S. Lyons) contains 11 pieces that feature Miles double-tracked on melody and harmony banjo, placing the instrument into unusual juxtapositions with instruments like the baroque flute, marimba, and Irish accordion. This disc features a superb supporting cast, including Ehrich, guitarists Muriel Anderson and Jim DeWan, accordionist Jimmy Keane, and marimba player Jef Thomas.

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Walt Koker, J.S. Bach

▶▶ Tony Trischka, Bad Livers

Michael Parrish

Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Formed in 1975, in Annandale, VA.

Kit Putnam (born December 29, 1941, in Richmond, VA), dulcimer, fiddle, psaltery, triangle, vocals; Kathleen Gotzmer (born April 6, 1957, in Sharon, PA), guitar, dulcimer, psaltery, bass, vocals (1992–present); Keith Young (born July 8, 1929, in Lafayette, IN), bass, dulcimer, guitar, vocals; Woody Padgett (born November 17, 1933, in Jacksonville, FL), autoharp, dulcimer, vocals; Neal Walters (born October 3, 1941, in Windom, MN), guitar, banjo, dulcimer, mandolin, bass, vocals (1978–present); Bill Wallace, guitar, dulcimer, vocals, (1975–77); Pat Appino, dulcimer, vocals (1975–79); Robin Gaiser, guitar, dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, vocals (1977–87); Terry Houff, guitar, dulcimer, mandolin, bass, vocals (1981–87).

Luthier Keith Young organized the Mill Run Dulcimer Band in 1975 to showcase the Appalachian dulcimers he was beginning to build in his basement. The band took its name from Colvin Run Mill, a restored eighteenth-century grist mill in Great Falls, Virginia, where they have appeared regularly for more than 20 years. As one might expect, the group has always featured the Appalachian dulcimer. All of the band members play the instrument, though never at the same time. Seldom straying far from the Washington, D.C., area, the band built a loyal following with a combination of traditional Appalachian material, sentimental and nostalgic songs from the Carter Family and others, and more contemporary songs that adapt well to their relaxed and folksy style. Their catalog now includes six albums, with a seventh on the way, and their appeal has broadened as the dulcimer has grown in popularity across the country. Young continues to make superb dulcimers and autoharps from his shop in Annandale, Virginia and his handmade instruments are in great demand. He is regarded as one of the four or five top dulcimer makers in the country. For the past several years, he has taught a dulcimer construction workshop at the Augusta Heritage workshops in Elkins, West Virginia, and runs a popular program of group classes in the D.C. area. In addition to his Mill Run work, Neal Walters performs as both a solo act and as part of the band Doofus, along with his wife Coleen, and John and Heidi Cerrigione from Ellington, Connecticut. Their first CD, *What Did We Leave Behind?*, is expected early next year. He also regularly teaches dulcimer workshops at Augusta, Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, Kentucky Music Week, and elsewhere. With Heidi Cerrigione, he recently published his first book, *Thirty Old Time Songs and Tunes for Dulcimer and Autoharp,* and is a co-editor of the volume you are holding in your hand. Mill Run recordings are available from the band at 3815 Kendale Road, Annandale, Virginia 22003.

what to buy: *Long Time Traveling* ♪♪♪♪ (MRDB, 1992, prod. Mill Run Dulcimer Band) is the group's most recent release, and a good opportunity to sample their multi-layered vocal harmonies and charming instrumental arrangements. The traditional numbers "Going to the West," "Down by the Sally Gardens," and "Going across the Sea" anchor this collection—setting the stage for traditional-style presentations of the contemporary songs "Sunny Road" (Bill Staines), "Dear Companion" (Jean Ritchie), and "Give Yourself to Love" (Kate Wolf). Likewise the Appalachian hymns "Balm in Gilead" and "If I Could Hear My Mother Pray" present touching statements of faith, while the Carter Family classic "The Only Girl" resonates of true love. Most notable is Jay Ungar's haunting fiddle theme "Ashokan Farewell," from the PBS special *The Civil War,* with melody alternating between dulcimer, autoharp, and fiddle. This CD is rich in folk nostalgia—you can almost hear a warm and familiar voice opening with "It was a quiet day in Lake Wobegon. . . ."

mill run dulcimer band

what to buy next: *You've Been a Friend to Me* ♪♪♪♪ (MRDB, 1988, prod. Mill Run Dulcimer Band) presents another nice blending of traditional and contemporary folk. Carter Family covers include the humorous "Old Stern Bachelor" and the sentimental title song. The band's motto of "a chicken song on every turntable" is twice fulfilled with the lively old-time pieces "Crow Black Chicken" and "There's a Lock on the Chicken Coop Door." And the topic of love is celebrated with Bob Franke's contemporary "Thanksgiving Eve," and the widely sung, but rarely recorded hymn "In the Garden." Most notable is Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer," an innovative arrangement utilizing 14 of the 15 chords in the standard autoharp. And for a warm and peaceful closer, the band sings an unaccompanied arrangement of "Across the Bridge Where Angels Dwell."

the rest:
Sunday at the Mill ♪♪♪½ (MRDB, 1979)
Chicken in the Yard ♪♪♪ (MRDB, 1981)
Homespun Christmas ♪♪♪½ (MRDB, 1984)
Sweet Songs from Yesterday ♪♪♪½ (MRDB, 1984)
Give Me Just a Little More Time N/A (MRDB, 1998)

solo outings:
Neal Walters:
(With Heidi Cerrigione) *Thirty Old Time Songs and Tunes* (Doofus Music, 1996, prod. Neal Walters, Heidi Cerrigione) (cassette only)
(With Doofus) *What Did We Leave Behind?* N/A (Doofus Music, 1998)

influences:
◀◀ Simmons Family, Bill Staines, Carter Family
▶▶ Doofus, Sweetwater

Art Wojtowicz

Bill Miller

Born 1940, in WI.

Don't trouble yourself trying to label the music of Native American singer/songwriter Bill Miller; he's happy to do it himself. It's not alternative, he's fond of saying: it's alter-Native. And so it is. Miller can shift gears rapidly between Neil Young–style folkie reveries and tradition-based Native American chants. His 1996 release was a rock album, much of which draws on the kind of energy Miller saw when he shared a concert bill with the rock band Pearl Jam. Having grown up on a northern Wisconsin reservation, Miller was exposed to the vagaries of racism and all its attendant violence. While his music occasionally gives in to bitterness and a thirst for revenge, it is mostly about hope, dignity, and compassion. Miller's is an important and genuinely wise voice.

what to buy: On *Raven in the Snow* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1995, prod. Richard Bennett) Miller switches from his gentle folkie stance to full-bore rock arrangements—a good idea since, for the first time, the music reflects the fury behind such songs as "The Final Word" and the title track. Others—such as the defiant "Brave Heart" and "Listen to Me," which pleads for understanding between generations—are more reflective and have an ethereal quality. Altogether, *Raven* is Miller's most fully realized work.

what to buy next: To get a glimpse of Miller's other abilities, check out *The Red Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1993, prod. Richard Bennett), which combines acoustic-based folk music with Native American flutes and chants. It includes the haunting instrumental "Dreams of Wounded Knee," plus "Praises," which is based on a Menominee prayer to the Creator, and "Reservation Road," a gritty memoir of Miller's birthplace.

the rest:
(With Robert Mirabal & the Smokey Town Singers) *Native Suite* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1996)

worth searching for: Miller's earlier, self-released albums, which he sells at shows and by mail order, include a pair of folk outings: *Old Dreams and New Hopes* ♪♪½ (Rosebud, 1987) and *The Art of Survival* ♪♪♪ (Rosebud, 1990), as well as the Native American/New Age–leaning *Loon, Mountain, and Moon: Native American Flute Songs* ♪♪½ (Rosebud, 1991).

influences:
◀◀ Neil Young, Dan Fogelberg, XIT
▶▶ Robert Mirabal, Robbie Robertson

Daniel Durchholz

Mill Run Dulcimer Band: (from left) Kit Putnam, Neal Walters, Woody Padgett, Keith Young, Kathleen Gotzmer
(© Oy Veerasarn)

Buddy Miller

Born September 6, 1952, in Fairborn, OH.

Buddy Miller's career, in large part, has been that of the roaming singer/songwriter. He's based himself, at various times, in San Francisco, New York, Austin, Los Angeles, and, currently, Nashville. He has worked as a guitarist for folk-rock singer Shawn Colvin and had a loose writing and performing partner-

550 *ed miller*

morris dance

To appreciate morris dance, one must shake off any preconceived notions about flower-bedecked folk waving hankies. Think of workhorses, snorting and tramping in the snow. Think of Stonehenge's stones moving, after midnight, pacing out their stories. And sex: morris is suffused with sex. Morris dance has been documented in the British Isles since at least the fifteenth century. It enjoyed a resurgence in popularity during the 1960s and 1970s, as part of a growing interest in folk music and culture. Besides Great Britain, there are morris teams in the United States, other parts of Europe, and all over the world. Morris dancers are skilled athletes and artists. The dance observes strict forms and often includes intricate hand motions with handkerchiefs or sticks. Some variants involve swords. Done well, the dance is stately and jubilant, as determined by the musical accompaniment. An excellent gateway to the morris world is provided by *Morris On* (Island, 1972). This musical project brought together five of the strongest talents in English folk and folk-rock: Ashley Hutchings, Richard Thompson, John Kirkpatrick, Barry Dransfield, and Dave Mattacks. Several of the tracks feature the sounds of bell-legged dancers strutting their stuff. The treatment is far from traditional, with Thompson's electric guitar and Mattacks's rock-influenced drumming. *Morris On* nevertheless embodies the spirit of the dance, and it's won many converts to morris teams over the last 25 years. You don't have to dance to appreciate it, but it will certainly get your toes tapping and your spirit leaping.

Pamela Murray Winters

erdale, Emmylou Harris, Lucinda Williams, and others. Within a year of its release, every song on the album had been covered, recorded for future release, or put on hold by a major-label artist. *Poison Love* ♪♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1997, prod. Buddy Miller) was a follow-up of equal quality, from heart-rending originals like "Don't Tell Me" to a stunning cover of the Otis Redding hit "That's How Strong My Love Is." Emmylou Harris plays guitar on both those cuts and more, and Steve Earle guests for a duet on the old Johnnie and Jack classic "Poison Love."

influences:

◀◀ Jim Lauderdale

▶▶ Robbie Fulks

Brian Mansfield

Ed Miller

Born July 9, 1945, in Scotland.

Ed Miller is one of the best singers to emerge from the Scottish folk revival, a guitar-wielding folkie who wins his audiences over with a sweet but powerful voice, a great ear for material, and equal doses of populist politics and wry humor. He learned his craft in the sessions, clubs, and festivals of the folk revival, both in Scotland and the United States. Miller is also a scholar with an academic degree in folklore and a deep curiosity about history and culture, and his multiple roles and approaches to music and song make his performances and recordings that much more rewarding. Miller was born immediately after World War II, and grew up in postwar Edinburgh. He was thus in his teens during the early 1960s, the perfect age to take active part in the Scottish folk revival. From sessions in Edinburgh pubs, he progressed to membership in the Edinburgh University Folksong Society. In 1968 he came to the States for "a year or so" to do graduate work in geography at the University of Texas at Austin. After three years, he earned his master's degree with a thesis on images of Glasgow and Edinburgh in literature and song, for which he drew on his knowledge of the folk song tradition. By then he was a school junkie; he returned to UT for a Ph.D., this time in folklore. His dissertation, once again, looked at singing traditions in lowland Scotland. Miller continues to live in Austin today; as he proudly points out, it has been his home for more than half of his life. During his time there, he has had many jobs: in addition to his folk-related work as a student, university teacher, and folk DJ for Austin's NPR affiliate, he has also been a house painter, a soccer coach, and a tour guide. The one constant thread that runs through all his experiences in Scotland and America has been his singing; he gigs

ship with Jim Lauderdale. He has recorded with Lauderdale, Heather Myles, and Victoria Williams. Miller came into his own in 1995 when he finally released an album under his own name. His wife, Julie Miller, is also a recording artist.

what's available: *Your Love and Other Lies* ♪♪♪♪ (HighTone, 1995, prod. Buddy Miller) features appearances by Jim Laud-

ed miller

regularly in Austin and tours throughout North America. Still, despite his long history and fine reputation as a performer, Miller waited until he was quite seasoned before recording an album; his first came out in 1989. Since then, he's put out four more original albums and one compilation.

what to buy: *Scottish Voice* ♪♪♪♪ (Wellfield, 1993, prod. Rich Brotherton), Miller's third recording, is a great one. Like all his albums, this one features his commanding vocal presence and his excellent taste in Scottish songs, both old and new. Among the traditional songs here are "Jock O'Braidieslee," the old ballad about the poacher caught and killed by the king's foresters, and "Tae the Beggin'" about why panhandling beats working. Songwriters covered include Archie Fisher, Brian McNeill, Dougie MacLean, and even former Silly Wizard accordionist Phil Cunningham, whose only known song, "Darling Ailie" (elsewhere, this one's been called "Eilidh"), just happens to be a beautiful one. Miller does a good job moving the locale of Tommy Sands's emigration song "When the Boys Come Rolling Home" to fit his own story, and the song sounds that much the more sincere when you know that, unlike Sands, he's really lived through the emigrant's farewell. The most unusual and delightful song here is called "Pittenweem Jo," and was written by John Watt, the "Bard of Fife." It's a sweet little love song with a catchy chorus and a smug self-confidence that's a lot of fun. Miller is joined on this CD by Rich Brotherton, one of Austin's best guitarists, and Alasdair Fraser, one of the best Scottish fiddlers anywhere, as well as other accompanists, to produce a very classy and tasteful album of the best in Scottish folk song.

what to buy next: *The Edinburgh Rambler* ♪♪♪♪ (Wellfield, 1998, prod. Rich Brotherton) is another collection of both traditional and revivalist songs, but this time the emphasis is firmly on songs written for the revival. Once again Miller adapts songs to fit his own life story; in this case by Ewan MacColl's "The Manchester Rambler" and Tommy Sands's "Home Away from Home" get the "Miller treatment"; happily, the changes don't hurt the songs at all. Miller also covers choice material by several Scottish songwriters. Apparently both first names and surnames are in short supply on the Scottish folk scene, for Miller covers material by Alan Reid, Jim Reid, Jim Davison, and Ian Davison! The best cover version here is Brian McNeill's "Muir and the Master Builder," based on the life of environmentalist John Muir. In addition to all the covers, Miller sings two lovely traditional songs, "The Shearin's No for You" and "The Rigs o' Rye," as well as Robert Burns's nationalistic "Scots Wha Hae." Strangely, though, this album's best track is neither Scottish nor adapted to Miller's Scottish heritage. It's an old cowboy song from Miller's adopted home state that explains why the Texas climate is so hellish. The album's arrangements team Miller with Brotherton on guitars and mandolins and John Taylor on fiddle. *At Home with the Exiles* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1995, prod. Rich Brotherton, Sandy Paton) is Miller's compilation disc, available in the United States as an import. It brings together tracks from Miller's two albums that are unavailable on CD, *Border Background* and *Home and Away*, along with a few tracks from *Scottish Voice*. Miller's smooth voice and Brotherton's subtle and supportive guitar playing are the stars of all three of these albums, and all of the tracks here are intelligent interpretations of traditional and original Scottish songs. Songs of every description are here, about work, love, sports, drink, travel, and other important parts of the Scottish experience. Titles include "Pittenweem Jo," "The John MacLean March," "The Jute Mill Song," "Crooked Jack," and "A Man's a Man." If there is a negative thing to be said about *At Home with the Exiles*, it's that, even with three albums of good material to choose from, it's only about 50 minutes long. CDs allow half-again that much material, and there are certainly that many good songs on Miller's original albums that could have been included. Tracks like "Banks of Sicily," "Home and Away," and "Love and Freedom" from the album *Home and Away* would have made excellent additions to this fine recording. *Live at the Cactus Cafe* ♪♪♪½ (Wellfield, 1995) is composed mostly of Miller's more lighthearted songs, which he felt went over better in a live setting than a studio. About half the songs on it are traditional chestnuts, including "Wild Mountain Thyme," "High Jeannie High," and "The Overgate," all of which deal with variously successful sexual encounters. The other half is made up of songs written by Scots folk-revivalists, including three by Adam MacNaughton and one each by Andy M. Stewart, Robin Laing, and Matt McGinn. A parody of the hackneyed and sentimental ballad "Loch Lomond" provides a few laughs, but the most amusing track is a medley of children's songs in which teachers, principals (or "hiedies" in Glasgow slang), and schools get burned, gutted, and destroyed. Don't let your kids hear this one, or you might find out how many of these songs they sing when your back is turned!

worth searching for: In addition to the four CDs listed above, Miller has released two albums that are available only in other formats. *Home and Away* ♪♪♪♪ (Wellfield, 1991, prod. Rich Brotherton), the more recent and better of the two, features wonderful versions of such songs as "Yellow on the Broom," "A Man's a Man," and "Banks of Sicily." It's available only on cassette. *Border Background* ♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1989, prod. Rich

Brotherton) contains traditional ballads like "Thomas of Winesbury" alongside lots of good material from the Edinburgh folk revival; you can find it on LP and cassette.

influences:

Adam MacNaughton, Archie Fisher, Hamish Henderson

Tony Cuffe, Andy M. Stewart

Steve Winick

Emmett Miller

Born 1903, in Macon, GA. Date of death is unknown.

A little-known figure said to have taught Hank Williams his first hit, "Lovesick Blues," to have given Bob Wills his entire western swing style, and to remain an idol of no less than Merle Haggard to this day, Emmett Miller first gained notoriety via Nick Tosches's 1977 book *Country.* Miller was a minstrel performer who cut some rare OKeh 78s during 1927–28 in New York with the Dorsey brothers and some other respected jazzmen. Bootleg editions of his recordings fueled his legend and fostered more disciples, notably Leon Redbone, who based a considerable part of his whole act on Miller's unnatural, guttural sound. Biographical details are thin, and he disappeared into the ether of history without so much as a fare-thee-well; nobody knows when or where he died. But his cult continues.

what's available: *Emmett Miller: The Minstrel Man from Georgia* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1996) is a masterpiece in musical archeology, a collection of 20 selections from those long-ago sessions. While falling somewhat short of establishing Miller conclusively as this great missing link in country music (too often the songs are little more than trite exercises in racial slander that passed as humor at the time), these recordings do show Miller to be a stylist of great originality and a vocalist with singular vitality—an altogether fascinating and rewarding but unrevealed chapter in music history.

influences:

vaudeville and minstrel traditions

Hank Williams, Bob Wills, Merle Haggard, George Jones, Bob Dylan

Joel Selvin

Jo Miller & Laura Love

See: Ranch Romance

Roger Miller

Born January 2, 1936, in Fort Worth, TX. Died October 25, 1992, in Los Angeles, CA.

If he had left us with nothing more than "King of the Road," Roger Miller's place in the pantheon of American musical giants would be assured. But Miller's remarkable body of work contains literally dozens of songs its equal and beyond. Songs that remain as vibrant, funny, poignant, and thought-provoking today as they were more than three decades ago when they first set the country music world on its ear. To the undiscriminating listener, Miller is best remembered for his mid-'60s string of light-hearted classics ("Dang Me," "England Swings," "Engine Engine # 9"): songs which also sold in Beatle-like quantities to pop and folk audiences as few releases out of Music City did in those days. But behind the rubber-faced, often crazed performer who threw these tunes so effortlessly up the charts lurked a deep and often dark spirit who, just as easily and as eloquently, sang of the harsher sides of life as well as the happy. Miller's own life and career saw plenty from both sides. At the tender age of two, his father recently deceased and his mother seriously ill, Miller was sent to Oklahoma where he was raised by an uncle. As a youngster he came to know and idolize family friend Sheb Wooley, later of "Purple People Eater" fame, who bought Miller his first fiddle and taught him his first guitar chords. Despite a two-year detour through the Korean War, Miller's goals were set, and by the mid-'50s he was haunting the honky-tonks and music offices of Nashville. Between stints playing fiddle for Minnie Pearl and drums for Faron Young, Miller got the assistance of George Jones in connecting with Mercury/Starday Records, who released his first single in 1957. With Miller now writing in earnest, Ray Price, Ernest Tubb, Jim Reeves, and old pal Young began scoring hits with Miller material, but Miller's own recordings, now on Decca, sank without a trace. Even Chet Atkins, his producer for RCA during the early '60s, could only get two Roger Miller records briefly into the Top 10 after three years of trying. With nothing left to lose, and in sore need of $1,600 with which to finance a move to California, Miller agreed to cut 16 songs (at a hundred bucks a pop) for Smash Records' new Nashville A&R chief Jerry Kennedy in January 1964. In a matter of hours he not only earned his moving money, but recorded his first two certified hits, "Dang Me" and "Chug-a-Lug." By the time he'd relocated to an apartment above Lee Hazelwood's Hollywood garage, he was swamped with offers for public appearances and television shots, and stranger still, his songs began crossing over to folk and then pop audiences. The sparse, simple arrangements Kennedy applied to Miller's sessions, which helped bring to the fore both Miller's

lyrics (as much Chuck Berry as Hank Williams in their wit and wordplay) and voice (a sly, throaty purr which would take jazz-like leaps into scat where the guitar solo would usually go) coalesced perfectly that November during the recording of what was soon to become his signature song, "King of the Road." The hits and accolades (a then-record six Grammys won the following year) came hard and fast, but by '67 things started going awry. First, his loyal label Smash was swallowed up by the giant Mercury corporation, affording Miller less of a free reign inside the studio and less of a promotional push outside of it. A long-rumored amphetamine dependency also began to take its toll, most noticeably on his writing ability: Though he could still spot and release a good song before anyone else ("Ruby, Don't Take Your Love to Town," "Little Green Apples," "Me and Bobbie McGee"), they just weren't *his* songs anymore. After a lackluster stint at Columbia Records, some film work, and a subsequent exile to the Vegas lounges, Miller wisely lay low during the early '80s. Surprisingly, when he next popped up it was as a Broadway composer, and his score for *Big River* duly won a Tony Award in 1985. Having now proved to himself and the world that he still had what it took, Miller spent his remaining years fishing, hanging with friends both old and new (his last hit, "It Only Hurts Me When I Cry," was a collaboration with Dwight Yoakam), and joking about the throat cancer that finally claimed him in 1992. As writer J.R. Taylor so perfectly eulogized, "Having conquered the sticks, the suburbs *and* the city, Roger Miller then put our country in his pocket and took it all with him."

what to buy: The three-CD *King of the Road: The Genius of Roger Miller* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1995, comp. prod. Daniel Cooper) says, and includes, it all. From the early stabs to the mega-hits, the should've-been hits ("My Uncle Used to Love Me but She Died," to name but one), *Big River,* and even a manic "Orange Blossom Special" with Danny Gatton, you just owe it to yourself to take the wild and wonderful ride through these 70 songs.

what to avoid: At last count, more than a dozen shoddy "best of" albums were available, all of which should be quickly passed over in favor of the *Genius* box set. However, if a more compact collection is what you crave, stick with the original *Golden Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (PolyGram, 1965, prod. Jerry Kennedy).

the rest:
Roger Miller Live! ♪♪♪½ (Silver Eagle Cross Country, 1997)

worth searching for: *Roger and Out* ♪♪♪♪½ (Smash, 1964, prod. Jerry Kennedy), *The Return of Roger Miller* ♪♪♪♪½ (Smash, 1965, prod. Jerry Kennedy), and *Words and Music by Roger Miller* ♪♪♪♪ (Smash, 1966, prod. Jerry Kennedy) contain the absolute cream of his work, wonderfully veering from the ridiculous ("You Can't Roller Skate in a Buffalo Herd") to the sublime ("Train of Life") and then some. These albums show a man at the absolute peak of his creative and commercial powers, and a musician at least the equal of any operating anywhere, then or now.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Wills, Hank Williams, Sheb Wooley
▶▶ Mel Tillis, Tom Waits, Chris Isaak

Gary Pig Gold

Mississippi Sheiks

Formed late 1920s.

Walter Vincson (born February 2, 1901, in Bolton, MS; died April 22, 1975, in Chicago, IL), guitar, vocals; Lonnie Chatmon (born early 1880s, in Bolton, MS; died 1942 or 1943, in Bolton, MS), fiddle, vocals.

Playing the simple tandem of acoustic guitar and fiddle, the Mississippi Sheiks were an anachronism almost from the moment they began recording in 1930. But guitarist and singer Walter Vincson (also given as Vinson and even Vincent) and violinist Lonnie Chatmon (of the prolific Chatmon family that also produced brothers Bo and Sam) had a prodigious repertoire, and their willingness to try almost any string-based music won them audiences and influenced bluesmen wherever they roamed. Their most popular song, "Sittin' on Top of the World," became a standard years later for Chicago kingpin Howlin' Wolf. And Wolf also copped a Sheiks' verse about "smokestack lightnin'" for his own song of the same name—borrowed as well by Wolf's rival, Muddy Waters. And through those Chicago blues titans, the Sheiks also have lived on in electric-juiced versions by Cream and respectful acoustic replays by Bob Dylan. The reasons for the pairing of Vincson and Chatmon were never clear. Chatmon apparently fought with his brothers in an early fraternal group over who sang lead. And Vincson later told interviewers he took up playing in the string band and abandoned farming because he was "tired of smellin' mule farts." The two men grew so close they took to calling each other "Bruno" and locked so tightly as musicians that they could anticipate each other's solos. A 1930 recording session in Shreveport produced the first version of "Sittin' on Top of the World," a song so popular that several other groups claiming to be the Sheiks soon began stealing gigs on the Delta. The real Sheiks paid regular visits to studios in San Antonio and Jackson, Mississippi, scoring nearly 70 tracks between 1930 and 1936. They ranged from Tommy Johnson–influenced blues like "Stop and

the chad mitchell trio

Listen" and "Blood in My Eyes for You" to hokum social commentaries like "Sales Tax" and "The World Is Going Wrong." At times, Vincson and Chatmon augmented their sound by adding Bo and Sam Chatmon. But the two original Sheiks stayed together as the heart of the group until the late 1930s, when their recording career ebbed. The pair's break-up is as mysterious as their coming together, attributed at various times by Vincson and Chatmon to either racism, a stroke, or the urgent need to flee an angry husband. Vincson recorded on his own but was unable to duplicate the Sheiks' early success.

what to buy: There could be no more perfect cross-section of the Sheiks' bountiful talents than *Stop and Listen* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1992, prod. Richard Nevins, Don Kent, Stefan Grossman), a well-chosen 20 selections. All of the above-mentioned Sheiks classics are included, as are the unissued "Livin' in a Strain" and the sardonic "He Calls That Religion." The sound is surprisingly clean for 1930s-era 78s.

what to buy next: The four discs of *Complete Recorded Works Volumes I–IV* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. Johnny Parth) contain all of the Sheiks' recordings, and what surprises most is how rarely Chatmon and Vincson duplicated themselves. Like most bluesmen of that era they knew enough to harp on a good thing, and were quick to remake "Sittin' on Top of the World" and "Stop and Listen." But the Sheiks' dexterity and open minds kept the records sounding fresh even as many of their peers' music palled.

influences:

◀◀ Henderson Chatmon, Neil Winston, Bo Chatmon, Sam Chatmon, Tommy Johnson

▶▶ Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Cream, Bob Dylan

Steve Braun

The Chad Mitchell Trio

Formed 1958, in Spokane, WA. Disbanded 1969.

Original trio: Chad Mitchell, vocals; Mike Kobluk, vocals; Joe Frazier, vocals. Later members included: John Denver, vocals; Jim (Roger) McGuinn, guitar, banjo.

The Chad Mitchell Trio epitomized the collegiate folk singing groups of the late 1950s and early '60s. Formed by college sophomores at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, the trio is best remembered as the breeding ground for future "superstars" John Denver, who, as Henry Deutschendorf, replaced Mitchell in 1965, and Jim (Roger) McGuinn (later of the Byrds), who spent several years as the trio's guitar and banjo accompanist. During the decade that they were together, the Chad Mitchell Trio was instrumental in introducing and promoting the songs of Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, Bob Dylan, and Ian Tyson. Their performance of Denver's tune, "Leaving on a Jet Plane," inspired Peter, Paul & Mary's recording, which became a top hit in 1969.

what to buy: Recorded at the Greenwich Village Club on March 19, 1962, *At the Bitter End* ♪♪ (Kapp, 1962, prod. Milton Okun) documents the Chad Mitchell Trio's live performances. Accompanied by McGuinn (guitar, banjo), Fred Hellerman of the Weavers (guitar), and Bill Lee (bass), the trio harmonize on the whimsical topical tune, "The John Birch Society," Ed McCurdy's "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream," Woody Guthrie's "The Great Historical Bum (The Bragging Song)," two songs by Bob Gibson and Hamilton Camp ("Blues around My Head" and "You Can Tell the World"), and a rare, early Tom Paxton composition, "Come Along Home (Tom's Song)."

what to buy next: In addition to songs by Phil Ochs ("Draft Dodger Rag") and Tom Paxton ("I Can't Help but Wonder"), *Slightly Irreverent* ♪♪ (Mercury, 1960, prod. Franklin Fried) includes a humorous medley of songs penned by E.Y. "Yip" Harburg.

the rest:

That's the Way It's Gonna Be ♪♪ (Mercury, 1960)
Mighty Day on Campus ♪♪½ (Kapp, 1961)
The Chad Mitchell Trio ♪♪ (Colpix, 1964)
Typical American Boys ♪♪ (Mercury, 1964)

worth searching for: *Belafonte Returns to Carnegie Hall* (RCA, 1961, prod. Bob Bollard) includes three songs—"Vaicazkem," "I Do Adore Her," and "The Ballad of Sigmund Freud"—recorded by the Chad Mitchell Trio on May 2, 1960.

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, the Kingston Trio, the Limeliters

▶▶ Peter, Paul & Mary, John Denver, Roger McGuinn, Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs

see also: *John Denver, the Byrds*

Craig Harris

Joni Mitchell

Born Roberta Joan Anderson, November 1943, in Fort Macleod, Alberta, Canada.

Joni Mitchell is one of the most influential singer-songwriters to emerge from the late '60s folk-rock scene, a poet on par with

Bob Dylan. As a child, she took piano lessons in Saskatoon, Canada, and as a teenager taught herself to play ukulele and later guitar so she could entertain at parties. She first gained notice as a songwriter when Judy Collins turned her song "Both Sides Now" into a Top 10 hit in 1968. That same year, Mitchell's debut album was released to critical acclaim, and the rapid succession of albums that followed peaked with the classic *Court and Spark*. During the mid-'70s, Mitchell shifted gears, dropped the angst angel image, and stretched out for experiments in electronic and ethnic music and collaborations with jazz players such as Tom Scott and the legendary Charles Mingus. Though she releases albums infrequently—she also pursues an active career as a painter—Mitchell remains a vital and ambitious artist; her latest effort, 1995's *Turbulent Indigo*, captured two Grammy awards.

what to buy: *Court and Spark* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1974, prod. Joni Mitchell) remains Mitchell's top achievement, a melding of pop and jazz stylings that netted multiple Grammy nominations and the hit singles "Help Me" and "Free Man in Paris." *Turbulent Indigo* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1994, prod. Joni Mitchell, Larry Klein) is an evocative collection of songs that sounds both modern and timeless. With its all-star guest list—including Stephen Stills and James Taylor—*Blue* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1971, prod. Joni Mitchell) is a frank and revealing work, as well as one of Mitchell's finest singing performances.

what to buy next: *Ladies of the Canyon* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1971, prod. Joni Mitchell) houses the Mitchell standards "Big Yellow Taxi," "Woodstock," and "The Circle Game." *For the Roses* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1972, prod. Joni Mitchell) was Mitchell's first gold album and includes her first Top 40 hit "You Turn Me on, I'm a Radio." *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1975, prod. Joni Mitchell) continues to explore jazzy and impressionistic song veins using the same all-star jazz aces who worked on *Court and Spark*.

what to avoid: The guest-laden (Billy Idol?) *Chalk Mark in a Rain Storm* ♪♪ (Geffen, 1988, prod. Joni Mitchell, Larry Klein) is a surprisingly slight effort, musically bland and lyrically weak.

the rest:
Joni Mitchell ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1968)
Clouds ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1969)
Miles of Aisles ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1974)
Hejira (Asylum, 1975)
Don Juan's Reckless Daughter ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1977)
Mingus ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1979)
Shadows and Light ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1980)
Wild Things Run Fast ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1982)
Dog Eat Dog ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1985)
Night Ride Home ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1991)
Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1996)
Misses ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1996)

worth searching for: *Just Ice* ♪♪♪♪ (KTS, 1994), a digital bootleg recording of a rare Mitchell performance in Toronto after *Turbulent Indigo*'s release, is worth looking for.

influences:

- Crosby, Stills & Nash, James Taylor, Motown, Charles Mingus, John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie
- Tori Amos, Tracey Bonham, Shawn Colvin, Milla Jovovich, Jewel, Alanis Morissette, Sarah McLachlan, Prince, Seal

Hilary Weber

Waddie Mitchell

Born in NV.

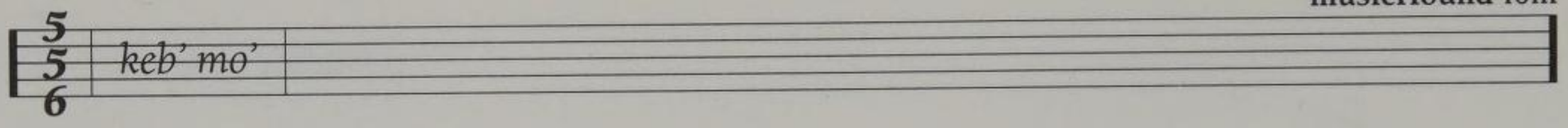
Cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell became a full-time cowboy starting at age 16 and later managed a 36,000-acre Nevada ranch. He was one of the organizers of the Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering, which began in 1984. His many books and records eventually made him the recipient of the Nevada Governor's Arts Award for Literature. Mitchell was one of the original inductees into the Cowboy Poets and Singers Hall of Fame.

what's available: *Lone Driftin' Rider* ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1992, prod. Joey Miskulin, Michael Martin Murphey), Mitchell's first album for Warner Western, features some material recorded live in Sparks, Nevada, and other studio performances backed by a group of musicians led by accordionist/producer Joey Miskulin. *Buckaroo Poet* ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1993, prod. Joey Miskulin) features more of the same—Mitchell's cowboy poetry with musical backing. *The Bard and the Balladeer: Live from Cowtown* ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1995, prod. Joey Miskulin, Michael Martin Murphey) features two of the most popular contemporary cowboy performers (Mitchell is joined by Don Edwards) together in Fort Worth, Texas, at a 1994 concert.

influences:

- Red Steagall, Michael Martin Murphey
- Rich O'Brien

Brian Mansfield



Keb' Mo'

Born Kevin Moore, 1952, in Compton, CA.

Once a journeyman backup guitarist who played with Buddy Guy, Joe Cocker, and Santana, this soft-spoken singer-songwriter picked up an acoustic guitar in the early 1990s and set out to be one of the rare blues superstars. His debut album emphasized his worship of Robert Johnson and Taj Mahal, the follow-up leaned on Bonnie Raitt–style adult-contemporary pop, but his live performances showcase his upbeat charisma and electric-band passion. *Just like You* was one of 1996's best-selling blues albums, and in a time when so many bluesmen play the same classics and guitar solos in an endless loop, Keb' Mo' may just have the talent and personality for mainstream success.

what to buy: *Keb' Mo'* ♪♪♪ (OKeh/Epic, 1994, prod. John Porter) isn't revolutionary—John Hammond Jr., Rory Block, Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, and Taj Mahal are among the many revivalists who have tried to rejuvenate Robert Johnson–style acoustic blues—but it announces a nice, smooth voice and a potential for greatness.

what to buy next: *Just like You* ♪♪½ (OKeh/Epic, 1996, prod. John Porter) is a well-crafted pop album, with decent songwriting, a sense of humor, and cameos from Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne, but it's so nice, friendly, and calm you just can't believe Moore is a follower of the devil-plagued Robert Johnson.

worth searching for: The soundtrack CD *Tin Cup* ♪♪ (Epic, 1996) contains a new Keb' Mo' song, "Crapped out Again."

influences:

◀◀ Robert Johnson, Bonnie Raitt, Taj Mahal, John Hammond Jr., Rory Block, Buddy Guy, Shawn Colvin, Papa John Creach, Tracy Chapman

▶▶ Jonny Lang, Corey Harris

Steve Knopper

Modern Lovers

See: Jonathan Richman

Hugh Moffatt

See: Katy Moffatt

Katy Moffatt

Born 1950, in Ft. Worth, TX.

Katy Moffatt is one of those artists about whom those in the know constantly ask, "Why isn't her name a household word?" She is a powerful and passionate vocalist and she writes great songs, but she's never really caught on commercially, despite having recorded since 1970, when she made her first album for Columbia. Moffatt's recent efforts for Philo and Watermelon have featured her strong vocals and fine original songs, often written with Tom Russell.

what to buy: *Walkin' on the Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1989, prod. Katy Moffatt, Andrew Hardin) contains mostly Moffatt originals, with two heart-wrenching vocals—"Walkin' on the Moon" and "I'll Take the Blame"—that deserve classic status. *Evangeline Motel* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1993, prod. Katy Moffatt, Tom Russell) continues the Moffatt-Ruffell musical partnership to good effect.

what to buy next: On *Kate Brislin & Katy Moffatt* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Jody Stecher), Brislin blends her traditional country harmonic sensibilities with Moffatt's pure, passionate vocal intensity to create an album of wonderful duets; the repertoire embraces the Louvins, the Everlys, two Moffatt originals, and Jimmy Martin. Classic harmonizing. *Dance Me Outside* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1992, prod. Katy Moffatt, Hugh Moffatt) finds Katy and brother Hugh Moffatt, a Nashville songsmith, combining voices on a bunch of country and R&B classics and originals.

the rest:

Child Bride ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1990)
Hearts Gone Wild ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1994)
Midnight Radio ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Tracy Nelson, Bonnie Raitt

▶▶ Lucinda Williams, Gillian Welch, Hugh Moffatt

Randy Pitts

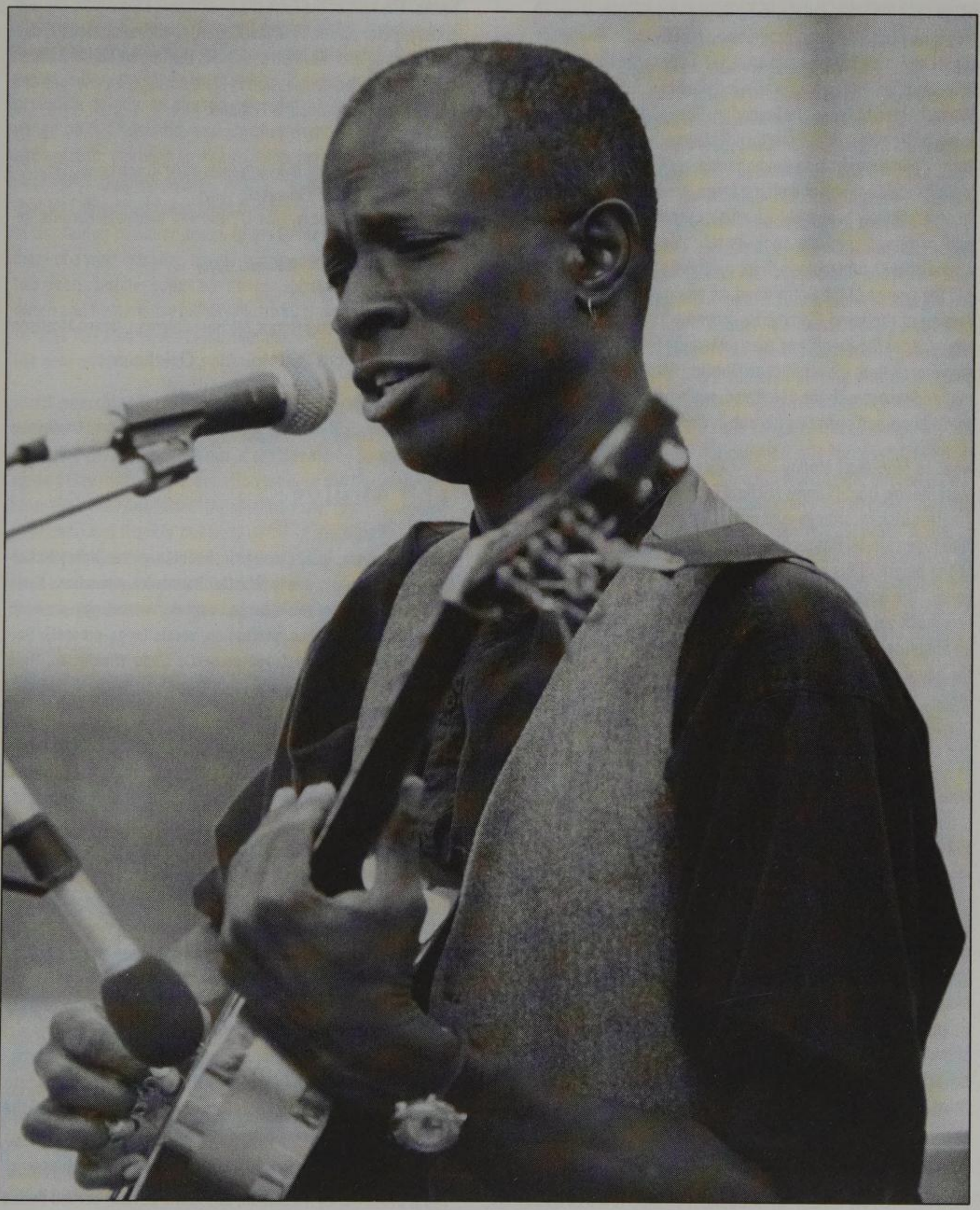
Matt Molloy

Born January 12, 1947, in Ballaghadreen, County Sligo, Ireland.

Both as a solo artist and as a member of the Bothy Band, Planxty, and, currently, the Chieftains, Matt Molloy has been at the center of Irish Traditional music for the past 25 years. His instantly recognizable sound, a combination of power and elegance wedded to incredible control of his instrument, has graced many of the most influential recordings in traditional Irish music. Molloy grew up in county Roscommon, an area

Keb' Mo' **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

matt molloy



noted for producing outstanding flute players. He learned to play flute from his father, progressing rapidly until he won the senior all-Ireland title at age 17. After a stint with the Siamsa Ceili Band, and a few years as a jet mechanic for Aer Lingus, Molloy helped to found the legendary Bothy Band. Made up of some of Ireland's finest (and wildest) young musicians, the Bothy Band brought a no-holds-barred, rock 'n' roll sensibility to their music both on and off the stage, producing some of the most ferociously beautiful Irish music ever recorded. All of the wild partying eventually took its toll, however, and Molloy wound up with tuberculosis in 1977. After a stint in the hospital and the demise of the Bothy Band, he was invited to join a new version of the band Planxty. He stayed with Planxty for one album, *After the Break*, and then joined the Chieftains, replacing veteran flute player Michael Tubridy. Molloy continues to tour and record with the Chieftains, while occasionally cutting solo albums and operating his pub in Westport, County Mayo.

what to buy: *Matt Molloy* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1976, prod. Matt Molloy, Donal Lunny, Micheal O'Domhnaill) is one of the greatest Irish recordings ever made. Recorded before his bout with tuberculosis, this recording shows a young, driven master at the height of his power. From the first notes of the old favorite "The Boys of the Lough," Matt Molloy demonstrates just how much music can be pulled out of a flute. Highlights include an absolutely killer version of "The Bucks of Oranmore" and the haunting "Lament for Staker Wallace." Molloy's wild, uninhibited playing is backed by the awesome guitar and bouzouki playing of Donal Lunny, his bandmate in the Bothy Band, and one of the finest accompanists in Irish music.

what to buy next: *Stony Steps* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987, prod. Donal Lunny), along with *Matt Molloy*, is required listening for anyone wanting to hear or play Irish flute music. While *Matt Molloy* is a solo tour-de-force, this album finds Matt sharing the stage with his impressive friends Kevin Burke, Sean Keane, and James Kelly, among others. He lets things stretch out a little more on this album and explores some more progressive accompaniment under the watchful eye of producer Lunny. *Contentment Is Wealth* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1985 prod. Brian Masterson) finds Molloy and fellow Chieftain Sean Keane showing off their tasty duet playing. This is a sparse, old-sounding album, with solid, tasteful accompaniment by guitarist Arty McGlynn.

what to avoid: Although Molloy's name is on the cover of *Music at Matt Molloy's* ♪♪½ (Realworld, 1992, prod. Martin Murray, Matt Molloy, Arty McGlynn), he appears on only seven of its 20 tracks. The rest of the time the performers range from the legendary (Peter Horan, Paul McGrattan) to the competent. A better recording of a live Irish session is the import album *Maiden Voyage*, recorded at a session in Clare during the early '90s and released by Celtic Music in England.

the rest:
Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1977)
Heathery Breeze ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1982)
Matt Molloy, Sean Keane, Liam O'Flynn ♪♪♪ (Claddagh Records, Ireland, 1992)
Shadows on Stone ♪♪½ (Realworld, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Fred Finn & Peter Horan, Michael Coleman, James Morrison
▶▶ Kevin Crawford, Paul McGrattan, Chris Norman

see also: *Bothy Band, Chieftains, Planxty*

Tony Ziselberger

The Mollys

Formed 1990, in Tucson, AZ.

Catherine Zavala, vocals, mandolin, bodhrán, guitar; Nancy McCallion, vocals, guitar, penny whistle, harmonica, melodion; Kevin Schramm, accordion, guitar, banjo, bouzouki, vocals (1993–present); Gary Mackender, drums, percussion, vocals (1994–present); Dan Sorenson, bass, guitar (1992–present); Linda Winkleman, flute (1990–91); Nathan Sady, accordion (1991–93); Michael Faulkner, drums (1991–94).

The Mollys are an unlikely fusion of Celtic and conjunto music from the unlikely town of Tucson, Arizona, where they release their albums on their own label, Apolkalips Now. Nonetheless, the band boasts a terrific Irish-American songwriter in Nancy McCallion, a great Mexican-American singer in Catherine Zavala, and a relentless punk 'n' soul rhythm section and wild accordionist in Kevin Schramm, who holds the divergent strains together. The result resembles Wynonna Judd singing the Lucinda Williams songbook backed by the Pogues and Los Lobos. McCallion and Zavala met in high school, led a Tucson new-wave band, Nadine & the MoPhonics, after graduation, and casually formed the Mollys as a folk trio for a St. Patrick's Day gig. The examples of the Pogues and Los Lobos, however, convinced them they could whip up their rootsy traditions into boisterous, bawdy rock 'n' roll, and they became one of the most impressive folk-rock bands of the mid-'90s.

what's available: *This Is My Round* ♪♪♪♪½ (Apolkalips Now, 1995, prod. Nancy McCallion, Catherine Zavala) served notice

that the Mollys were a major new band. Irish folk stars Mick Moloney and Eugene O'Donnell are on hand, but the best songs share the raucous, non-conformist spirit of their protagonists, a Donegal lad in London who does not suffer anti-Irish prejudice quietly, an abused wife who takes imaginative revenge on her husband, and another woman who refuses to apologize for marrying an wealthy older man. Even better is *Hat Trick* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Apolkalips Now, 1997, prod. Mollys), which proved that McCallion had blossomed into a major-league songwriter of the caliber of Gillian Welch or Iris DeMent. She takes much more of a wise-cracking, bawdy approach to the world than her two peers, but her songs are no less substantial for it. Just as Welch and DeMent use hillbilly music for their personal stories, so does McCallion uses Celtic and Tejano music for her distinctive take on love and work.

worth searching for: The Mollys' first CD, *Tidings of Comfort and Joy* ♪♪♪ (Apolkalips Now, 1992, prod. Nancy McCallion, Catherine Zavala), which is out of print, features an earlier line-up and tilts the folk-rock equation more to the traditional folk side. *Welt the Floor!* ♪♪♪♪ (Apolkalips Now, 1995, prod. Kevin Schramm) and *Wankin' out West* ♪♪♪♪½ (Apolkalips Now, 1997, prod. Mollys) are live albums sold only at the band's gigs. They both capture the irrepressible spirit of the group in action, but the latter illustrates how fast and how far they've grown.

influences:

◀◀ Pogues, Los Lobos, Mick Moloney, Christy Moore, Steve Jordan

▶▶ Gillian Welch, Iris DeMent

Geoffrey Himes

Mick Moloney

Born November 15, 1944, in Limerick, Ireland.

A Limerick-born singer and guitar, mandolin, and banjo player, Mick Moloney got his start playing skiffle songs about age 14. It wasn't until his exposure to Irish music as a college student during the early '60s, however, that he became a serious musician. After starting on the guitar, he picked up a tenor banjo, and seemed to know automatically where his fingers should go. He quickly began attending music sessions in County Clare, an important locus where traditional players from all over Ireland congregated. He devoted a couple of years of his life to fanatical playing and practicing, and tried to incorporate what he learned from each model into his own playing. The end result was a unique style that, years later, would earn him multiple victories as best tenor banjoist in *Frets* magazine's prestigious reader's poll.

During the early 1960s, Moloney became a part of the Dublin folk music scene as a student at University College, Dublin. By 1964 records by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem were forever changing Irish music, and groups of singers with guitars, called "ballad groups," were becoming the norm. Moloney, who by now also played the mandolin, fell in with another student named Donal Lunny, who would later be a member of both Planxty and the Bothy Band. Armed with mandolins and banjos for playing tunes, guitars for accompaniment, and Mick's store of tunes and songs, Moloney and Lunny, along with Brian Bolger, formed a band, the Emmet Folk Group. Taking a cue from the Dubliners, the Emmet Folk tried to incorporate both ballad group-style singing and traditional playing into their music. Lunny credits Moloney with bringing in a lot of the Emmet Folk's unique repertoire of tunes and songs. Although the Emmet Folk was neither long-lived nor commercially successful, Moloney was soon able to put his talents to work again. In 1966 he was asked to join a family group from County Meath called the Johnstons. Another future member of Planxty, Paul Brady, joined up with him, and the two applied some of Moloney's ideas from the Emmet Folk in their new situation. The Johnstons became one of the most popular groups in Irish music during the 1960s and early 1970s, and Moloney was able to tour the world. During a 1971 tour of the United States he met Kenneth S. Goldstein, then chairman of the department of folklore and folklife at the University of Pennsylvania. With Goldstein's encouragement, Moloney decided to come to the United States to get a doctorate in folklore. When he arrived in America, Moloney began to realize what a vast and relatively untapped storehouse of Irish musicians the United States was. He took on the role of organizer, putting together festivals and concerts where Irish musicians from different cities could meet and play together. He formed a lasting musical partnership with fiddler Eugene O'Donnell, trained younger players like Seamus Egan, and organized bands including the Green Fields of America, Moloney, O'Connell and Keane, and Cherish the Ladies.

Moloney finally earned his Ph.D. in 1992, 20 years after he moved to the States. He continues to play, both as a solo act and in various groups. He has also become a popular tour guide, organizing and hosting several tours of Ireland every summer that are specifically geared toward traditional music and folklore.

what to buy: Moloney and O'Donnell's *Uncommon Bonds* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1986, prod. Mick Moloney) may be the best in-

troduction to this artist. Moloney's interest in Irish traditional songs is represented by the moving numbers "Bay of Biscay" and "Bonny Blue-Eyed Nancy." His fascination with the representation of Irishness on the Vaudeville stage compelled him to include such quirky and wonderful songs as "Muldoon the Solid Man" and "Miss Fogarty's Christmas Cake." His love of contemporary material in the Irish tradition is demonstrated by his inclusion of songs by Robbie O'Connell, Tommy Sands, and Seamus MacMathuna. Moloney's mandolin and banjo are perfectly complemented by O'Donnell's sensitive fiddle playing, and the two play their hearts out on several sets of rousing tunes. Also of interest to folk fans is the long list of guest artists on this CD, which includes Norman and Nancy Blake, the Clancy Brothers, and Saul Broudy, as well as some of the top names in Irish instrumental music.

what to buy next: *Mick Moloney with Eugene O'Donnell* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1978, prod. Mick Moloney) is still one of Moloney's greatest pieces of work. It includes some of Moloney's most appealing songs, including "The Limerick Rake," "The Irish Maid" and "The Bantry Girl's Lament," but it is more focused on tunes. Numerous sets of jigs and reels show off Moloney's instrumental prowess to the fullest. Moloney, O'Connell, and Keane's *There Were Roses* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1985, prod. Mick Moloney) teams Moloney up with guitarist and singer Robbie O'Connell (also of the Clancy Brothers and Robbie O'Connell) and piano accordion player Jimmy Keane. Fiddler Liz Carroll guests on many tracks as well. The title track, one of Tommy Sands's most moving ballads about the Northern Irish troubles, is a classic, and the rest of the album contains a lot of fine tunes and songs. The same lineup's follow-up album *Killkelly* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Mick Moloney) contains a few absolutely indispensable tracks, particularly the title song, which is the definitive version of the most popular recently penned emigration ballad. "Peter Pan and Me," a song about the Northern Irish troubles, is equally affecting. The album's drawback is that half of it is taken up with a single 20-minute medley of tunes and songs about the Irish in America that combines serious and silly material. It might have seemed like a good idea at the time, but it didn't produce a very listenable result. Also quite noteworthy is the CD *Live in Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1989, prod. Mick Moloney) by Moloney's all-star Irish-American band the Green Fields of America, featuring Moloney, O'Connell and Keane, and also Seamus Egan, Eileen Ivers, and Donny and Eileen Golden. This contains an alternate version of the song "Kilkelly," as well as many more stirring tunes and lovely songs. Particularly moving is their tribute to Ed Reavy, one of the greatest composers of Irish traditional tunes.

the rest:

(With Eugene O'Donnell and Seamus Egan) *Strings Attached* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1980)

(With Eugene O'Donnell and Seamus Egan) *Three Way Street* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992)

(With Eugene O'Donnell and Seamus Egan) *Out of Ireland Original Soundtrack* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995)

influences:

⏮ Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, Dubliners, Flanagan Brothers, Tulla Ceili Band, Willie Clancy, Johnstons

⏭ Planxty, Donal Lunny, Cherish the Ladies

Steve Winick

Bruce Molsky

Bruce Molsky grew up in New York City. A Doc Watson album given to him when he was 11 started him on a journey: his personal exploration of southern traditional music. On his musical travels he mastered fiddle, banjo, guitar, and voice. He did not perfect these instruments in isolation, however: among Molsky's mentors were seminal old-time fiddle players such as Tommy Jarrell, Albert Hash, and John Sayler. The results? Well, witnessing this man fiddle a tune live is to experience music to its fullest. To see him sitting down on his camp stool, hunched over his fiddle and sawing away like a man possessed, brings forth emotions difficult to describe. Luckily, the brilliance of Molsky's recordings is that they capture much of this passion.

what to buy: The best way to experience Molsky in his element is to listen to one of the solo fiddle tunes on *Lost Boy* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Bruce Molsky) such as "Buck Hoard," where the listener can almost feel the fiddler's very presence in the room. The notes flow out of his fiddle with such fluidity that at times you begin to wonder if Molsky sold his soul to achieve such talents. He doesn't just dazzle you with the fiddle, however; he also gives one of the best vocal performances of "The Blackest Crow," some stunning banjo work on "Fortune," and a few tunes of fingerstyle guitar ("Sail Away Ladies" and the African "Masanga Njia").

what to buy next: *Bruce Molsky and Big Hoedown* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Bruce Molsky) teams Molsky with longtime partner Rafe Stefanini (banjo, fiddle, vocals) and Beverly Smith (guitar, vocals). This CD is a lively combination of fid-

dle-banjo duets, traditional songs, and old-time string-band dance tunes.

the rest:
(With Bob Carlin) *Take Me as I Am* ♪♪♪♪ (Marimac) (cassette only)
(With Carla Gover) *Hush My Restless Soul* ♪♪♪♪ (June Appal)
The Hellbenders ♪♪♪♪ (Carryon)
Warring Cats ♪♪♪♪ (Yodel-Ay-Hee) (cassette only)
(With A. Robic and the Exertions) *Old Time Music Dance Party* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987) (cassette only)

influences:
John Salyer, Tommy Jarrell, Ed Haley
Rafe Stefanini, David Bass

Steve Gardner

Buddy Mondlock

Born in Chicago, IL.

Some musicians pump out the product so quickly it's hard to keep up. Buddy Mondlock takes his time, and it's worth it. He's released only two albums during the past decade, one of which isn't available in the United States. The 13 songs on 1987's *On the Line* are evocative and cinematic, from the Lyle Lovett-esque "Skeleton" to the sweet country waltz of "Gabriel." Rightly acclaimed for his songwriting, he's also a fine singer with a light, sincere tenor. His songs have been recorded by Janis Ian, Garth Brooks, and Nanci Griffith, among others. Peter, Paul, and Mary and David Wilcox have both recorded his best-known song, "The Kid" ("I'm the kid who ran away with the circus / Now I'm watering elephants"). These days he's working mostly behind the scenes in his home town of Nashville. A wry humor is key to Mondlock's style. When an interviewer asked how he boosts his creativity, he joked, "I wait for my girl to break up with me."

what's available: *On the Line* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sparking Gap, 1987, prod. Buddy Mondlock, Victor Sanders) is a superb collection of country- and swing-tinged original compositions in an appealing, largely acoustic setting.

influences:
Paul Simon, Al Stewart, James Taylor
Cheryl Wheeler, Teddy Thompson

Pamela Murray Winters

Monroe Brothers

See: Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

editor's choice
14 celtic albums

De Danann, *The Star Spangled Molly* (Shanachie)
The Bothy Band, *Old Hag You Have Killed Me* (Polydor)
Planxty, *Planxty* (Polydor)
Altan, *Horse with a Heart* (Green Linnet)
Dervish, *At the End of the Day* (Whirling Disc/Kells)
Cusan Tan, *Kiss of Fire* (Firebird)
Sue Richards, *Hazel Grove* (Maggie's Music)
Clannad, *Dulaman* (Shanachie)
Bonnie Rideout, *Kindred Spirits* (Maggie's Music)
Tannahill Weavers, *Mermaid's Song* (Green Linnet)
House Band, *Word of Mouth* (Green Linnet)
La Lúgh, *La Lúgh* (Claddagh)
Silly Wizard, *Live Wizardry* (Green Linnet)
Sharon Shannon, *Out the Gap* (Grapevine)

Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Formed 1939, in Nashville, TN.

Bill Monroe (born September 13, 1911, in Rosine, KY; died September 9, 1996, in Springfield, TN), vocals, mandolin; Charlie Monroe (born July 4, 1903, in KY; died September 27, 1975), guitar, vocals; Chubby Wise, fiddle; Earl Scruggs, banjo; Lester Flatt, guitar; Cedric Rainwater, bass; a legion of other bluegrass performers, including Stringbean, Del McCoury, Jimmy Martin, Sonny Osborne, Hubert Davis, Carter Stanley, Mac Wiseman, Peter Rowan, Kenny Baker, Byron Berline, Dale Potter, Tommy Jackson, Richard Greene, Bill Keith, Roland White, and Vassar Clements.

Truly the Father of Bluegrass Music, mandolinist Bill Monroe began his performing and recording career with brother and guitarist Charlie Monroe during the 1930s, recording 60 classic numbers for Bluebird that were cast in the then-standard country-brother duet style of the day. But even then, there was some-

bill monroe and his blue grass boys

thing different about Bill's approach to old-time country harmony duets. His mandolin playing was faster and fiercer, and his harmony vocals were pitched higher than the norm. The brothers split during the late 1930s; Charlie went on to lead his group, the Kentucky Partners, a popular and successful traditional country string band group, into the 1950s, coming out of retirement briefly during the 1970s. Bill, meanwhile, formed his first group of Blue Grass Boys and made country-music history; they soon became members of the Grand Ole Opry (October 1939) and had their first hit, an uptempo version of the Jimmie Rodgers standard "Mule Skinner Blues." The sound that would be known as "bluegrass" was taking shape, but the conventions that coalesced into a new kind of acoustic string-band music didn't come together until banjoist Earl Scruggs and guitarist Lester Flatt, along with fiddler Chubby Wise, joined Monroe in 1946. This band, along with either Howard Watts (alias Cedric Rainwater) or Bill's brother Birch Monroe on bass, is generally accepted as being the first true bluegrass band. With their arrival, this new form of music was complete. Bluegrass, as Monroe envisioned it and brought it to life, featured a repertoire drawn from Appalachian roots, with a touch of blues, Scottish and Irish fiddle influences (including many tunes learned in childhood and remembered from his uncle, Pendleton "Uncle Pen" Vandiver), and Protestant gospel vocal harmonies, with the occasional folk song or honky-tonk number thrown in for spice. Scruggs brought the syncopated, three-finger banjo style to the band, and various members added their individual talents. All the members except the bass player took instrumental breaks, Monroe sang tenor on the verses and lead on the choruses, the guitarists sang lead on the verses, and gospel three- and four-part harmonies were always a featured part of the show. This was the formula Monroe used for more than 50 years; he had his ups and downs, but he persevered. A star during the 1940s, he was largely overlooked during the 1950s, rediscovered during the 1960s, lionized during the 1970s and 1980s, and revered during the last years of his life. Countless great musicians apprenticed in his band as Blue Grass Boys; that designation became a badge of honor. Most of Monroe's musicians went on to illustrious careers in the music he invented; many of them left their individual marks on the music as well.

what to buy: *The Music of Bill Monroe from 1936 to 1994* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1994, comp. prod. John W. Rumble) is a monumental compilation that includes tracks from every period of Monroe's career (although it concentrates on the 44-year point with MCA/Decca). The collection includes two Monroe Brothers tracks with brother Charlie from Bluebird, a live "Muleskinner Blues" from a Grand Ole Opry broadcast in 1939, two tracks from the first Blue Grass Boys group on Bluebird from 1940–41, six tracks from his classic Columbia period, various live tracks and previously unissued or hard to find material from throughout Monroe's career, including appearances on albums by others; 98 selections in all. The compilation is an excellent effort to trace the arc of this American master musician's career and probably the best place to begin any attempt to understand the magnitude and significance of Monroe's musical accomplishments. It is with the recordings collected in *The Essential Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys 1945–1949* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, comp. prod. Lawrence Cohn) that modern bluegrass music, with all its conventions, was defined. All the songs and tunes cut by Monroe's Blue Grass Boys for Columbia are here (although 16 tracks are alternate, originally unissued versions), including all 28 titles cut by the classic Flatt & Scruggs–Chubby Wise–Howard Watts version of the Blue Grass Boys. Definitive. *16 Gems* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains the issued cuts from the classic 1940s Blue Grass Boys that were replaced by alternates on the box set. *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991, prod. various) is a valiant attempt to distill Monroe's 1950–91 output for Decca and MCA into 16 songs and tunes. Although an impossible feat, this is the best one-disc overview of the man's 40-plus years of work for the label, and it's all great stuff. *Live Recordings 1965–69: Off the Record, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993, prod. Ralph Rinzler) captures 26 tracks of live performances at festivals, clubs, parties, and picking sessions featuring versions of the Blue Grass Boys never recorded, often doing versions of classic material much different from the more familiar recorded versions. It also includes an interview/music segment with Bill and his brothers Charlie and Birch from 1969. A companion piece is *Live Duet Recordings 1963–1980—Off the Record, Volume II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993, prod. Ralph Rinzler), where Bill is joined by folk legend Doc Watson.

what to buy next: Excellent early Decca material from 1950–55, *In the Pines* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1993, reissue prod. Gary B. Reid) includes a killer version of the title cut featuring Jimmy Martin's lead vocal. All Monroe's Decca and MCA recordings up to 1979 are collected on three box sets from Germany's Bear Family label, including: *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1950–1958* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1989, prod. Paul Cohen, Owen Bradley); *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1959–1969* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1991, prod. Owen Bradley, Harry Silverstein); and *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1970–1979* ♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1994, prod. Harry Silverstein, Walter Haynes).

the rest:
Beanblossom ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1973)
Columbia Historic Edition—Bill Monroe ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1984)
Bluegrass '87 ♪♪½ (MCA, 1987)
16 All-Time Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987) (cassette only)
Southern Flavor ♪♪½ (MCA, 1988)
At His Best ♪♪ (Hollywood, 1989)
Live at the Opry: Celebrating 50 Years ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989)
Cryin' Holy unto the Lord ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991)
Bill Monroe at His Best ♪♪½ (Hollywood, 1992)
Live Recordings 1956–1959 ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993)
Blue Moon of Kentucky ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
I Saw the Light ♪♪♪ (MCA Special Products, 1996)
The Essential Bill Monroe ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1997)

worth searching for: *Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys: Muleskinner Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1991, prod. Billy Altman) contains all the Blue Grass Boys material recorded for Bluebird in 1940–41; bluegrass in its infancy, or pre-bluegrass in its seminal stages. Either way, it's classic material, historically important as well. *Are You from Dixie? Great Country Brother Teams of the 1930s* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1988, prod. Billy Altman) contains three Monroe Brothers songs along with material by the Delmore Brothers, the Allen Brothers, the Dixon Brothers, and the Blue Sky Boys. *Feast Here Tonight* ♪♪♪♪♪ (RCA/Bluebird, 1975, reissue prod. Frank Driggs) is a two-LP set of the classic 1930s Monroe Brothers recordings.

influences:
◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Carter Family
▶▶ Del McCoury, Peter Rowan, any bluegrass musician who ever lived

Randy Pitts

Charlie Monroe

See: Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Patsy Montana

Born Ruby Blevins, October 30, 1912, in Hot Springs, AR. Died May 3, 1996.

Growing up the only girl in a family with 10 boys, it's no wonder that Patsy Montana's image became one of a lovable tomboy. After growing up in rural Arkansas, Montana performed in California with the Montana Girls (where she picked up the nickname Patsy and, later, the stage name Montana). Later, she backed Jimmie Davis on recordings and fronted the Prairie Ramblers on the *WLS Barn Dance*. The first woman in country music to sell a million copies of a record ("I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart" in 1935, the middle of the Depression), Montana continued to perform and record well into the 1990s, providing a standard against which nearly every female singer that followed could measure herself. She was posthumously inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1996.

what to buy: Montana is probably more poorly represented by her available catalog than any other recent inductee into the Country Music Hall of Fame. *The Cowboy's Sweetheart* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Cathy Fink) was recorded when she was well into her 70s and features renditions of classic Western songs (including "Cowboy's Sweetheart" and Gene Autry's "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine") with new genre tunes like Laurie Lewis's "The Cowgirl Song." This record possesses plenty of charm, but though Montana receives sympathetic backing from Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer's band Rhythm Ranch, there's little of the freewheeling vocal spunk of her pioneering records of the 1930s.

what to buy next: For the original recording of "Cowboy's Sweetheart," try the excellent various-artists compilation *Columbia Country Classics, Volume I: The Golden Age* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990).

the rest:
Cowboy's Sweetheart ♪♪ (King, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Sons of the Pioneers, Gene Autry
▶▶ Suzy Bogguss, Dixie Chicks

Brian Mansfield

Christy Moore

Born 1945, in Ireland.

Christy Moore is one of Ireland's most influential singer-songwriters. As a founding member of Irish trad-rock bands Planxty and Moving Hearts and as a soloist, Moore has successfully fused the musical traditions of Ireland with an understanding of modern political and social concerns. His original songs, which include "Ordinary Man," "Go, Move, Shift," and "City to Chicago," have provided a voice for the working class and have spoken out against violence, war, and economic struggle. The older brother of singer-songwriter Luka Bloom, Moore has been singing most of his life. As a child, he sang at home with his mother and with school and church choirs and learned to play piano. Initially attracted to rock and roll, he shifted his musical direction after hearing a recording by Liam Clancy of the Clancy Brothers. His knowledge of Ireland's traditional music

was expanded after meeting Donal Lunny, the keyboardist of a band in Newbridge, the Liffeysiders. Lunny has continued to play an important role in Moore's career. In addition to playing together in Planxty and Moving Hearts, the two musicians have collaborated on Moore's solo albums, with Lunny producing several of his recordings. Moore was working as a bank official in 1964, when he met and befriended piper Willie Clancy, with whom he would play local pubs for the next year and a half. Moving to London in 1966, he performed several gigs with the Grehans. While recording his debut solo album, *Prosperous*, in 1972, Moore assembled the band that became Planxty. Although he was only with the group for two years, he helped to produce three highly influential albums. In the early 1980s he took the band's energetic trad-rock approach a step further and formed Moving Hearts with Lunny, Keith Donald, Davy Spillane, Declan Sinnott, Eoin O'Neill, and Brian Calnan. Combining traditional instruments, including bodhrán and uilleann pipes, and modern instruments, including saxophone and electric guitar, the group brought the musical traditions of Ireland up to contemporary standards. Since leaving Moving Hearts in 1983, Moore has focused on his solo career. His 1996 album, *Graffiti Tongue*, included a song, "North and South of the River," written with Bono and the Edge of U2.

what to buy: *The Christy Moore Collection 1981–1991* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros.-UK, prod. Donal Lunny, Christy Moore) surveys the most influential decade of Moore's solo work and includes such memorable tunes as "Ordinary Man," "Lakes of Pontchartrain," "Biko Drum," and "Lindoosvarna."

what to buy next: Recorded at the Point Theater in Dublin in July, 1994, *Live at the Point* ♪♪♪½ (1994, prod. Christy Moore) captures the excitement of Moore's concerts. Accompanying himself on guitar and bodhrán, he performs an intimate set that includes traditional folk songs, such as "Black Is the Color," and memorable original tunes including "Fairytale of New York," "Go, Move, Shift," and "Ride On."

the rest:
Prosperous ♪♪♪½ (Tara, 1971)
Whatever Tickles Your Fancy ♪♪½ (Polydor, 1975)
Christy Moore ♪♪½ (Polydor, 1978)
The Christy Moore Folk Collection: 1973–1978 ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1978)
The Iron behind the Gate ♪♪½ (Tara, 1978)
Live in Dublin ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1978)
The Time Has Come ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1983)
Ride On ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1984)
Ordinary Man ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1985)
Nice 'n' Easy ♪♪½ (PolyGram, 1986)
Unfinished Revolution ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1987)
Voyage ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1989)
Smoke & the Strong Whiskey ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1991)
King Pluck ♪♪½ (Columbia/Sony, 1993)
Graffiti Tongue ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Ewan MacColl, Martin Carthy, Clancy Brothers, Seamus Ennis
▶▶ Oyster Band, Bothy Band, Rare Air, Luka Bloom

see also: *Moving Hearts, Planxty*

Craig Harris

Hamish Moore

Born in Scotland.

Making a name for yourself in two professions (albeit related professions) is quite an accomplishment, but that is exactly what Hamish Moore has done. Known as a premier maker of various sorts of bagpipes, Moore has also made a big splash in the world of bagpipe music. His work with Scottish small-pipes and Highland bagpipes, as well as other types of bagpipes, has opened a whole new frontier to the piping community. Moore's work is innovative and creative, combining the elements of traditional music and modern jazz in a delightful whirlwind. The result leaves the listener filled with anticipation for what is to come next. Moore began playing the Highland bagpipe at age 10, but his passion was truly kindled when he discovered the "cauld wind" Scottish small-pipes in 1980. His love of the instrument prompted him to promote it in a variety of ways, from hand-crafting small-pipes to combining them with other instruments in new and exciting forms of music, thus grabbing a whole new audience for the instrument. His musical credits are numerous, including participation in Scottish festivals of folk and jazz, opening for Van Morrison at Edinburgh Castle, recording a film score with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and teaching at a variety of piping schools. He also established a piping school of his own, with branches in the United Kingdom, North America, and New Zealand.

what to buy: *Stepping on the Bridge* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1994, prod. Jerry Holland) is a good place to start for those who enjoy traditional music played well. Moore plays Cape Breton and Scottish tunes in the Cape Breton style made popular by fiddlers such as Buddy and Natalie MacMaster. The choice of tunes is superb, and Hamish brings the music to life through his emotional playing. The liner notes to this album explain

Moore's belief that Cape Breton's style of playing more accurately represents the style of Scottish music in the eighteenth century than the styles currently in favor in Scotland.

what to buy next: *Farewell to Decorum* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1993, prod. Michael Marra) is an eclectic montage of creatively presented jazz, folk, and pop. Moore is joined by Dick Lee, a highly acclaimed jazz saxophonist. The two are accompanied by a variety of other musicians, making up a whole jazz band on some of the tracks. Hamish does a stirring small-pipe solo called "Farewell to Nigg," where he experiments with an unusual tuning of the drones and chanter, leaving the piece with a decidedly minor feel.

worth searching for: Also worthy of note, *The Bee's Knees* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Hamish Moore, Dick Lee) is another pairing of Hamish with Dick Lee, resulting in a jazzy selection of traditional and modern tunes.

influences:

◀◀ Alex Currie, Buddy MacMaster, Dick Lee

▶▶ Barbara Dennerlein, Don Patterson, Don Pullen

Jo Hughey Morrison

Kevin Moore

See: Keb' Mo'

The Lynn Morris Band

Formed 1988.

Lynn Morris (born San Antonio, TX), vocals, guitar, banjo; Marshall Wilborn, bass, vocals; Jesse Brock, mandolin; Ron Stewart, banjo; past members include Tom Adams, banjo; David McLaughlin, mandolin, guitar, vocals.

Lynn Morris, a national banjo champion, grew up in, as is often said facetiously, "the great bluegrass state of Texas." Her college years in Colorado led to her first exposure to the genre in which she would eventually become something of a pioneer. As a writer, producer, skilled picker, and vocalist, Morris has been rewarded by bluegrass associations for her playing, and she is regarded as one of bluegrass music's most versatile female performers. Her husband, bass player and songwriter Marshall Wilborn, served in two impressive bluegrass outfits—as a member of Jimmy Martin's band and also in the Johnson Mountain Boys. The couple first met as members of Whetstone Run, a Pennsylvania-based band. Wilborn, also from Texas, was in the Johnson Mountain Boys with Gettysburg, Pennsylvania's Tom Adams. Another survivor of the Jimmy Martin experience, Adams picked banjo with Martin for two years, joining Morris and Wilborn in 1988. Bridging the gap between hard-edged country vocals and sweet bluegrass harmony, Morris is obviously influenced by much of the work of legends like Hazel Dickens, ensuring she won't be confused with too many of the more pop-edged bluegrass acts proliferating these days. A handful of hard country cover songs can be found on the group's three albums, along with lots of traditional bluegrass music.

what to buy: Between *Mama's Hand* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Lynn Morris) and *The Lynn Morris Band* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Lynn Morris Band), there's plenty of heavy-duty bluegrass picking to be found. The Hazel Dickens–penned title track of the former has become a multi-award-winning signature song for Morris. The debut record features a young Ronnie McCoury on mandolin.

what to buy next: *The Bramble & the Rose* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992) is a strong collection, with tunes by Tom T. Hall, Johnny Cash, and Dolly Parton. You'll also hear Wilborn's original version of the Alison Krauss hit "Heartstrings."

influences:

◀◀ Hazel Dickens, Johnson Mountain Boys

▶▶ Laurie Lewis, Cox Family

Stephen L. Betts

Van Morrison

Born August 31, 1945, in Belfast, Ireland.

More than anyone's except maybe Jerry Lee Lewis or Little Richard, the mercurial music of Van Morrison explores that most elusive of dichotomies: the tension between the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the worldly, sex and chastity. Alternating between being pious and being lascivious, Morrison's best albums explore that most tenuous and volatile of life's conflicts. He has lurched all over the emotional and musical landscape in his search. As a teenager in Them, Morrison screamed lustily, emulating hard-bitten American bluesmen and scoring hits with the proto-rock/blues of "Baby, Please Don't Go" and his own "Gloria," still a garage-band mainstay. After the pop-heavy (but controversial) "Brown Eyed Girl," which revealed a seemingly endless capacity for hit records, Morrison's first real solo record, *Astral Weeks*, veered away from the mainstream, introducing an inquisitive, introspective, and self-absorbed obsession with folk/jazz, all banging acoustic guitars, strings, impressionistic lyrics, and a grunting, growling scat that would differentiate his voice from all others.

van morrison

He embraced the poetry and mysticism of William Blake and William Butler Yeats with the same enthusiasm as the lyrics of Jackie Wilson or Leadbelly. His early solo records for Warner Bros., especially the warm country/soul of *Moondance*, *His Band and Street Choir*, *Tupelo Honey*, and *St. Dominic's Preview* reflect the rural hippie aesthetic of the period and his Woodstock, New York, surroundings. After a brief hiatus between 1974–77, his later Warner albums seemed to tilt further in favor of the mystic and spiritual, most notably on *Beautiful Vision* and *Into the Music*. Since moving to Polydor during the mid-'80s, Morrison's music has matured even more but has retained—some would probably say regained—its edge. For all his accomplishments and influence, Morrison remains something of a (large) cult artist, and his aversion to show business mechanisms has been well documented. Eschewing fashion in favor of his muse, wherever it takes him, Morrison displays a rare honesty, tenacity, and willingness for growth and exploration without consideration for commercial trends or fashion. It seems he's forever stalled at the crossroads where the path of righteousness meets the highway to hell. He can make it a bumpy ride at times, but it's worth getting in the back seat and hanging on.

what to buy: Choosing the best from someone as prolific and challenging as Morrison is difficult at best, but his first three solo records are absolute musts. *Astral Weeks* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1968, prod. Lewis Merenstein) is a song cycle that sounds like a concept album, even if it isn't, as it meanders through the alleys and back streets of London's pre-punk Notting Hill Gate with sleazy eccentrics like the unforgettable icon "Madame George." *Moondance* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1970, prod. Van Morrison) and *His Band and the Street Choir* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1970, prod. Van Morrison) would have made an extraordinary double album, with numerous youthful examples of the Morrison acoustic soul magic including "Into the Mystic," "Caravan," "Crazy Love," "Domino," "Blue Money," and "Call Me up in Dreamland." *Hymns to the Silence* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1991, prod. Van Morrison), a lengthy double set, is one of his more recent triumphs. Disc one, with a couple of wry showbiz rants ("Professional Jealousy" and "Why Must I Always Explain") and a masterful version of "I Can't Stop Loving You," is especially listenable.

what to buy next: *St. Dominic's Preview* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972, prod. Van Morrison, Ted Templeman) contains wonderful songs, such as "Jackie Wilson Said (I'm in Heaven When You Smile)," "Almost Independence Day," and the epochal "Listen to the Lion." *Irish Heartbeat* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1988, prod. Van Morrison, Paddy Moloney), a collaboration with the Chieftains, is an inspired collection of traditional music. *A Night in San Francisco* ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1994, prod. Van Morrison) is a two-disc, extended live set that does justice to his current high-energy, big-band performances and includes amazing medleys that place his music in context. *Too Long in Exile* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1993, prod. Van Morrison) finds a loose Morrison in a bluesy mood, relaxing on alto saxophone, electric guitar, and harmonica and reprising "Gloria" for his middle age. Neophytes can't go wrong with *The Best of Van Morrison* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1990, prod. various) and *The Best of Van Morrison Volume II* ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1993, prod. various), with 35 distinct tracks between them that will have to do until the inevitable box set comes along.

what to avoid: *Inarticulate Speech of the Heart* ♪ (Warner Bros., 1983, prod. Van Morrison) is as confusing as the title implies. Synthesized New Age blather, it was, not surprisingly, his last record for Warner Bros.

the rest:
Blowin' Your Mind ♪♪♪ (Bang, 1967)
Best of Van Morrison ♪♪♪ (Bang, 1970)
Tupelo Honey ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1971)
T.B. Sheets ♪♪♪ (Bang, 1972)
Hard Nose the Highway ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1973)
It's Too Late to Stop Now ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1974)
Veedon Fleece ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1974)
A Period of Transition ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1977)
Wavelength ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1978)
Into the Music ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1979)
Common One ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980)
Beautiful Vison ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1982)
A Sense of Wonder ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1985)
Live at the Grand Opera House Belfast ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1985)
No Guru, No Method, No Teacher ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1986)
Poetic Champions Compose ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1989)
Avalon Sunset ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1989)
Enlightenment ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1990)
Bang Masters ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1991)
Days like This ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1995)
(With Georgie Fame) *How Long Has This Been Going On* ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1996)
Brown Eyed Girl & Blue Eyed Soul ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
Tell Me Something: Songs of Mose Allison ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1996)
The Healing Game ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1997)

worth searching for: Morrison's infrequent live sets are generally considered the best way to experience the Belfast Cowboy, as witnessed by his three excellent, authorized live albums.

There are literally dozens more available in bootleg form, and since Morrison rarely does the same show twice, many of them are worth the effort. *Can You Feel the Silence?* ♪♪♪♪½ (Great Dane, 1983) records a 1982 show with a great Morrison rant about "Idiot Wind" that tries to explain why he's playing at a rock festival. *Van Morrison Gets His Chance to Wail Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪♪ (Gold Standard) puts you in the studio during 1969–71, with Morrison on acoustic guitar as he works out demo versions of "Ballerina," "Domino," "And It Stoned Me," "Wild Night," "Caravan," and many more.

solo outings:

Them:

Them ♪♪♪½ (Parrot/Decca, 1965)
Them Again ♪♪♪ (Parrot/Decca, 1966)
Them Featuring Van Morrison ♪♪♪♪ (Parrot/London, 1972)

influences:

◀◀ Sonny Boy Williamson, Leadbelly, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Sam Cooke, Slim Harpo, Solomon Burke, James Brown, Ray Charles, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Jackie Wilson, Bo Diddley, Curtis Mayfield & the Impressions, Johnny & the Pirates, Alexis Korner, Mose Allison, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Counting Crows, Graham Parker & the Rumour, Dexy's Midnight Runners, Sinead O'Connor, U2, Band, Elvis Costello, Rod Stewart, Mark Knopfler, Bob Seger, John Mellencamp, Bruce Springsteen, Joan Armatrading, Rickie Lee Jones

Leland Rucker

Bill Morrissey

Born November 25, 1951, in Hartford, CT.

The most bizarre thing about this New England folkie is not his voice, which sounds like a frog eating sandpaper. It's that such a voice manages to be soulful, funny, and moving all at the same time. Though Morrissey rarely tries to rock—or honky-tonk for that matter—his songs about normal people doing slightly odd things evoke the natural spirit of both country and rock 'n' roll. "Grizzly Bear," one of his best early songs, is about a rich, stuck-up, beautiful woman who won't give the narrator the time of day until he gets her to dance something called the Grizzly Bear. And "Letter from Heaven" is a party song about Charlie Parker, Mama Cass, and devil-plagued bluesman Robert Johnson ("Yeah, I know, everybody's always surprised to see him here") having a ball on a cloud someplace. Though his idiom isn't country per se, he records a Hank Williams song now and then, and his songwriting style is as down-to-earth and friendly as that of Johnny Cash.

what to buy: The darkly funny *Night Train* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1993, prod. Ellen Karas), with "Letter from Heaven" and the romantic "Ellen's Tune" ("I love the way she knocks upon my door"), is Morrissey's most consistent (and, not coincidentally, shortest) album. His debut, *Bill Morrissey* ♪♪♪ (1984/Philo/Rounder, 1991, prod. Bill Morrissey, Ellen Karas), has "Grizzly Bear" and a bunch of other wry love songs and was actually re-recorded in 1991.

what to buy next: Recorded with pal folk singer Greg Brown, *Friend of Mine* ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1993, prod. Ellen Karas) is a reverential collection of great old songs, including Willie Dixon's "Little Red Rooster," Hank Williams's "I'll Never Get out of This World Alive," and Chuck Berry's "Memphis, Tennessee."

what to avoid: Most of Morrissey's records are solid, but the weakest material is on *Inside* ♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1992, prod. John Jennings).

the rest:

Standing Eight ♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder, 1989)
You'll Never Get to Heaven ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1996)

worth searching for: Morrissey fans should keep their eyes open for stray copies of "Live Free or Die"/"Trailer Park" (Shoot the Cat Records, 1977), the funny and rebellious first single—released, coincidentally, in the same year as *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols.*

influences:

◀◀ Hank Williams, Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly

▶▶ Shawn Colvin, Suzanne Vega, Patty Larkin, Christine Lavin

Steve Knopper

Morse Playboys

See: Eddie LeJeune

Pete Morton

Born in Leicester, England.

Pete Morton is not afraid to call himself a folk singer. In Morton's case the genre is bent and melded with a background steeped in punk and defiant rock. Sprinkle a large dose of traditional influence over it all and you wind up with something difficult to categorize, but the Leicester, England, native's love of traditional music becomes a thread lacing around everything he performs. Morton grew up in an era where it was common for young men to gravitate towards punk and he too took up

that cause, but his direction changed when he began discovering the music of folk singers of the '60s and '70s. "I found some folk records in the library, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Bob Dylan, and felt they were so powerful. Especially the voice of Buffy Sainte-Marie." Morton soon left his bandmates and went his own way, delving still deeper into the traditional music of the British Isles, primarily England and Scotland. What he found will come as no surprise to lovers of traditional music. He discovered that traditional material and traditionally based contemporary folk music was the perfect medium to address many of the social issues and problems of today. As he says, "Punk and folk music are pretty much the same thing. They're both strong; a shouting out." These varied influences resulted in the development of a powerfully unique writing and singing style. Morton's writing takes a global perspective on issues but he is still able to succinctly pare them down to manageable chunks. His audiences have no trouble dealing with the stories that Morton brings to the stage, whether they are stories from Kurdistan or his home in England. But rather than just another angry young man, he has progressed beyond that stage, now imbuing his songs with a mature new sense of hope. Morton's greatest asset is his songwriting ability. With a craggy voice that is aged beyond his years he delivers music has been described as "an important step forward for English folk music.

what to buy: *Courage, Love, and Grace* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1996/Rounder, 1997, prod. Gordon Jones), a recent solo album, is Morton's best and most consistent by far. Intelligent songwriting, good production, and even pacing make it a great collection of songs. Morton writes about human fallibility, the mysteries of love, politics, and religion. "On Your Side," a simple, affirming love song, is an example of Morton's best and the backup vocals by Sally Barker top it off. His epic "Change," a dream journey with George Fox, is a somewhat cryptic piece that talks about class differences and injustices.

what to buy next: Pithy songwriting, strident vocals, and some fun mark *Mad World Blues* ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Gordon Jones). Morton's "Songbird" became the center of the album, which is based on the idea of thinking globally instead of nationalistically. In it, Morton makes apologies "for messin' up the Earth." "We race through time on a mad, mad wheel, arrogantly saying we're wise/Avoiding the obvious in glory and death/ I hope we can apologize in the end."

the rest:

One Big Joke ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown/Green Linnet, 1988)
(With Roger Wilson and Simon Edwards) *Urban Folk Volumes I and II: Self Destructive Fools* ♪♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, 1997)

worth searching for: *Frivolous Love* ♪♪♪ (Harbourtown, Philo/Rounder, 1987, prod. Gordon Jones) contains 10 of Morton's original songs and the remarkable reworking of the traditional ballad "Tamlyn," which has become a firm favorite with his audiences.

influences:

◀◀ Buffy Sainte-Marie, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Billy Bragg, Brooks Williams, Richard Shindell, Stephen Fearing

Denise Sofranko

Lisa Moscatiello

Born April 5, 1966, in Arlington VA.

Singer and guitarist Lisa Moscatiello has long been a favorite of Washington, D.C., area folk-music fans and is set to be discovered by a nationwide audience on the strength of her debut album *Innocent When You Dream*. Growing up in the middle of Washington's fertile Irish music scene, Moscatiello learned well from master musicians Billy McComiskey and Andy O'Brien of the Irish Tradition, harper Sue Richards, and singer-guitarist Chris Noyes, among others. While still in high school she was playing professionally with D.C.-area multi-instrumentalist Wendy Morrison in a duo called Short Story and with the Irish band Sodabread. After four years at Yale, where she broadened her musical palette with influences from the Jazz and pop worlds, Moscatiello returned to D.C. and joined the English folk-rock band the New St. George. In the New St. George, Moscatiello became a professional musician, learning much from the group's arranger, keyboardist Jennifer Cutting. After six years touring all over the United States and recording one album, the New St. George called it quits and Moscatiello began a solo career. Her debut album, *Innocent When You Dream* was released on her own Happy Cactus label in 1995, garnering strong reviews and airplay. Moscatiello continues to tour as a solo performer, with keyboardist Bev Stanton, and with the New York–based Irish band Whirligig.

what's available: *Innocent When You Dream* ♪♪♪♪½ (Happy Cactus Records, 1995, prod. Marco Delmar) showcases Moscatiello's great voice and great taste in songs. Her debut album sees her wrapping her warm alto voice around songs from a variety of genres, making each of them her own. Opening with a faithful version of Fairport's "Now Be Thankful," she goes on to cover songs from the bluegrass, Irish, French, and folk fields. Producer Marco Delmar and Moscatiello's group of band-

mates—including bass player Rico Petruccelli, guitarist Dave Chappell, and multi-instrumentalist Robin Bullock—keep the sound consistent across all the genres. Highlights include the title track, a Tom Waits composition imaginatively paired with a Yeats poem set to music by Moscatiello; her version of the French song "Dame Lombarde"; and a breathtaking version of the traditional Scots ballad "Bogie's Bonnie Belle." Moscatiello has great taste in musicians as well as songs and gets such talented friends as fiddler Bruce Molsky, all-Ireland accordionist Billy McComiskey, and Chesapeake singer Moondi Klein to help out. Like Maura O'Connell, whom she admires, Moscatiello is a singer's singer, more interested in finding and performing good songs than fitting into stylistic pigeon holes. Her debut album is a great collection of songs, sung wonderfully.

influences:

Sarah Vaughan, Dolores Keane, Irish Tradition

Maura O'Connell, Susan McKeown

see also: *New St. George*

Tony Ziselberger

Mouth Music

Formed 1990, in Scotland.

Jackie Joyce, vocals; Martin Swan, guitar, whistles, flutes, drums; Michaela Rowan, voice; James MacKintosh, drums; Quee MacArthur, bass; Jeremy Black, percussion.

"All music is singing or drumming," states Mouth Music's Martin Swan, and that is probably the closest you can come to finding a description of this unusual group. Evolving to a whole new sound with each new recording, Mouth Music has defied fans and critics alike with their chameleon-like personality. One moment funky world-beat, the next new age with a touch of traditional music thrown in, quickly followed by techno-pop, this group changes persona at the drop of a song. Which, considering their start, should hardly be a surprise. Formed by Scottish film and TV director Martin Swan and American-born ethnomusicologist Talitha MacKenzie, how could this group help but pull on a variety of styles and traditions, forming a new fusion of sounds at each turn? Feeling that rhythm is the root of any music, Mouth Music derives this rhythm in the most creative of ways, from bongos and bottles to synthesizers, and even through the vocal lines themselves.

what's available: Winner of multiple "Best of the Year" awards, *Mouth Music* ♪♪♪ (Triple Earth, 1991, prod. Martin Swan, Chic Medley) takes Gaelic tunes to Africa and back, adding a bit of pop culture along the way. Driving rhythms and heavily synthesized vocals and keyboard lines accompany a collection of traditional tunes, bringing them a new sound. Dance beat meets waulking songs and a cappella mouth music, sometimes together at once, sometimes alternating in style. Particularly fascinating is "I See the Great Mountains," from the tune better known as "Mist Covered Mountains," which mixes the well-known vocal line with a hypnotic drum beat. *Mo-Di* ♪♪ (Triple Earth, 1993, prod. Martin Swan, Stuart Hamilton) is a collection of memorable dance tunes, distinguished by the amazing multi-lingual vocal talents of singer Jackie Joyce. Stand-out tracks include "Birnam," an ethereal new-age ballad, and "He Mandu," which combines exciting dance rhythms with fascinating harmonies. *Shorelife* ♪ (Triple Earth, 1995, prod. Martin Swan, Chic Medley) has more of a computerized feel, heavy on the synthesizers and drum kits.

influences:

David Byrne, Brian Eno, Enya

Pink Kross

Jo Hughey Morrison

Moving Cloud

See: Kevin Crawford

Moving Hearts

Formed 1981, in Dublin, Ireland. Disbanded in 1985.

Christy Moore, guitar, vocals; Keith Donald, saxophone; Davy Spillane, pipes; Declan Sinnott, guitar; Donal Lunny, keyboards; Eoin O'Neill, bass; Brian Calnan, drums.

The musical traditions of Ireland were expanded by the rock-influenced arrangements played by Moving Hearts. With the songs of brogue-heavy vocalist and songwriter Christy Moore set to the trad-Irish sounds of bodhrán and uilleann pipes, and the dynamic sounds of saxophone, keyboards, and a powerful rhythm section, the band roared with a contemporary-minded intensity that influenced such future trad-rock groups as the Oyster Band, the Pogues, and Rare Air. Moving Hearts initially came together to perform one night a week at the Baggot Inn in Dublin. Their early performances were so successful that the gig was extended to three nights a week, with word about the band's potent sound spreading across the Atlantic. Although Moore only remained with the band until 1983, they continued to perform together for another two years. Their final album, *The Storm*, was an all-instrumental outing.

cajun accordion

Creoles in Louisiana were playing accordions as early as 1850, barely twenty years after the invention of the instrument. It was probably Creoles that introduced accordions to the Cajuns, but it was the German settlers who brought the one-row diatonic accordion that is now the defacto Cajun accordion. Joe Falcon's recording of "Allons a Lafayette" in 1928 started an accordion craze, but it is the sophisticated playing of Creole Amédée Ardoin that has continued to deeply influence succeeding generations of accordionists. Iry Lejeune took Ardoin's songs and super-charged them with his own passionate accordion playing, updating them for modern Cajun music. Meanwhile, succeeding generations of Creole musicians began to utilize two- and eventually three-row button accordions to get more "blue" notes. Clifton Chenier introduced the piano accordion and created modern zydeco by melding Ray Charles bass lines onto Creole tunes and Louisiana blues, something only possible with the "strap-on Steinway." The one-row accordion has returned to prominence amongst Creole musicians, mainly through Boozoo Chavis. Both Cajuns and Creoles see the one-row accordion as a symbol of ethnic identity. Demand for the instrument is so strong that Cajuns have also become proficient builders of the instrument.

Jared Snyder

what to buy: Moving Hearts' self-titled debut album *Moving Hearts* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1981, prod. Donal Lunny) is their most politically minded recording. In addition to Moore's original songs, "Hiroshima Nagasaki Russian Roulette" and "Irish Ways and Irish Laws," the album includes a powerful rendition of Jackson Browne's anti-nuke classic, "Before the Deluge."

what to buy next: The first album released after Moore's departure, *Live Hearts* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1983, prod. Steve Turner) maintains the high-energy levels of their live performances. Recorded at the Dominion Theatre in London, the album, which features the lead vocals of Mick Hanley, carries as potent a punch as the group's earlier work.

the rest:
The Dark End of the Street ♪♪♪ (WEA-UK, 1982)
The Storm ♪♪ (Tara, 1985)

influences:
Planxty, Bothy Band, Band

see also: Oyster Band, Rare Air, U2, Pogues

see also: *Christy Moore, Donal Lunny*

Craig Harris

Moxy Früvous

Formed 1990, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Jian (formerly Jean) Ghomeshi, vocals, drums, percussion; Mike Ford, vocals, guitar; David Matheson, vocals, accordion, banjo, guitar; Murray Foster, vocals, bass.

Don't get hung up on the name: fans, members, and web sites will give many improbable stories about the origin of "Moxy Früvous." (According to the liner notes from *Bargainville*, it refers to the "sound produced when yogurt dollops are dropped in searing liquid.") What matters is that the band has incredible talents behind the incredible name. As vocal-pyrotechnic groups go, this one is unparalleled; the harmonies make the goofiness and lefty banner-waving easy to swallow. Moxy Früvous began as a group of buskers on Toronto's streets. Commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Company to write satirical songs for radio, the group rose to the challenge and became audience favorites.

Easily dismissed as musical Marx Brothers, Moxy Früvous's songs often touch on political issues: "River Valley" is a gorgeous ecological ballad; "Drinking Song," about Armageddon, sounds like something Pete Seeger would pen on a good day; "The Kids' Song" pokes gentle fun at the Canadian government's penchant for surveys and paperwork. Musically, the band favors '60s-style folk-anthem melodies with romantic Eastern European and Middle Eastern touches, which provide an appealing counterpoint to the often biting lyrics. Nobody does this sort of thing like the Canadians; imagine the comedy group Kids in the Hall with the voices of the Vienna Grown-up Boys Choir, with hearts on sleeves and tongues in cheeks.

what to buy: Begin at the beginning with *Bargainville* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner, 1993, prod. Moxy Früvous, Doug McClement), the band's most balanced album and the one with the strongest songs, including "River Valley," "My Baby Loves a Bunch of Authors," and the *Spiderman* theme.

what to buy next: *You Will Go to the Moon* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bottom Line, 1997, prod. Moxy Früvous, Stephen Traub) starts out with a retro/hip-hop mix and spins out into the world music bazaar, where it's hard to place the band's intentions but the noises they make are awfully pretty anyway. Fortunately, it swings back into retro with "Your New Boyfriend" (who's apparently a "right-wing shit" in four-part harmony).

what to avoid: Unless you're a completist, pass on *Wood* ♪♪♪½ (Warner, 1995, prod. Moxy Früvous, Michael Koppelman). It's well made but strangely somber; I'm a major Früvous fan, and I found it hard to listen to more than once.

worth searching for: If you're a convert by way of the band's live shows, look for *The B Album* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner, 1996, prod. Moxy Früvous), a short collection of satirical songs like "Gord's Gold" and "The Greatest Man in America" (tributes to Gordon Lightfoot and Rush Limbaugh, respectively). It's marketed mostly at live shows.

influences:

◀◀ Bee Gees, Andrews Sisters, Roches, Kids in the Hall

▶▶ Nields, Sons of the Never Wrong, Da Vinci's Notebook

Pamela Murray Winters

Mr. Fox

Formed 1970, in Yorkshire, England; disbanded 1971.

Bob Pegg, vocals, organ, melodeon, tin whistle, terrapin, guitar, piano, bass, bass drum; Carole Pegg, vocals, fiddle; Alan Eden, drums, vocals; Barry Lyons, bass, dulcimer, recorder, tambourine, vocals; Andrew Massey, cello (1970); John Myatt, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon (1970).

Mr. Fox bucked all the folk-rock trends of the early '70s. Instead of performing traditional ballads and fiddle tunes, they wrote their own stories of Yorkshire life and myth, and performed them in a style heavily influenced by Yorkshire Dales bands. They used electric instruments, but shunned rock rhythms, producing a quirky sound that remains fresh today and is perfectly suited to their morbid lyrics. Doomed to obscurity by their short life span and distance from the mainstream, they remain one of the most interesting footnotes in folk-rock history.

what's available: *Mr. Fox/The Gipsy* ♪♪♪♪ (Castle, 1996, prod. Bill Leader) collects both Mr. Fox albums on one CD. *Mr. Fox* (1970) has the full Dales sound, with cello and woodwinds underpinning the Peggs' macabre fairy tales; "The Gay Goshawk," with startling and highly effective distorted bass, is the standout track. One is obliged to note that the band is sloppy and often out of tune, but somehow this doesn't diminish the album's curious power. On *The Gipsy* (1971), the cello and woodwinds are gone, and the band is technically improved, but the material is somewhat less focused. The bizarre folk-rap of "Aunt Lucy Broadwood" and an Eldritch rendition of "House Carpenter" keep things quite lively, however.

worth searching for: "Mendle," an intense, highly fuzzed, and rather psychedelic song from *The Gipsy*, was left off the combined CD due to lack of space. You'll need to track down the original vinyl release if you want to hear it.

Tim Walters

Karen Mueller

Born June 30, 1962, in Winfield, KS.

Karen Mueller is an outstanding autoharp performer who began playing in 1978 and won the 1986 International Autoharp Championship in Winfield, Kansas. In addition to the autoharp, she plays guitar, mountain dulcimer, and mandolin, all of which she regularly teaches in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She's been described as "one of the country's premier autoharp players" and has a unique autoharp style that is full of energetic syncopated rhythms, improvisation, and dynamic variations. Mueller's repertoire includes many old time/bluegrass fiddle tunes and Irish jigs, many of which she has published in a tune book, *The Autoharp Gourmet*.

what's available: *Clarity* ♪♪♪♪½ (Streamline Productions, 1993, prod. Karen Mueller, Streamline Productions BMI) is an exciting instrumental recording featuring Mueller's unique and energetic autoharp style. The title is most appropriate to describe her clean melody picking and each selection makes an immediate statement. The cuts vary from an excellent rendition of "Norwegian Wood" with banjo added by Tony Trischka, to a wonderful medley of "Blarney Pilgrim" and "Humours of Enistymon" that includes Timothy Britton on uilleann pipes. Other musicians lending support on this recording include Tom Schaefer (fiddle), Pete Mathison (bass), Marc Anderson (percussion), Jacqueline Ultan (cello), and Michael O'Sullivan (grand piano). Mueller's mountain dulcimer is featured on four cuts and displays her fingerpicking on "Sister," and her incredible rhythmic energy on "Night Flight to Dublin," a take-off on a classical guitar piece that she's turned into a jig. *Clarity* is available from Streamline Productions BMI, P.O. Box 80565, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408.

worth searching for: *Autoharp Gourmet* ♪♪♪ (Streamline Productions, 1992, prod. Karen Mueller) is available on cassette and demonstrates the arrangements in the tune book. This instrumental solo recording stands on its own and is an excellent sampling of her autoharp expertise.

influences:

◀◀ Tony Rice, Bothy Band, Bryan Bowers

▶▶ Les Gustafson-Zook, Tina Louise Barr

Heidi Cerrigione

Ann Mayo Muir

See: Bok, Trickett, Muir

Maria Muldaur

Born Maria D'Amato, September 12, 1943, in New York, NY.

When Maria Muldaur started her solo career, she rode her distinctive, sweet voice to the pop stratosphere with the single "Midnight at the Oasis." As usual with overnight successes, she had worked a long time to get there. Through the 1960s she was part of the Even Dozen Jug Band and then the Jim Kweskin Jug Band (with whom she recorded a great early version of her solo hit, "I'm a Woman"). After the Kweskin band broke up, she and bandmate/husband Geoff Muldaur recorded before they divorced in 1972. She released her self-titled solo debut in 1973 and enjoyed a quick rise and fall on the pop charts. In the 1980s she became a born-again Christian and recorded some gospel and contemporary Christian albums. Muldaur has enjoyed good success on the blues and roots-music circuit in the 1990s.

what to buy: There's no question that Muldaur's best album is her first. *Maria Muldaur* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1973/Warner Archives, 1993, prod. Lenny Waronker, Joe Boyd) came out at a time when the pop scene was ready to enjoy the eclecticism of American music. She hit swing with "Walking One and Only" and sexy radio pop with "Midnight at the Oasis"—a song that, for good or ill, set a standard for come-on pop songs of the 1970s. The follow-up, *Waitress in a Donut Shop* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1974/Warner Archives, 1993, prod. Lenny Waronker, Joe Boyd), was just as broad and excellently performed but didn't hang together as well. It featured her rock 'n' rolling "I'm a Woman" (her second and last chart hit) as well as two cuts led by jazz great Benny Carter—"Sweetheart" and "It Ain't the Meat (It's the Motion)."

what to buy next: On *Sweet and Slow* ♪♪♪♪ (Tudor, 1983/Stony Plain, 1993, prod. David Nichtern) Muldaur sings with her old fire for Nichtern, who wrote "Midnight at the Oasis," with bands led by Dr. John and Kenny Barron. *Jazzabelle* ♪♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1995, prod. Maria Muldaur), recorded a decade later, is a jazz effort that finds Muldaur just as sharp with a huskier voice. *Louisiana Love Call* ♪♪♪½ (Black Top, 1992, prod. Hammond Scott) and *Fanning the Flames* ♪♪♪½ (Telarc, 1996, prod. John Snyder, Maria Muldaur, Elane Martone) don't capture the pop moment the way her earlier albums did, but in terms of performance, Muldaur certainly gives her all, vocally.

what to avoid: Generally speaking, you can't go wrong with a Muldaur album, but if you're rummaging through remainder bins of old vinyl, avert your eyes and close your wallet for *Southern Winds* ♪♪ (Reprise, 1978) and *Open Your Eyes* ♪ (Reprise, 1979, prod. Patrick Henderson), which sound totally tired.

the rest:

There Is a Love ♪♪♪ (Myrrh, 1982)
On the Sunny Side ♪♪♪ (Music for Little People, 1992)
Meet Me at Midnite ♪♪♪½ (Black Top, 1994)
Jazzabelle (Stony Plain, 1995)

worth searching for: Geoff and Maria Muldaur's fine *Pottery Pie* ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1967/Hannibal, 1993, prod. Joe Boyd) points the way toward Maria's first solo outing. Out of print, Muldaur's third solo outing—*Sweet Harmony* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1976, prod. Lenny Waronker)—was just a tad less interesting than her first two.

influences:

◀◀ Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Dolly Parton

▶▶ Wendy Waldman, Linda Ronstadt

Salvatore Caputo

Muleskinner

Formed early 1970s.

Peter Rowan, guitar, lead vocals; David Grisman, mandolin, harmony vocals; Bill Keith, banjo; Richard Greene, violin, bass vocals; Clarence White, lead and rhythm guitar, harmony vocals.

Muleskinner was a short-lived bluegrass supergroup born of its members' shared experience with 1960s counterculture and love of traditional hillbilly music.

what to buy: *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam* ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1974, prod. Richard Greene, Joe Boyd) is the quintet's sole outing. Originally released on Warner Bros. in 1974, this record predates both the classic edition of New Grass Revival and mandolinist David Grisman's groundbreaking mix of jazz

and bluegrass. It also documents one of flatpicker extraordinaire Clarence White's final studio sessions.

the rest:
Live—Television Soundtrack ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Dillards
▶▶ New Grass Revival

see also: *Peter Rowan, David Grisman, Richard Greene*

Bill Friskics-Warren

Heidi Muller

Born c. 1950s, in NJ.

Heidi Muller has been writing and singing professionally for two decades, accompanying herself on mountain dulcimer and guitar. She settled in Seattle during the early 1980s, where she struck up a friendship with Linda Waterfall, who has served as Muller's mentor and producer. Muller has toured nationally, and was a New Folk finalist at Kerrville in 1989, but she remains principally a regional figure.

what to buy: Muller's first CD, *Matters of the Heart* ♪♪♪½ (Cascadia, 1989, prod. Linda Waterfall) remains her most engaging effort. "Good Road" has become the theme songs for a regional NPR show called "Inland Folk," but the disc's principal charm is that Muller's graceful voice is simply coupled to a set of adult songs (half hers, half not) that suits it perfectly.

what to buy next: *Giving Back* ♪♪♪ (Cascadia, 1996, prod. Heidi Muller, Janis Carper) and *Cassiopeia* ♪♪♪ (Cascadia, 1992, prod. Linda Waterfall) are both thoroughly pleasant outings.

influences:
◀◀ Linda Waterfall, Jean Ritchie

Grant Alden

Peter Mulvey

Born September 6, 1969, in Milwaukee, WI.

Peter Mulvey picks acoustic guitar with the dexterity of such heroes as Leo Kottke and Michael Hedges, and he pens literary lyrics that owe a clear debt to Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen. On stage, he sticks to his voice and guitar, but in the studio, his rock 'n' roll passion emerges. He first got the music bug when he busked on the streets of Dublin in 1989. He came home to pursue a theater major at Marquette University in Milwaukee, but he ended up co-leading a successful college band, Big Sky, which leant an alternative-rock edge to his folk-rock compositions. When that group split up in 1992, Mulvey impulsively moved to Boston, ground zero for the singer-songwriter movement.

There he found plenty of receptive audiences but also plenty of competing musicians. The best day job he could find was playing for tips in the Boston subway system, much as he had in Ireland. He soon graduated to opening-act gigs and then placed as a finalist in the annual Boston Acoustic Underground competition in '93 and '94. He was the new darling of the acoustic-music scene, but when he got a chance to make an album for Eastern Front Records, he couldn't resist plugging in again.

what to buy: *Rapture* ♪♪♪ (Eastern Front Records, 1995, prod. Peter Mulvey) uses its rock-band arrangements to amplify the strangeness of Mulvey's intriguing imagery. "Standing with my sneakers soaking up a lake of gasoline," he sings on one song, "standing with my Bob Dylan comic books and a bag of Boston baked beans/I smell the future and it smells like gasoline." A jungle-like tom-tom drum figure and a spacey guitar line gave this witty description the ominous edge it needed. To illustrate both sides of his musical personality, Mulvey included two versions of the Waterboys' "The Whole of the Moon," one recorded solo as he did it in the Boston subways and one with the studio band.

what to buy next: *Deep Blue* ♪♪♪ (Eastern Front Records, 1997, prod. Nicholas Sansano) takes its title from Mulvey's song about the IBM computer that wishes it had skin and hands with which to celebrate its chess victory. Like many of Mulvey's compositions, this one starts out funny and ends up unsettling. As King Crimson bassist Tony Levin pushes the bristling art-rock song relentlessly forward, however, there's a genuine sense of despair in such lines as, "I'm gonna find out just how long a guy can lie and lie and lie in the middle of the floor." Mulvey isn't consistently reliable yet. Several songs drift off into the esoteric ether of words that mean more to him than to anyone else and of music that's more atmosphere than melody. He has good taste in role models, though, for *Deep Blue* includes remakes of songs by Tom Waits, Chris Smither, and Los Lobos. Good taste and genuine talent are usually indicators of a bright future.

the rest:
Goodbye Bob ♪♪♪ (Eastern Front Records, 1997)

worth searching for: *Brother Rabbit Speaks* ♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1992, prod. Peter Mulvey, Rick Bauer) is a mostly acoustic studio album recorded in Milwaukee during Mulvey's early development as a singer-songwriter. *Rain* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1993,

prod. Peter Mulvey) is a solo, acoustic live album recorded October 7, 1993, at the Helfaer Theatre in Milwaukee.

influences:

⏪ Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, Leo Kottke, Patty Larkin, Waterboys, Tom Waits

Geoffrey Himes

Brendan Mulvihill

See: Irish Tradition

Alan Munde

Alan Munde was one of the first players to successfully stretch the banjo's tonal possibilities from traditional bluegrass accompaniment instrument to melodic powerhouse. During the late 1960s he joined Jimmy Martin's Sunny Mountain Boys and in 1972 he and his fiddling college classmate Byron Berline were recruited to back up the Rick Roberts–era Flying Burrito Brothers. A couple of years later, Munde and Berline formed Country Gazette, subsequently adding former Burritos Kenny Wertz and Roger Bush to the lineup. The group disbanded in 1986 and today Munde is an assistant professor at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. In addition, he has co-written a book with guitarist Joe Carr titled *Prairie Nights to Neon Lights: The Story of Country Music in West Texas.*

what to buy: *Blue Ridge Express* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Alan Munde) is a compilation of the best of Munde's three works released between 1975 and 1986: *Banjo Sandwich*, *The Banjo Kid*, and *In the Tradition*. The styles featured on the disc range from bluegrass to traditional folk to jazz. Especially worth checking out is the cool banjo-mandolin interplay between Munde and Joe Carr on the fiddle tune "Leather Britches."

what to buy next: *Windy Days and Dusty Skies* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1995, prod. Alan Munde), recorded with Joe Carr, showcases Munde's superb banjo stylings and Carr's sparkling guitar and mandolin playing. Especially noteworthy are "Forked Deer," which features Italian guitar picker Beppe Gambetta, and "Milwaukee Blues," which includes spectacular twin fiddling courtesy of Billy Joe Foster.

the rest:

(With Country Gazette) *Keep on Pushing* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Festival Favorites Revisited ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993)
Welcome to West Texas (Flying Fish, 1998)

influences:

⏪ Earl Scruggs

⏩ Béla Fleck

see also: *Flying Burrito Brothers*

Rick Petreycik

Lee Murdock

Born February 7, 1953.

Northern Illinois resident Lee Murdock began his folk singing career during his college days in Iowa. Since settling in Illinois, Murdock has made a career of singing, collecting, and writing songs of the Great Lakes, which he delivers in his booming baritone while finger picking intricate fills on his six- and 12-string guitars.

what to buy: Full of great songs, *Fertile Ground* ♪♪♪♪ (Depot, 1989, prod. Lee Murdock, Mark Karney, Drew Carson) contains some of Murdock's most enduring performance pieces, including Doug Miller's anthemic title song, Murdock's Yuletide classic "The Christmas Ship," and moving covers of "Lakes of Ponchartrain" and "Lady Franklin's Lament."

what to buy next: *Freshwater Highway* ♪♪♪½ (Depot, 1995, prod. Lee Murdock, Mark Karney) is the most accessible of Murdock's Great Lakes albums, combining catchy covers like Shel Silverstein's "Great Lakes Song" and Stephen Foster's "The Glendy Burk" with some of Murdock's memorable songs. The dramatic "No Nets Will Be Found" deals with the exploits of American fisherman working in Canadian waters. As usual, Murdock worked with some of Chicago's best musicians, including Don Stiernberg, Howard Levy, and John Williams.

the rest:

The Grand Departure ♪♪♪ (Depot, 1980) (LP only)
Where the Pinery Narrows ♪♪♪ (Depot, 1983) (LP only)
Wayfaring Stranger ♪♪♪ (Depot, 1987) (LP only)
Folk Songs of the Great Lakes Region ♪♪½ (Depot, 1989) (cassette only)
Safe in the Harbor ♪♪♪ (Depot, 1993)
Cold Winds ♪♪♪ (Depot, 1993)
Voices across the Water ♪♪♪½ (Depot, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Weavers, Kingston Trio, Stan Rogers

⏩ Tom & Chris Kastle

Michael Parrish

Colm Murphy

See: De Danann

Elliot Murphy

Born March, 16, 1949, in Garden City, NY.

Hemingway said no man who ever wrote anything of value left his country to work his craft. Elliot Murphy, one of the more gifted practitioners of heartland rock to ever labor under the "new Dylan" tag, is the contradiction to refute such a claim. And of that unlucky lot, Murphy has suffered perhaps the most pervading kind of indifference. At one point, he was actually doing office work in a law firm, such was the lack of attention. Nonetheless, he has retained his songcraft while doggedly forging a 20-plus year career. His consistency level has remained higher than most of his peers, as he continues to craft songs of remarkable intellectual depth while retaining and a journeyman's stance. Murphy now resides in the more welcoming environs of Paris, where he has much larger following than in his native United States.

what to buy: Much of Murphy's output is out of print, but his recent *Selling the Gold* ♪♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1996, prod. Djoum, Elliot Murphy) is a telling introduction to his mature subtlety and still active muse. Without resorting to bombast or overly simplistic immediacy, it's also typical Murphy: there's big pay-off to be had, but only if you pay attention. Both Bruce Springsteen and Violent Femmes' Gordon Gano pop up for cameos. Dipping into his past a bit, *Going through Something: The Best of Elliott Murphy* ♪♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1996, prod. Elliot Murphy, Steve Wilkison) covers highlights from '78 through '91 from otherwise deleted albums. A decent run through of what you missed the first time around.

what to buy next: The title track and a host of others make *Party Girl, Broken Poets* ♪♪♪ (Dejadisc, 1984, prod. Elliot Murphy, Ernie Brooks) a decent spin. Murphy's knack for extended storytelling while adhering to conventional folk and pop song structures flourishes, untouched by the new-wave '80s.

the rest:

Diamonds by the Yard: A Career Retrospective ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1992)
Unreal City ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1993)

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Lou Reed, Velvet Underground

▶▶ Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, Tom Petty, Violent Femmes

Allan Orski

Michael Martin Murphey

Born May 5, 1938, in Dallas, TX.

Michael Martin Murphey's career path has been an odd one—from rock-band singer to progressive-cowboy country to country balladeer to Western-music historian. The common thread through all these phases is Murphey's thoroughly romantic dedication to the American West. The first place many of today's country listeners first heard Murphey's work was from the pop band the Monkees, who recorded Murphey's "What Am I Doin' Hangin' 'Round?," written while Murphey was performing as Travis Lewis of the Lewis and Clarke Expedition, which had their own hit album in 1967. During the early 1970s Murphey relocated to Austin, Texas, and became part of that city's country scene; he made some of his best, most free-spirited music while living there, including such early albums as 1972's *Geronimo's Cadillac* and 1973's *Cosmic Cowboy Souvenir*, which featured the talents of such Austin musicians as Gary P. Nunn and Willis Alan Ramsey. Murphey moved progressively to the middle of the road—first to the pop market, where he had hits with "Wildfire" and "Carolina in the Pines" (both from *Blue Sky, Night Thunder*) in 1975, then into country where he had a string of largely forgettable hits during the 1980s. As the 1980s and the hits ended, he returned to the music of the American West. He signed with Warner Western and became largely responsible for the direction of that label during its early days. His most recent albums have been collections of standard and original cowboy music.

what to buy: *Cowboy Songs III: Rhymes of the Renegades* ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1993, prod. Joey Miskulin, Michael Martin Murphey) is the best of Murphey's recent cowboy offerings, with duets with Chris LeDoux, Hal Ketchum, and the late Marty Robbins (an electronically altered version of "Big Iron"), plus original songs and public-domain material about Cole Younger and Birmingham jails.

what to buy next: Largely a collection of traditional songs like "The Yellow Rose of Texas" and "Spanish Is the Lovin' Tongue" and silver-screen cowboy numbers ("Happy Trails," "Tumbling Tumbleweeds"), *Cowboy Songs* ♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1991, prod. Steve Gibson, Michael Martin Murphey) is a pleasantly romanticized look back at the American West. Murphey has better albums than this, but not in print.

what to avoid: In between his phases as hippie-cowboy and historian-cowboy, Murphey spent seven years making the kind of sappy middle-of-the-road ballads that would've made even John Denver blush. Most of that stuff has fallen out of print, but *The Best of Michael Martin Murphey* ♪ (Liberty, 1995, prod. Jim Ed Norman)—half of which is re-recordings of early songs like "Geronimo's Cadillac" and "Carolina in the Pines"—stays as a sad reminder.

the rest:
Blue Sky, Night Thunder ♪♪ (Epic, 1975)
Swans against the Sun ♪♪ (Epic, 1975)
River of Time ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1988)
Land of Enchantment ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1989)
The Best of Country ♪♪ (Curb, 1990)
Cowboy Christmas: Cowboy Songs II ♪♪ (Warner Western, 1991)
What's Forever For ♪♪ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
Sagebrush Symphony ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1995)
Horse Legends ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1997)

worth searching for: Even before his *Cowboy Songs* trilogy, Murphey (or Michael Murphey, as he was first called) was always fascinated by the American West; he just used to write more songs of his own about it. The best of those is the title track from *Geronimo's Cadillac* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1972, prod. Bob Johnston), which has been re-recorded often but never improved. This album also has a slightly renegade take on the West with such songs as "Calico Silver" and "Natchez Trace." It also has Murphey's version of "What Am I Doin' Hangin' 'Round?"

influences:
◀◀ Roy Rogers, Jerry Jeff Walker
▶▶ John Denver, Don Edwards

Brian Mansfield

Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole

Formed in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

During the mid-'70s, Arnie Naiman, from Toronto, Canada, attended the Mariposa Folk Festival and saw American musicians such as the New Lost City Ramblers, Doc Watson, and Tommy Jarrell. Having informally played some contemporary folk on guitar for a few years, he decided to try to pick up playing the banjo. Naiman learned the frailing, or clawhammer, style of old-time banjo picking. Chris Coole, also from Toronto, first recalled hearing the sound of a tenor banjo on a Neil Diamond record. Interest gradually increased with a few family trips to Nashville, listening to Roy Lewis's *Greatest Hits*, and a banjo workshop at the 1990 Mariposa festival. After acquiring a five string banjo, Coole started playing Scruggs style, but was soon drawn towards old-time clawhammer. He met up with Naiman, who introduced him to festivals, dances, and camps, and most importantly his own banjo and fiddle playing. Naiman and Coole now have a repertoire of traditional and original old-time tunes and songs on fiddle, banjo, and guitar.

what's available: Naiman and Coole recorded a CD of old-time banjo tunes and songs with guitar accompaniment titled *Five Strings Attached with No Backing* ♪♪♪♪ (Merriweather, 1997, prod. Arnie Naiman, Chris Coole). A few of the songs have vocals added, including the beautiful and lonesome old tune "The Blackest Crow," which Naiman plays and sings (and sounds a lot like fellow-Canadian Bruce Cockburn.) Banjo tunings and keys are documented for the banjo-playing enthusiast. This is a good CD for both new and old fans of the banjo. Along with the traditional tunes, Naiman and Coole add a number of splendid originals.

influences:
◀◀ Dwight Diller, Mike Seeger, Henry Reed
▶▶ Diane Jones & Hubie King

Steve Gardner

Graham Nash

See: Crosby, Stills & Nash

The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Formed 1985, in Nashville, TN.

Pat Enright, guitar, lead vocals; Alan O'Bryant, banjo, lead vocals; Roland White, mandolin (1989–present); Stuart Duncan, fiddle, (1985–present); Gene Libbea, bass (1989–present); Mike Compton, mandolin (1984–88), Mark Hembree, bass (1984–88).

The Nashville Bluegrass band is arguably the most important bluegrass act of the 1990s next to Alison Krauss and Union Station. Noted for their strong harmony singing, they are responsible more than anyone for bringing the sound of black, a cappella gospel into bluegrass. The multiple Grammy- and International Bluegrass Music Association-award winners are stronger and more influential then ever entering their second decade.

what to buy: *Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Jerry Douglas), the Grammy winner for Best Bluegrass Recording, varies styles and manages the difficult task of sounding both traditional and contemporary. From the hard-driving "Kansas City Railroad Blues" through the swaying rhythms of "On Again, off Again" to the a cappella gospel number "Father I Stretch My Hand to Thee," this is the rare album with no flaws.

what to buy next: The band's second Grammy winner, *Unleashed* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Jerry Douglas) deftly mixes traditional numbers with new songs by Gillian Welch, Dave Allen, Harry Stinson, and others. A special highlight is the band's harmonizing with gospel greats the Fairfield Four on "Last Month of the Year."

the rest:
The Nashville Bluegrass Band ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
To Be His Child ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
(With Peter Rowan) *New Moon Rising* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
The Boys Are Back in Town ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Home of the Blues ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1991)

solo outings:
Roland White:
Trying to Get to You ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Fairfield Four, Country Gazette, Kentucky Colonels
▶▶ IIIrd Tyme Out, Lonesome River Band

Douglas Fulmer

Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas /Nathan Williams

Born March 24, 1963, in Lafayette, LA.

With Buckwheat Zydeco out on the road playing to an international audience, Nathan Williams has become the champion of the blues- and R&B-inflected zydeco sounds of Lafayette. Williams plays the full-size piano accordion with vigor and skill equal to all but the great Clifton Chenier. His bands are tight and tend to have stinging guitar solos as well as sweaty zydeco grooves. Although Williams covers can range far, like Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely," the music doesn't sway off into the rock-dominated sound that appears too readily in other young zydeco performers. While the diatonic accordion, minor riff sound seems to dominate at the moment, Nathan remains true to the Creole blues of Clifton Chenier and the traditional Creole French culture.

what to buy: *Creole Crossroads* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Scott Billington) works as an unintentional tribute to the great Clifton Chenier by two artists whom he greatly influenced: Nathan Williams and Michael Doucet. Chenier recorded "Black Girl" with his uncle Morris on fiddle, and Williams and Doucet provide an update. There are also two duet pieces, echoing another great Creole/Cajun pairing of Creole Amédée Ardoin and Cajun Dennis McGee. Elsewhere, it is a joy to hear Doucet solo over the Cha Chas crackerjack rhythm section instead of the sometimes porous Beausoleil. He is at his bluesiest here, emulating Canray Fontenot and Bradford Gordon, the black fiddlers with whom he studied. While not the perfect example of Williams's sound, this CD is his most entertaining work.

what to buy next: It's almost impossible the capture the excitement of a live zydeco band on a recording, but *I'm a Zydeco Hog* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Scott Billington) comes close. You'll just have to imagine the heat of a full dance floor and the way the band plays off the dancers and the dancers in turn inspire the musicians. Williams and the band deliver one crushing dance groove after another, from the start of "Tante Rose" to the closing notes of "Zydeco Road," only pausing for the "Grand Prix" waltz. The guitar and bass drop out for "Hey Bebe Bebe" where Nathan trades licks with "Cat Roy" Broussard's saxophone, sounding a bit like a meringue band lost in the Achafalya swamp. Mostly you get a really tight zydeco band in a current version of the classic Clifton Chenier sound. This record is the perfect example of the Nathan Williams sound, but lacks the diversity that will make *Creole Crossroads* more appealing to those with less experience with zydeco.

the rest:
Steady Rock ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Your Mama Don't Know ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990)
Follow Me Chicken ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Clifton Chenier, Rockin Sidney, Buckwheat Zydeco
▶▶ Geno Delafose, Lynn August

Jared Snyder

Neal & Leandra

Formed in St. Peter, MN, early 1980s.

Neal Hagberg (born June 22, 1969, Omaha, NE), guitar, vocals; Leandra Peak, (born September 15, 1961, in Louisville, KY), guitar, vocals.

Neal and Leandra have been touring the country since the early 1990s, singing their own blend of original folk and smoothly mixed harmonies that they began while attending Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, a Swedish Lutheran School college in the early '80s. What started as just singing at weddings and other functions blossomed. At college, Peak (a Spanish major) was singing in a musical when Hagberg (a premed major) heard her and asked if she would sing with him at a

5
7
8 *holly near*

function. They began playing informally, singing at friends' weddings and mostly for fun. In 1988 they recorded their first album together; they were married in 1989. By the early 1990s, they were performing full time, becoming mainstays on public radio, filling concert halls in the Midwest, and building a following elsewhere in the country. They play festivals and folk clubs, but mostly tour the country with Columbia Artists Management, performing at community concerts. In 1993 they signed with Red House Records, which had heard their album *Old Love*, which was reissued in 1995.

what to buy: The couple's fourth album, *Hearts and Hammers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994, prod. John Scherf), reflects the love and setbacks that couples experience. Their warmth, sincerity, and soft, closely knit harmonies can easily open a listener's emotional fireplug. Songs like "Save Me" parallel a search for love with a need to be rescued. "Grand Hotel," with added pomp from piano accompaniment, contrasts the blindness of the city's rich against what's really happening on the streets around them. "Too Happy" is a comical modern-day Tarzan-Jane love tale. The title track aptly describes the building of a strong relationship.

what to buy next: It's really a toss-up between the duo's latest album, *Accidental Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1996, prod. John Scherf, Neal Hagberg, Leandra Peak), and the one for which they are best known, *Old Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Uncle Gus Music, 1992, prod. John Scherf). *Accidental Dreams* contains original, touching, honest ballads, with a dash of humor. "Love in the Family" is a song for every family that has ever quarreled (which one hasn't?). "Rock in the River" speaks of women's strength of spirit, inspired by poet Maya Angelou. Their other songs deal with feelings of suspicion in a small town. Others, like "Love Back Then," deal with the reality of love and its occasional lapses into solitude and hurt, while "Sam" is a lighthearted look at their dog, who just likes to lie around a lot. Joining Neal and Leandra are fiddle maestro Peter Ostroushko and more than a half-dozen other performers. *Old Love* contains the title track, which has become the couple's signature and most-requested song, a sweetly affecting duet. The album was a regional hit, and in 1991, after performing it on Minnesota Public Radio, listeners flooded the station with requests to hear the song again. The song has sold more than 10,000 copies at shows alone, a stellar feat for the previously independent artists. The album blends intimate and heartwarming songwriting and vocals with a contemporary folk sound and touches of blues, country, and even bluegrass.

the rest:
Rocky Road ♪♪♪ (Uncle Gus Music, 1988)
Lazy Summer Evening ♪♪♪ (Uncle Gus Music, 1990)

influences:
◀◀ Ian & Sylvia, Peter, Paul & Mary, Barry & Holly Tashian
▶▶ Barry & Holly Tashian

Stephen Ide

Holly Near

Born June 6, 1949, in Ukiah, CA.

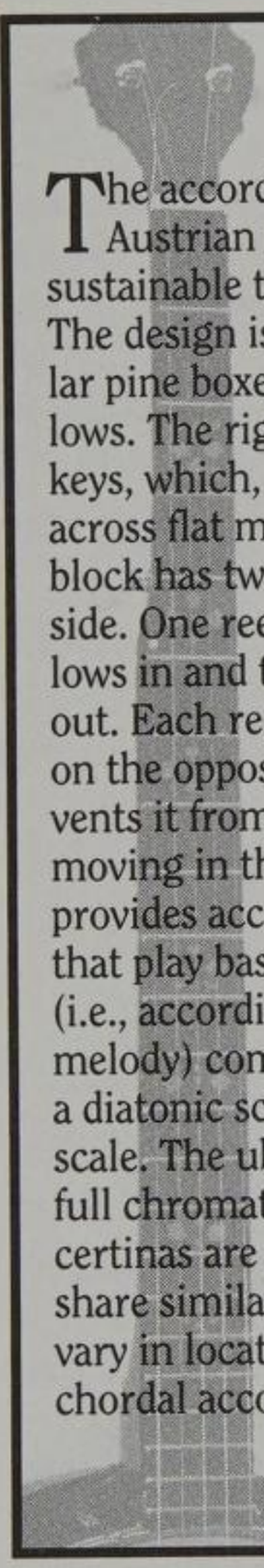
Holly Near practically gave birth to the genre known as "women's music." The daughter of Californian political activists, she learned early to combine social concerns with the limelight. In her days at UCLA she got involved in television and film, appearing in many of the popular TV shows of the time, from *The Partridge Family* to *The Bold Ones*. She recorded her first album in 1973 on the label she founded, Redwood Records, which emphasized women and other "marginalized" musicians.

Over the three decades of her career, Near's commitment to political issues hasn't varied, except insofar as the issues themselves have varied. She's best known as a pioneer in gay rights—she was open about her sexuality at a time when few dared such openness, and her song "Singing for Our Lives" has become an anthem. She's also fought for peace in Central and Latin America, and the cultures have influenced her music in turn.

In addition to her "cause-related" songs, Near is fond of musical theater, an interest reflected in her recent album *With a Song in My Heart*, featuring longtime accompanist John Bucchino on piano. At this stage of her career, she has the luxury of working on unusual projects, such as with a performing arts school in her native Ukiah, California.

what's available: Very few of Near's albums are in print at this writing. *With a Song in My Heart* ♪♪♪ (Calico Tracks, 1997, prod. Holly Near), a collection of standards, suffers from a lack of variety, though the individual tracks show Near's affinity for, as she puts it, "timeless gems from my parents' generation." Holly Near and Ronnie Gilbert's collaborative effort, *This Train Still Runs* ♪♪♪♪ (Abbe Alice Music, 1996, prod. Donna A. Korones), like many live albums, is stronger on enthusiasm than

Holly Near **(Photo by Mike Rogers)**



accordion

The accordion was invented in 1829 by an Austrian piano tuner as a device to create sustainable tones that would facilitate his work. The design is deceptively simple: two rectangular pine boxes connected by a set of paper bellows. The right-hand box has buttons or piano keys, which, when pressed, allow air to travel across flat metal reed blocks. Each rectangular block has two metal reeds, one riveted to each side. One reed sounds when pushing the bellows in and the other when pulling the bellows out. Each reed has a corresponding leather flap on the opposite side of the reed block that prevents it from sounding when the bellows are moving in the opposite direction. The left hand provides accompaniment in the form of buttons that play bass notes and chords. Button boxes (i.e., accordions with buttons to play the melody) come in styles ranging from one row in a diatonic scale to five rows in a full chromatic scale. The ubiquitous piano accordion has the full chromatic scale on its piano keyboard. Concertinas are a related family of instruments that share similar construction to accordions, but vary in location of the buttons and the lack of chordal accompaniment.

Jared Snyder

finesse. Highlights include "In the Quiet Morning," a Janis Joplin tribute written by Mimi Fariña.

worth searching for: If you can find it, buy *Singer in the Storm* ♪♪♪♪ (Chameleon, 1990, prod. Holly Near), a powerful concert recording that features Near with many other talents, including Bucchino, Mercedes Sosa duetting with Near on two tracks, and Melissa Etheridge on guitar on the title track. Her cover of Walter Robinson's "Harriet Tubman (Lifeline)" gave me chills, and I don't chill easily.

influences:

⏪ Ronnie Gilbert, Pete Seeger, Joan Baez

⏩ disappear fear, Margie Adam

Pamela Murray Winters

Fred Neil

Born 1937, in St. Petersburg, FL.

A little-known but major talent of the American folk renaissance, Fred Neil is probably better recognized for other people's performances of his songs—such as "Everybody's Talkin'" (Harry Nilsson) or "The Dolphins" (Tim Buckley)—than his own long-out-of-print albums. He was a fixture on the Greenwich folk scene during the early 1960s, and his laid-back 12-string guitar style and unique singing voice, which slips effortlessly from a mellow tenor to a haunting baritone, was a major influence on the scene. After recording four albums from 1965–71, Neil retreated to his home in Florida where, by all accounts, he lives in virtual seclusion.

what to buy: *Fred Neil* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1966, prod. Nick Venet) is highlighted by Neil's versions of the dreamlike "The Dolphins" and "Everybody's Talkin'."

the rest:

Bleecker and MacDougal ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1964)
Other Side of This Life ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1971)

influences:

⏪ Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie

⏩ Bob Dylan, Tim Buckley, John Sebastian

Joel Selvin and Dan Weber

Mark Nelson

Born July 10, 1950, in Santa Ana, CA.

Mark Nelson is perhaps best known as an innovative and exciting mountain dulcimer player, but he is a complete musician with excellent credentials on instruments as diverse as the Hungarian *cittera*, the Swedish *hummel*, and the Hawaiian slack-key guitar. Developing his style during the early '70s, he took first place in the National Dulcimer Championships in Winfield, Kansas, in 1979 and his unique style has helped fuel a fast growing interest in the dulcimer throughout the country. Along the way, he has recorded a number of excellent but difficult to categorize albums, worked as an artist-in-residence in schools throughout the West, and published a number of highly regarded instructional books and videos for the dulcimer. He has collaborated with musicians as diverse as Kevin Burke, David Balakrishnan, and Keola Beamer. His stage performances display the full range of his diverse musical interests as well as a large dose of interesting anecdotes presented with unfailing good humor. On his more recent releases, he has taken a lead role in the MIDI revolu-

tion, experimenting with digital technology to tastefully complement the more traditional sounds of the dulcimer.

what to buy: *Autumn* ♪♪♪♪ (Wizmak Productions, 1996, prod. Mark Nelson) showcases all of Nelson's instrumental prowess in a fascinating variety of mostly original compositions for dulcimer, MIDI-dulcimer, hummel, and MIDI-guitar. Nelson combines mood pieces, jazz improvisations, Hawaiian slack-key dulcimer experiments, a Turlough O'Carolan piece, a requiem for a dear, departed canine friend, and a variety of other musings into a surprisingly cohesive and very satisfying musical celebration of his West Coast home and lifestyle. Although the material was actually recorded over a period of six years, it all sounds as fresh as though it were done in one session. His musicianship is impeccable and he displays wonderful technique, a keen melodic sense, and, perhaps most important, the "right" amount of discipline, taste, and restraint in the use of the MIDI instruments. The album has received quite a lot of airplay on National Public Radio.

what to buy next: *Southern Light* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1986, 1990, prod. Danny Carnahan) is quietly intense bop and swing, teaming Nelson with new acoustic musicians Andy Narell, David Balakrishnan, Robin Petrie, Pat Klobas, and producer Danny Carnahan. The music is again eclectic and hard to pigeonhole but it has a decidedly more jazz-like flavor than *Autumn*. The CD version released in 1990 is slightly different from the original 1986 release in that two of the original cuts were dropped, including Nelson's singing debut, and two were added, including "Larkin," his first effort at using the MIDI dulcimer. By the artist's own admission, the whole album made a lot more sense with these changes since it made for a "better sense of progression."

the rest:

Fiddle Tunes for Dulcimer: The Rights of Man ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1980)

You Can Teach Yourself to Make Homemade Musical Instruments ♪♪½ (Mel Bay Publications, 1995) (companion to Nelson's book of the same title)

The Faery Hills ♪♪♪ (Wizmak Productions, 1996) (companion to Nelson's *The Complete Book of Celtic Music for Dulcimer.*)

Scottish Airs and Ballads for Appalachian Dulcimer ♪♪♪ (Mel Bay Publications, 1997) (companion to Nelson's book of the same title)

worth searching for: *After the Morning: Irish, Scottish, and American Fiddle Music for Dulcimer* ♪♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1983, prod. Kevin Burke) featured ensemble performances with a first-rate string band led by Irish fiddler Kevin Burke and also featuring several other outstanding Celtic musicians from the Pacific Northwest. Geoffrey Himes describes this as "some of the liveliest playing ever to come out of a lap dulcimer. The rolling momentum of Irish music takes on a new sonic quality with the dulcimer's slippery, sliding sound." Long out of print, this recording was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection when it was released. The master tapes are now owned by Fantasy Records and a CD release is rumored. Nelson also has one cut on *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Susan Trump Music, 1997, prod. Susan Trump), a nice compilation featuring 19 of the country's best dulcimer players. Similarly, he also has two cuts on *December's Hearth* ♪♪♪ (Wizmak Productions, 1996, prod. Tom White, Geri White), a holiday sampler featuring the stable of Wizmak artists.

influences:

Richard Fariña, Raymond Kane, Kenny Hall, Margaret MacArthur

Jerry Rockwell, Ledward Kaapana, David Schnaufer

Neal Walters

Tracy Nelson

Born December 27, 1944.

Tracy Nelson is certainly one of the most underrated white blues singers of the last 30 years. A contemporary of Janis Joplin's, she moved from Madison, Wisconsin, to San Francisco during the mid-'60s, where she fronted the blues-rock band Mother Earth. Although Nelson was probably a better singer than Janis Joplin, she lacked Joplin's onstage flair. She moved Mother Earth to Nashville (where she has lived ever since) at the height of the ballroom scene, and started cutting country and R&B-based albums during the era of the endless guitar solo. During the '80s, she took a decade-long hiatus from recording before starting to create her string of fine new albums for Rounder a few years back.

what to buy: *The Best of Tracy Nelson/Mother Earth* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1996, comp. prod. Gregg Geller) collects most of the essential tracks from Nelson's Mercury and Reprise albums of the late '60s to mid-'70s, sampling California and Tennessee tracks cut with Mother Earth. Highlights include Nelson's stunning signature song, "Down So Low," a psychedelic cover of Memphis Slim's "Mother Earth," and a soaring rendition of Steve Young's "Seven Bridges Road."

what to buy next: *Move On* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996) was cut in Nashville with a bunch of powerful accompanists, including Mike Henderson and the Bluebloods, Al Kooper, and guitarist Gary Nicholson. The overall sound is rockin' blues, with Nel-

son's singing at full throttle. Notable cuts include the Little Feat–style rocker "Livin' on Love," the barrelhouse version of "Got Me Goin'," and the sassy pop blues tune "Ladies' Man," which features Phoebe Snow, Maria Muldaur, and Bonnie Raitt.

what to avoid: Although it has its moments, the now-out-of-print *Sweet Soul Music* ♪♪ (MCA, 1975/One Way, 1995) mostly falls flat.

the rest:
Mother Earth Presents Tracy Nelson Country ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1970/Reprise Archives, 1997)
Homemade Song/Come See about Me ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993)
In the Here and Now ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993)
I Feel So Good ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)
Time Is on My Side ♪♪♪ (One Way, 1995)

worth searching for: *Deep Are the Roots* ♪♪♪ (Prestige LP, 1965), Nelson's debut, was a straight country blues effort that stands in sharp contrast to the big-band settings of her other early work.

influences:
◀◀ Willa Mae Thornton, Bessie Smith, Janis Joplin
▶▶ Janis Joplin, Bonnie Raitt, Melissa Etheridge

Michael Parrish

Willie Nelson

Born April 30, 1933, in Fort Worth, TX.

Willie Nelson is arguably the most influential figure of the past quarter century—first as a songwriter and then as a performer who rewrote the rules for what qualified as country. After landing in Nashville in 1960, he penned such hits as Ray Price's "Night Life," Faron Young's "Hello Walls," and Patsy Cline's "Crazy." When Music City found his style (and nasal voice) too unusual, Nelson retreated to Texas, where he became a cultural icon. During the early 1970s his audience was an unlikely mix of rednecks and hippies, both of whom related to his relaxed attitude and cosmic cowboy themes. His *Red Headed Stranger* album made him the nominal head of the so-called "Outlaw" movement. Stylistically, Nelson tried everything from honky-tonk to Tin Pan Alley, and with his distinctive approach it all somehow formed a cohesive American style. His film career includes roles in *The Electric Horseman, Honeysuckle Rose, Barbarosa,* and others. During the 1980s he co-founded the annual Farm Aid benefit concerts. Unimpressed, the IRS socked him for back taxes in 1991, which cost Nelson most of his assets. Nevertheless, his social conscience and mastery of all forms of country music have made him one of the genre's true giants. If they ever carve a country-music version of Mount Rushmore, they'll have to include Nelson.

what to buy: *Red Headed Stranger* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975) is Nelson's greatest "Outlaw" album, with admirably spare production and the timeless "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain." Nelson's return to Texas yielded *Shotgun Willie* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1973), an adventurous concept album that brought him together with such rockers as Leon Russell and Doug Sahm and made him hip outside the country-music community. *Phases and Stages* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1974, prod. Jerry Wexler), Nelson's second concept album, cemented his status as a crossover star. These two albums can sometimes be found packaged together as *Shotgun Willie/Phases and Stages* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, 1993). *Who'll Buy My Memories? (The IRS Tapes)* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sony, 1991) was intended only as a method of paying off his tax debt, but it's one of Nelson's most evocative albums ever, featuring nothing but his voice and guitar—and his soul.

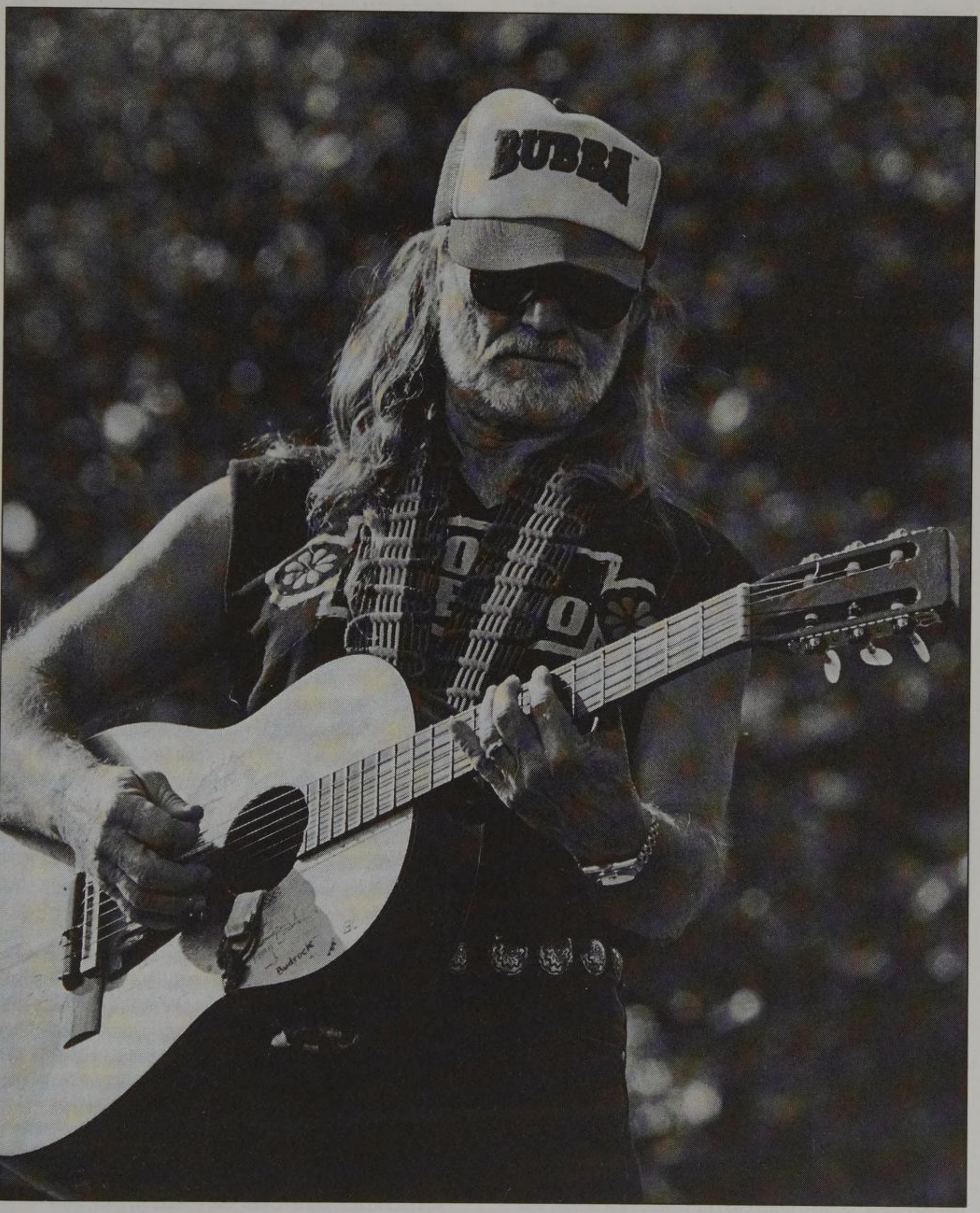
what to buy next: *Nite Life: Greatest Hits and Rare Tracks, 1959–1971* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990, prod. various), a great collection of Nelson's early years, includes "Half a Man" and "Funny How Time Slips Away." On *Stardust* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1978) Nelson takes on the Tin Pan Alley of George Gershwin and Hoagy Carmichael, and wins hands down.

what to avoid: *Pancho, Lefty, and Rudolph* ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1995), a collaboration with Merle Haggard, is a cheapo repackage that has five holiday songs from each artist. The music's pretty good (Nelson's "Pretty Paper," Haggard's "If We Make It through December"), but hold out for full Christmas albums by each artist.

best of the rest:
. . . and then I wrote ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1962/1995)
The Sound in Your Mind ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1976)
(With Waylon Jennings, Jessi Colter, and Tompall Glaser) *Wanted! The Outlaws* ♪♪½ (RCA, 1976/1996)
To Lefty from Willie ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
Willie and Family Live ♪♪♪½ (CBS, 1978)
Willie Sings Kristofferson ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1979)
(With Leon Russell) *One for the Road* ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1979)
(With Ray Price) *San Antonio Rose* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1980)
Original Soundtrack: Honeysuckle Rose ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1980)
Greatest Hits (& Some That Will Be) ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981)

Willie Nelson **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

willie nelson



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8
4 michael nesmith

Somewhere over the Rainbow ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1981)
Always on My Mind ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982)
Tougher than Leather ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
Without a Song ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1983)
(With Roger Miller) *Old Friends* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1983)
City of New Orleans ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1984)
(With Kris Kristofferson) *Music from* Songwriter ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1984)
Me and Paul ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Half Nelson ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
(With the Highwaymen) *Highwayman* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Partners ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1986)
Willie ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1986)
The Promiseland ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1986)
(With Waylon Jennings) *Take It to the Limit* ♪♪♪ (CBS, 1987)
Island in the Seas ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987)
What a Wonderful World ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1988)
Best ♪♪♪ (EMI, 1988)
All-Time Greatest Hits, Volume I ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1988)
Horse Called Music ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
(With the Highwaymen) *Highwayman 2* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1990)
Born for Trouble ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990)
Greatest Songs ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990)
The Best of Willie Nelson ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1991)
Super Hits ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1991)
Willie Sings 28 Great Songs ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/IMG)
Super Hits ♪♪♪ (CSI Classics, 1991)
(With Jennings) *Clean Shirt* ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1991)
Moonlight Becomes You ♪♪♪½ (Justice, 1993)
The Early Years: The Complete Liberty Recordings Plus More ♪♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1994)
The Legend Begins ♪♪½ (Pair, 1994)
Peace in the Valley: The Gospel Truth Collection ♪♪♪ (Promised Land, 1994)
Healing Hands of Time ♪♪½ (Liberty, 1994)
The Early Years ♪♪♪½ (Scotti Bros., 1994)
(With Curtis Potter) *Six Hours at Pedernales* ♪♪♪ (Step One, 1994)
A Classic and Unreleased Collection ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1995)
The Essential Willie Nelson ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1995)
Super Hits, Volume II ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1995)
Just One Love ♪♪♪♪ (Justice, 1995)
Revolutions of Time . . . the Journey ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1995)
(With the Highwaymen) *The Road Goes on Forever* ♪♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1995)
(With Billy Walker) *Charlie's Shoes* ♪♪½ (DEC, 1995)
Spirit ♪♪♪ (Island, 1996)
(With Bobby Nelson) *How Great Thou Art* ♪♪♪ (Finer Arts, 1996)
(With Johnny Lee) *Willie Nelson & Johnny Lee* ♪♪½ (Intermedia, 1996)
Broken Promises ♪♪♪ (DRG, 1997)
Classic Willie ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1997)
Hill Country Christmas ♪♪♪ (Finer Arts, 1997)

worth searching for: Never one to stick with an image, Nelson turned to such modern writers as Lyle Lovett, Paul Simon, and John Hiatt for *Across the Borderline* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1993, prod. Don Was), his most satisfying album in years. *Pretty Paper* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979, prod. Booker T. Jones), Nelson's Christmas album, features extremely laid-back renditions of holiday favorites like "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Jingle Bells."

influences:
◀◀ Floyd Tillman, Gene Autry, Lefty Frizzell
▶▶ Waylon Jennings, Rodney Crowell, Billy Joe Shaver

Bob Cannon

Michael Nesmith

Born December 30, 1942, in Houston, TX.

Being tagged "the smart Monkee" may seem faint praise indeed, but Michael Nesmith was that, and more. A session musician and folkie when he was tapped to join the Prefab Four, Nesmith regularly contributed songs to the group and was its most accomplished musician (apologies to Peter Tork). Apart from the Monkees, Nesmith wrote Linda Ronstadt's first hit "Different Drum" and recorded such innovative, if quirky, concept albums as *The Prison*. Despite the odious implications of his day job, Nesmith was there at the dawn of country rock, and his contributions, such as the utterly lovely song "Joanne," are often overlooked. Maybe that's because Nesmith's most significant innovation is in the field of video. His clip for Duran Duran's "Rio" was one of America's first conceptual music videos, and the terrific *Elephant Parts* the first conceptual long-form video. *Popclips*, a video show Nesmith produced for Nickelodeon, was the prototype of MTV. Finally, his company, Pacific Arts, produced the brilliant cult films *Repo Man* and *Tapeheads*. So laugh at his past if you want (and his present, in the wake of the Monkees' reunion), but no one else descended from the Monkees has evolved quite so far.

what to buy: These days, you're pretty much limited to whatever you can find, since nearly all of Nesmith's music is out of print. *The Newer Stuff* ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1989, prod. Michael Nesmith) is a collection of mostly quirky pop tunes, while *The Older Stuff; The Best of the Early Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, prod. Michael Nesmith) is better, containing more country-flavored material, including "Joanne" and "Different Drum."

the rest:
And the Hits Just Keep on Comin' ♪♪♪ (Pacific, 1972/Rio, 1995)

worth searching for: The long-form video *Elephant Parts* (Pacific Arts, 1980) ♪♪♪♪♪ has it all—good music, plenty of laughs, and an energetic spirit of innovation not seen since Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney decided, "Hey, let's put on a show!"

influences:

⏪ Bob Dylan, Merle Travis, Ernie Kovacs

⏩ Stone Poneys, the wool hat industry, MTV

Daniel Durchholz

The New Christy Minstrels

Formed 1961, in NY. Disbanded, c. 1969.

Randy Sparks, guitar, vocals; Barry McGuire, guitar, vocals; Art Podell, guitar, vocals; Dolan Ellis, guitar, vocals; Jackie Miller, banjo, vocals; Barry Kane, fiddle, vocals; Gayle Caldwell, percussion, vocals; Nick Woods, guitar, vocals; Larry Ramos, banjo, vocals; Clarence Treat, mandolin, vocals; Kenny Rogers, guitar, vocals; others.

Like the Kingston Trio, the New Christy Minstrels (named after the popular nineteenth-century vaudeville troupe) rode the early-'60s folk boom to commercial success and helped spawn an array of similarly conceived multi-voiced, acoustic guitar-driven groups. Despite their preference for light material, the Minstrels could tackle a Leadbelly tune with professional results, and they also had an adept writer in Randy Sparks, who penned "Follow the Drinkin' Gourd" (a popular folk-circuit staple) and "Today," a 1964 smash. It was gravel-voiced Barry McGuire who helped give the first incarnation of the Minstrels its identifiable sound through hits "Green, Green" and "Saturday Night" (both Top 20s from 1963). After McGuire departed for a solo career ("Eve of Destruction"), the Minstrels recruited future star Kenny Rogers, who failed to return the group to commercial favor, and the band petered out by the end of the decade, warbling less folkie fare like "Chim, Chim, Cheree."

what to buy: All you really need to know about the Minstrels is contained on their *Greatest Hits* (Rhino, 1996, prod. Bonnie Pritchard, Tom Pickles), which includes their hits, a smattering of traditional forays ("Cotton Fields"), plus a really boffo period album cover photo.

the rest:

Presenting: The New Christy Minstrels ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1962)
Ramblin' Featuring "Green Green" ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1963)
New Christy Minstrels Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1966)
Golden Classics Edition (Collectables, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Pete Seeger, Kingston Trio, Leadbelly

⏩ Rooftop Singers, Byrds, Mamas & the Papas

David Simons

New Golden Ring

See: Sandy & Caroline Paton

The New Grass Revival

Formed 1971, in Louisville, KY. Disbanded 1989.

Sam Bush, mandolin; John Cowan, bass guitar, lead vocals (1974–89); Béla Fleck, banjo, (1981–89); Pat Flynn, guitar, vocals, (1981–89); Courtney Johnson (died June 7, 1996), banjo (1971–81); Curtis Burch, guitar, Dobro (1971–81); Ebo Walker, bass (1971–74).

Sam Bush put together the New Grass Revival when he was only 19 years old, but it wasn't until 10 years later when banjo ace Béla Fleck and guitar player Pat Flynn joined that the band really took off. Their shows were nearly legendary, adding a decided rock 'n' roll energy and style to bluegrass.

what to buy: New Grass Revival was always better live than in the recording studio and *Live* (Sugar Hill, 1989, prod. New Grass Revival), recorded during their farewell tour, effectively captures the raucous energy of the group's live sets.

what to buy next: *Hold to a Dream* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1987, prod. Garth Fundis) was the best of New Grass Revival's attempts at mainstreaming for the country audience.

what to avoid: Like any New Grass Revival album, *Friday Night in America* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1987, prod. Wendy Waldman) has some high points, but overall it's not as loose and energized as their other efforts.

the rest:

Fly through the Country/When the Storm Is Over ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1976/1977)
Barren County ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1979)
Commonwealth ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1981)
On the Boulevard ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1985)
Anthology ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990)

influences:

⏪ Country Gazette, Kentucky Colonels

⏩ Béla Fleck & the Flecktones, Chesapeake

Douglas Fulmer

New Kingston Trio

See: Kingston Trio

The New Lost City Ramblers

Formed 1958, in New York, NY.

Multi-instrumentalists Mike Seeger; John Cohen; Tom Paley (1958–62); Tracy Schwarz (1962–present).

The most popular, most influential, and arguably the most important first-generation revival band of the folk boom in terms of presenting rural Southern string-band music both in concert and on recordings, the New Lost City Ramblers remain a force in traditional music circles to this day. Their music, which came to be known as old-time or old-timey (to distinguish it from bluegrass), explores the diversity of U.S. string-band music within Appalachian ballads, black and white gospel and blues, Cajun, and countless other traditions. They have tended to concentrate on—and are most successful at performing—the string-band music of the Appalachian and Ozark cultures, their knowledge of which has been gleaned from 78s, Library of Congress field recordings, and from hunting down traditional performers and learning their repertoires. The Ramblers' influence on generations of young musicians who have followed in their footsteps is incalculable; it's difficult to imagine a revival of old-time music of any consequence without them. Ethnomusicologists to a man, the Ramblers chose to perpetuate rather than preserve the music by performing it with grace, dignity, and a sense of good fun. Although all band members have gone on to other endeavors (musical and otherwise), they have continued to perform in recent years on an infrequent basis.

what to buy: *The New Lost City Ramblers, the Early Years, 1958–1962* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991, prod. Mike Seeger, Moses Asch, Peter Bartok) contains 26 tracks from the 12 highly influential albums recorded for Folkways with the original members, before Tom Paley left the band and subsequently moved to England. These performances breathed new life into old traditions, sparking an interest in the traditions presented here that live on. *The New Lost City Ramblers Volume II, 1963–1973: Out Standing in Their Field* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993, prod. various) continues the traditions of the first recordings and incorporates the musical contributions of Tracy Schwarz who, among other talents and interests, brought his enthusiastic fiddling and knowledge of Cajun music to the band.

what to buy next: *The New Lost City Ramblers & Friends* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1994, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) gathers 31 live examples from the 1963–65 Newport Folk Festivals of the Ramblers performing with influential performers of days gone by, including Cousin Emmy, Maybelle Carter, Eck Robertson, Roscoe Holcomb, Sam and Kirk McGee, and Dock Boggs, illustrating the band's familiarity and expertise performing the repertoires of these older performers and at the same time underlining the group's rediscovery efforts on behalf of these important, although sadly neglected, artists. *New Lost City Ramblers' 20th Anniversary Concert* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. Steve Rathe) is a live recording of a Carnegie Hall concert from 1978, celebrating the group's first 20 years. It includes special guests the Highwoods String Band, Elizabeth Cotten, and Mike Seeger's brother, Pete.

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Eck Robertson, many more

▶▶ Highwoods String Band, Freighthoppers

see also: *Tracy Schwarz, Mike Seeger, Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker*

Randy Pitts

The New St. George

Formed 1986, in Takoma Park, MD; disbanded 1995.

Jennifer Cutting, vocals, keyboards, accordions; Lisa Moscatiello, vocals, whistles, acoustic guitar, bouzouki; Rico Petruccelli, vocals, bass; Juan Dudley, percussion; Bob Hitchcock, vocals, lead guitar, mandolin (1986–94); Eric Rose, guitar (1994–95); Al Petteway, guitar (1995).

Jennifer Cutting grew up under rigid discipline in a secluded Hindu monastery in South Florida surrounded by mango plantations. Steeped in Anglo/Indian music and customs, she didn't hear her Western name again until she was 18. She attended graduate school in ethnomusicology at the University of London and had the good fortune to become the last and youngest protégé of British folk revival leader A.L. Lloyd. Moving back to the States in 1984, she started the New St. George from a basement practice room in 1986. Lisa Moscatiello, the band's lead vocalist, played in local Washington, D.C. bands Sodabread and Celtoiri, and as a duo with Grace Griffith prior to joining the New St. George. Rico Petruccelli, the bassist, co-producer, and backing vocalist, worked with Chuck Berry, Jonathan Edwards, and Charlie Byrd, played bass on Mary Chapin Carpenter's first three albums, and was a member of her touring band for four years. African American Juan Dudley, the band's drummer and percussionist, played with the classic rock band Pilot and the new

wave/alternative band Big Bang Theory, as well as various jazz bands. Bob Hitchcock grew up in Brighton, Sussex, an area steeped in the English folk tradition. He moved to New York City in 1975, played a bit there, and eventually ended up in D.C. As a member of the sea music group the Boarding Party, he recorded two albums with them before joining the New St. George in 1986. After Hitchcock left the New St. George in 1994 to pursue other interests, Eric Rose shared the electric guitar duties with Al Petteway. Rose came to NSG from the world of major-label session work in LA and New York (Warner Bros.). Guitar and mandolin wizard Petteway joined the band in 1995, alternating with Rose at live appearances.

what's available: *High Tea* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1994, prod. Rob Petruccelli, Jennifer Cutting, Bob Dawson) is a classic folk-rock album combining the sound of Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span with elements of Motown, bossa nova, funk, and progressive rock. The album's upbeat opening tune, "The Steggie," got a lot of airplay, but the album's highlights are probably Moscatiello's vocals on "False Bride" and Cutting's "All the Tea in India," an award-winning song that beautifully excoriates British colonialism.

worth searching for: The New St. George has one cut on *Hungry for Music: A Holiday Feast* ♪♪♪ (Hungry for Music 1995, exec. prod. Jeff Campbell). "Time to Remember the Poor" is an exquisite arrangement of a turn-of-the-century English broadside ballad with haunting, multi-tracked vocals by Moscatiello.

influences:

◀◀ A.L. Lloyd, Steeleye Span, Fairport Convention

▶▶ Lisa Moscatiello

see also: *Lisa Moscatiello, Al Petteway*

Neal Walters

Carrie Newcomer

Born May 25, 1958, in Dawagiac, MI.

Hope isn't a four-letter word to Carrie Newcomer, a husky-voiced singer-songwriter who creates poignant, powerful music by maintaining a refreshingly optimistic attitude in a genre often marked more by introspection and melancholy. After six years and two independent albums as a founding member of the Bloomington, Indiana, folk trio Stone Soup, Newcomer went solo in 1988, joined Rounder's Philo roster in 1994, and instantly established herself as that rare performer capable of clicking her heels and keeping both feet on the ground. Her compassion for the homeless ("In the City") and victims of senseless violence ("The Madness You Get Used To") is fueled by her spirituality, as is her anger at those who use their belief in God to justify starting wars ("Playing with Matches") and bombing abortion clinics ("Wisdom Is Watching"). But Newcomer's most inviting and inspiring songs document the lessons learned from her own life, struggling through sour relationships, raising a teenage daughter, and emerging a little smarter and a lot stronger, battle scarred but not bitter.

what to buy: Backed by a solid five-man band that accompanied her on the road, Newcomer beefs up her sound without sacrificing the intimacy of her earlier records on *My Father's Only Son* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1996, prod. Mark Williams, Robert Meitus). Such nostalgic gems as "Up in the Attic" and the title track offer snapshots of her life, but such harder-rocking anthems as "You Can Choose" and the defiant "I'm Not Thinking of You" are clear windows into her soul.

what to buy next: Her splendid Philo debut, *An Angel at My Shoulder* ♪♪♪½ (1994, prod. Carrie Newcomer, Michael Graham), established her life-affirming attitude with "Only One Shoe" and "Three Women," and her sense of humor with "My Mamma Said It's True," a bluesy litany of maternal myths.

what to avoid: The earnest songs on *Visions and Dreams* ♪♪½ (Philo, 1995, prod. Carrie Newcomer, Graham Thomas, Richard Thomas), a reissue of her 1991 solo debut originally released on Windchime Records, are more about wet-behind-the-ears poetry than the wise-beyond-her-years poignancy that would inform her later albums.

the rest:

The Bird or the Wing ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1995)
My True Name ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1998)

worth searching for: The two Stone Soup albums originally released on Windchime Records, *Long Fields* ♪♪♪ (Windchime, 1983, prod. Richard Thomas, Stone Soup) and *October Nights* ♪♪♪ (Windchime, 1987, prod. Richard Thomas, Stone Soup), are available on cassette and can be mail-ordered through Windchime Promotions, Inc., P.O. Box 5653, Bloomington, Indiana 47407.

influences:

◀◀ Janis Ian, Bruce Cockburn, Mary Chapin Carpenter

▶▶ Sara Hickman, Story, Dar Williams

David Okamoto

jimmy c. newman

Jimmy C. Newman

Born Jimmy Yeve Newman, August 27, 1927, near Big Mamou, LA.

Nicknamed "The Alligator Man," Jimmy C. Newman is best known for bringing Cajun flair to country music. Inspired by the cowboy call of Gene Autry, Newman integrated his own signature call—"Ai-eee!"—into his country act. During the 1950s, his hits "Cry, Cry Darling," "Seasons of My Heart," "Blue Darling," and "Day Dreaming" made the charts. One of his best-remembered songs, "Falling Star," made Newman a star in 1956, the same year he joined the Grand Ole Opry. Newman's bayou-rich songs—such as "Alligator Man," "Bayou Talk," "Louisiana Saturday Night," "City of Angels," and "Back in Circulation"—continued to be chartmakers through the '60s. Although his recording career slowed during the '70s, he continues to bring down the house with his spirited Louisiana-flavored shows.

what to buy: Though Newman's days as a country hitmaker are long past, he can still make great records, and *Whatever Boils Your Crawfish* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1995, prod. Jimmy C. Newman) is an absolute blast. Newman, producing himself, gets great performances out of his band. The album kicks off with a great one-two punch: Loudon Wainwright's "Dead Skunk in the Middle of the Road" and the rollicking title tune.

what to buy next: Rounder wanted a traditional Cajun country sound when Newman recorded *The Alligator Man* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Jimmy C. Newman, Ken Irwin), and that's exactly what it got. Newman sings the songs largely in French, and the playing is marked by the spirited fiddle of Rufus Thibodeaux and Dobro of Joe Rogers.

what to avoid: Don't buy both *Jimmy C. Newman & Cajun Country* ♪♪ (Dot, 1986, prod. Stan Cornelius) and *More Cajun Music* ♪½ (MCA, 1995, prod. Stan Cornelius), which are essentially the same album, although *More Cajun Music* has two fewer cuts. Recorded about the time Rockin' Sidney's rhythm-box zydeco tune "My Toot Toot" became a national sensation, *More Cajun Music* finds Newman trying for the same sound, even recording Rockin' Sidney's "Cochon de Lait." On *Jimmy C. Newman*, he did his own version of "My Toot Toot." It's not a comfortable fit.

the rest:

20 Cajun Country Classics ♪♪ (Plantation, 1985)
16 Best of Jimmy C. Newman ♪♪ (Plantation, 1987)
Cajun Classics ♪♪ (Sun, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Dewey Balfa & the Balfa Brothers

▶▶ Doug Kershaw, Eddy Raven, Jo-El Sonnier

Randall T. Cook and Brian Mansfield

Randy Newman

Born November 28, 1943, in New Orleans, LA.

Swaggering onto the scene like Jonathan Swift at a Bourbon Street piano bar, Randy Newman thrives on misinterpretation. His biggest hit, 1977's "Short People," drew protests from diminutive listeners who didn't realize he was attacking a larger target—prejudice in general. He sometimes takes on the personae of apartheid-supporting South Africans ("Christmas in Capetown"), insecure gay bashers ("Half a Man"), Southern bigots ("Rednecks"), and right-wing conservatives ("Roll with the Punches") to get his points across. The ultimate irony is that, despite his perennial cult-hero status, Newman's wry blend of Tin Pan Alley pop, ragtime, and Crescent City R&B has won over Madison Avenue and Hollywood: he's licensed his songs for commercial jingles ("I Love LA." for Nike, "I Love to See You Smile" for Colgate), penned film scores for *Ragtime*, *The Natural*, and *Avalon*, and dueted with Lyle Lovett on the catchy theme for 1995's *Toy Story*. His albums barely trickle out—between 1979 and 1996, he's released all of four discs—but he hasn't lost his satirical edge or ambitious flair: 1995's *Randy Newman's Faust* is a twisted musical-theater adaptation of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's classic set in South Bend, Indiana. The Lord is played by James Taylor; the Devil, of course, by Newman.

what to buy: Newman wedges his tongue into his cheek on the gloriously sardonic *Sail Away* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1972, prod. Russ Titelman, Lenny Waronker) as he entices slaves to America like a sideshow huckster ("Sail Away"), celebrates the polluted Cuyahoga River like it was Walden Pond ("Burn On"), and advocates dropping the Big One ("Political Science"). *Good Old Boys* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1974, prod. Russ Titelman, Lenny Waronker), a rollicking concept album about the South, is celebrated for skewering redneck ignorance but "Louisiana 1927," "A Wedding in Cherokee County," and "Marie" garner their emotional clout from Newman's sympathetic narrative eye. The engaging *Land of Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1988, prod. Mark Knopfler, James Newton Howard, Tommy LiPuma, Jeff Lynne) opens with three autobiographical numbers about his New Orleans childhood and ends with "I Want You to Hurt like I Do," his chilling answer to "We Are the World."

what to buy next: *Trouble in Paradise* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1983, prod. Russ Titelman, Lenny Waronker) is often dismissed as the album that spawned "I Love LA." But digging deeper uncovers such gems as "Miami," the scathing "Christmas in Capetown," and "My Life Is Good," in which a cocky Newman brags about

Bruce Springsteen asking him "How would you like to be the Boss for a while?"

what to avoid: The pinched production and bloated orchestrations of *Randy Newman* ♪♪ (Reprise, 1968, prod. Lenny Waronker, Van Dyke Parks) make for a tough listen, even with "Davy the Fat Boy" and "I Think It's Going to Rain Today."

the rest:
12 Songs ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1970)
Randy Newman Live ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1971)
Little Criminals ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1977)
Born Again ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1979)
Randy Newman's Faust ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1995)
Maverick: The Original Film Score (Reprise, 1995)

worth searching for: For timid beginners, the German-made *Lonely at the Top* ♪♪♪½ (WEA International, 1987, prod. Lenny Waronker, Russ Titelman, Van Dyke Parks) is a 22-track best-of collection that mixes sarcastic favorites like "Rednecks" and "Short People" with such lovely ballads as "Marie," "I Think It's Going to Rain Today," and "Living without You." It's an impressive portrait, though hardly a complete picture.

influences:
◀◀ Stephen Foster, uncles Lionel and Alfred Newman, George & Ira Gershwin, Fats Domino
▶▶ Lyle Lovett, Timbuk 3

David Okamoto

Maire Ni Chathasaigh

Born April 21, 1956, in Co. Cork, Ireland.

Until recently, the harp had, for the most part, fallen out of the world of traditional Irish dance music. While there were a few scattered players, and a harp category at the All-Ireland competition, the rarity and expense of the instrument meant that there were few harpers in the rural countryside where traditional music survives most strongly. During the last 30 years, artists like Derek Bell of the Chieftains, Antoinette McKenna, and even Mary O'Hara had helped to start a harp revival, but it wasn't until the 1980s and the arrival of Maire Ni Chathasaigh's recordings that harpers began to use the techniques and ornamentation common to Irish dance music. Her technically proficient and precise style is based on the playing of the fiddlers and pipers she heard as a child in County Cork in the west of Ireland. Her first recording, *The New Strung Harp*, introduced audiences to her use of traditional ornamentation, including the rolls, cuts, and slurs common to fiddles, accordions, and pipes, and served as a revelation to harpers all over the Celtic world. The album forced harpers everywhere to raise their playing standards, and changed forever the role of the harp in dance music. Born into a musical family (her sister is fiddle player Nollaig Casey) and brought up speaking both Irish and English, Ni Chathasaigh began playing the harp at age 12, having already learned whistle and piano. She attended University College, Cork where she spent time collecting songs and music from traditional players in the area and received an honors degree in Celtic studies. Having won numerous harp competitions in her youth, Ni Chathasaigh is now a fixture as a judge and teacher at those same competitions. She has toured and taught throughout the United States and Europe, both as a solo performer and with her long-time musical partner, guitarist Chris Newman. She currently lives in England and is also president of Old-Bridge Records, her own label.

what's available: *The New Strung Harp* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Temple, 1985/1997, prod. Robin Morton) is a classic. When released in 1985, the recording showed a new way to play Irish jigs and reels on the harp. Modeled on the playing of fiddlers and pipers, Ni Chathasaigh's playing mimics those instruments in her style of ornamentation, allowing her music to fit as closely as possible into the dance music idiom. She shows off her awesome technique on the set of reels "The Volunteer" and "The Pullet" and on the jig "Gander in the Pratie Hole," and also sings a few traditional Irish songs in a sweet, clear voice. Although other harpers have in the intervening years raised their level of playing to Ni Chathasaigh's, she was the first to play in this modern style, and for that reason she is important listening. *The Carolan Albums* ♪♪♪♪ (Old Bridge, 1994) is an essential compilation of the music of Turlough O'Carolan, a blind eighteenth-century itinerant considered to be the last of the great traveling Irish harpers. His compositions have become a major part of the traditional Irish repertoire and Ni Chathasaigh's precise, confident performances set a new standard for this important material.

worth searching for: Ni Chathasaigh's other recordings, all with guitarist Newman, are available on the import Old Bridge label. They are: *The Living Wood* ♪♪♪½ (Old Bridge, 1995); *Out of Court* ♪♪♪ (Old Bridge, 1991); and *Live in the Highlands* ♪♪♪ (Old Bridge, 1995).

influences:
◀◀ Grainne Yeats, Antoinette McKenna
▶▶ Sue Richards, Carol Thompson, Aine Minogue

Tony Ziselberger

Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill

See: Nightnoise

The Nields

Formed 1988 in Wilmington, DE.

Nerissa Nield (born June 2, 1967 in New York, NY), vocals, guitar; Katryna Nield (born April 30, 1969 in New York, NY), vocals; David Nield (born David Jones, November 8, 1960 in Henderson, NC), guitar, vocals; Dave Chalfant (born January 31, 1968 in Barcelona, Spain), bass; Dave Hower (born January 8, 1967 in New York, NY), drums.

Youthful exuberance and infectious melodies have made the Nields one of pop-folk's fastest rising acts. Although the group began as a trio featuring singer-songwriter Nerrisa Nield, her guitarist husband, David Nield, and her lead vocalist sister Katryna Nield, The Nields have evolved into an exciting five-piece rock band. The Nield sisters—Nerrisa and Katryna—grew up listening to their parents' collection of folk albums and have been singing together since earliest memory. The sisters' love of music was further enhanced when they attended the Potomac School in Washington, D.C. and took classes with John Langstaff, director of the Revel singers. Although they attended different colleges—Nerrisa as an English major at Yale and Katryna as a religion major at Trinity in Hartford—they resumed their singing partnership in 1991. Pete Townshend and Adrian Belew–inspired guitarist David Nield, whom Nerrisa married in 1990, also played a big role in the development of the band's sound, backing the two sisters on an acoustic guitar run through an electric pedal board. After honing their sound at open mics in Washington, D.C., the Nields relocated to Windsor, Connecticut, when David was hired to be an English teacher and head of the theater department at the Loomis Chafee Boarding School. Ed McKuen of University of Hartford radio station WWUH radio was one of the first to discover the group and provided airplay for their demo tape on his show. The group's popularity spread after they were featured on anthology albums produced by the *Fast Folk Music Magazine* (*The Old Vienna Tapes: Volume II*) and by WWUH (*Honey, Hide the Banjo! It's the Folk Next Door Again* and *The Folk Next Door*). While their first two self-produced albums, *66 Hoxsey Street* and *Live at the Iron Horse Music Hall*, showcased the initial trio, the Nields, who settled in Northampton, Masachusetts, were enhanced by the addition of bassist Dave Chalfant and drummer Dave Hower in 1994.

what to buy: The Nields' second album as a five-piece band, *Gotta Get over Greta* ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1996/EMI/Guardian, 1997, prod. Kevin Moloney) shows how much they'd grown since their inception. A powerful folk-rock collection, the album is the product of an ultra-tight unit. Nerrisa and David Nield's songwriting skills are showcased with such original songs as "Best Black Dress," "I Know What Kind of Love This Is," and the title track, while Katryna Nield's lead vocals are delivered with enthusiasm and emotion. Released initially by Razor & Tie, the album was re-mastered by EMI/Guardian with three additional tracks—"Taxi Girl," "Einstein's Daughter," and a cover of the Beatles' "Lovely Rita."

what to buy next: Recorded during a 1993 performance at a Northampton, Massachusetts club, *Live at the Iron Horse Music Hall* ♪♪♪ (Nields, 1993) captures the infectious spirit of the trio's early live shows.

the rest:
66 Hoxsey Street ♪♪♪½ (Nields, 1992)
Bob on the Ceiling ♪♪♪ (Nields, 1994)

worth searching for: Katryna and Nerrisa have contributed vocal harmonies to two albums by Dar Williams, harmonizing with Williams on "Alleluia" on *The Honesty Room* ♪♪♪♪ (Burning Field Music, 1993, prod. Dar Williams, Adam Rothberg, David Seitz) and "As Cool As I Am" on *Mortal City* ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1996, prod. Steven Miller). Live recordings by the Nields include "Anchorman" on *The Folk Next Door* ♪♪♪½ (WWUH, 1992, prod. Ed McKuen) and "(Just like) Christopher Columbus" on *Honey, Hide the Banjo! It's the Folk Next Door Again* ♪♪♪ (WWUH, 1993, prod. Ed McKuen), as well as *The Old Vienna Tapes, Volume II* ♪♪♪ (Fast Folk, 1993).

influences:
◀◀ Beatles, Cranberries, Counting Crows, Who, Adrian Belew
▶▶ Dar Williams, Eddie from Ohio, Indigo Girls

Craig Harris

Nightnoise

Formed 1983, as a duo.

Billy Oskay, violin, viola, keyboards (1983–90); Micheál Ó Dhomhnaill, guitar, whistles, synthesizers, vocals; Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, keyboards, vocals, whistles, accordion (1986–present); Brian Dunning, flutes, panpipes (1986–present); John Cunningham, fiddle, vocals (1991–present).

Familiarity with French Impressionist painters like Monet might help an unfamiliar listener understand the group Nightnoise. Calling on backgrounds from the classical to the traditional

Irish, this group has assembled a mist-covered image from a serious of brightly colored impressions. Pulling their various backgrounds together, they have created a soft, romantic mood with the music they play. Nightnoise has a distinct and unusual sound, with a new-age feel to the instrumentation, but with more of a jazz-like rhythm to the music. Unquestionably Celtic in background, the group never loses the sense of the traditional, but never exactly attempts to be traditional either. Definitely not rock, but far too varied to be new age, this group is just plain hard to classify. There is a chamber-folk quality to them, but the music also borders on pop, and still maintains an Irish feel. Perhaps they are the closest thing the Irish have to American jazz. The band was started by Billy Oskay, who wanted to record some tracks and asked Micheál Ó Dhomhnaill to join him. The resulting music soon became the album known as *Nightnoise*, and they decided to take their show on the road. They added a piano player and a second fiddler for the road show, and by the time they were ready to record again, had added Ó Dhomhnaill's sister Tríona (from Touchstone and Bothy Band) and Brian Dunning to the mix. When Oskay decided to leave, they quickly filled his position with John Cunningham (of Silly Wizard fame). What appealed to these top-notch performers with busy solo schedules was the concept behind Nightnoise. The group does ample touring, but allows the members to have plenty of time to pursue other projects during the course of the year. This factor may add greatly to the group's success, since exploring other creative outlets frequently keeps the songwriting juices flowing. It certainly works, as displayed by the group's highly evocative and creative music.

what to buy: *Shadow of Time* ♪♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1993, prod. Dawn Atkinson, Nightnoise) contains a delightful mix of traditional and new material, sporting soaring flute lines, rhythmic piano accompaniment, and melodic fiddle. Exciting rhythms highlight "Silky Flanks," a wonderful instrumental track, and amazing Gaelic vocals create rhythm, melody, harmony, and texture in the mouth music "Fionnghuala." This is new-age folk at its best.

what to buy next: *A Different Shore* ♪♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1995, prod. Nightnoise) is also filled with new-age style music in a slightly more exotic vein. The arrangements include wonderful fiddle, flute, and vocal lines, brilliantly performed. The melodic piano line on the song "Falling Apples" and the throaty bass flute line on the title track, "A Different Shore," are particularly lovely.

what to avoid: Both *At the End of the Evening* ♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1988, prod. Nightnoise) and *Something of Time* ♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1987, prod. Billy Oskay, Micheál Ó Dhomhnaill) seem to have more new-age material and less folk substance to them than Nightnoise's other albums. A lack of tension in the music keeps these albums from living up to the group's overall standard.

the rest:
Oskay & Ó Dhomhnaill: Nightnoise ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1984)
Parting Tide ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1990)
Nightnoise: A Windham Hill Retrospective ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1992)
The White Horse Sessions ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1997)

solo outings:
Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill:
Tríona ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1975)

influences:
Relativity, Jethro Tull, Silly Wizard, Touchstone
Enya

see also: *John Cunningham, Silly Wizard, Bothy Band*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Harry Nilsson

Born June 15, 1941, in Brooklyn, NY. Died January 15, 1994, in Agoura Hills, CA.

Harry Nilsson was both a remarkable singer and a gifted songwriter. It was the latter talent that launched his career during the mid-'60s; bands such as Three Dog Night scored hits with his songs, which helped him embark on his own recording career. His supple voice—which could handle mellow, swing-influenced ballads and soaring rock anthems with equal facility—was given full rein, as were his more eclectic instincts as a composer. He achieved mainstream success with his version of "Everybody's Talkin'," the theme from the hit film *Midnight Cowboy*, and scored massive hits with the humorous original "Coconut" and Badfinger's ultimate power ballad, "Without You." He also wrote songs for the cartoon musical *The Point*, which became a success with help from the single "Me and My Arrow." Nilsson composed other music for film and television, notably the theme from the series *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*, which he also performed over the show's opening credits. He rarely performed live, however, and never toured in support of his recordings. He followed a decidedly idiosyncratic career path, recording standards, making mock-horror films with Ringo Starr, and drinking quite a lot with John Lennon. Unfortunately, Nilsson's voice was damaged along the way, and he lost his exquisite falsetto—apparently from booze. Lennon's mur-

der in 1980 made Nilsson an outspoken advocate of gun control; he recorded very little during that decade, however. After his own death from heart disease in 1994, he was the subject of an all-star tribute album that demonstrated his profound influence on pop.

what to buy: The two-disc anthology *Personal Best* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1995, prod. various) is a stunning treasury of Nilsson's achievements as both vocalist and songwriter. In addition to boasting his best-known moments, the compilation features many obscure gems.

what to buy next: *Nilsson Schmilsson* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1971, prod. Richard Perry) is a fine mix of hits and lesser-known delights.

what to avoid: *Son of Dracula* ♪♪ (RCA, 1974, prod. Harry Nilsson, Ringo Starr) may have been fun to make, but its blend of songs (mostly recycled from other albums), stoned dialogue, and incidental music from this dog of a movie will try the patience of most listeners.

the rest:
Pandemonium Shadow Show ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1967)
Spotlight on Nilsson ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1967)
True One ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1967)
Aerial Ballet ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1968)
Nilsson Sings Newman ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1970)
The Point ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1971)
Aerial Pandemonium Ballet ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1971)
Son of Schmilsson ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1972)
Songwriter ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1972)
A Little Touch of Schmilsson in the Night ♪♪½ (RCA, 1973)
(With John Lennon) *Pussy Cats* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1974)
Sandman ♪♪½ (RCA, 1975)
That's the Way It Is ♪♪ (RCA, 1976)
Knilsson ♪♪ (RCA, 1977)
Nilsson's Greatest Music ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1978)
A Touch More Schmilsson in the Night ♪♪ (RCA, 1988)
All-Time Greatest Hits ♪♪ (RCA, 1989)
Presence of Christmas ♪♪ (Dove, 1997)

worth searching for: *Harry* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1969/DCC, 1997, prod. Harry Nilsson, Rick Jarrard) is gentler and more nostalgic, but contains some of his very best early work.

influences:
◀◀ Cole Porter, George & Ira Gershwin, Hank Williams, Little Richard, Beatles, Beach Boys, Burt Bacharach, Randy Newman, Van Dyke Parks

▶▶ Marshall Crenshaw, Aimee Mann, Gin Blossoms, Jellyfish, Posies, Semisonic, Jennifer Trynin

Simon Glickman

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Formed 1966, in Long Beach, CA.

Jeff Hanna, vocals, guitar; Jimmie Fadden, vocals, drums; Les Thompson, vocals, mandolin (1966–73); Bruce Kunkel, guitar, violin, vocals (1966–67); Ralph Barr, guitar, clarinet, vocals (1966–68); Jackson Browne, guitar, vocals (1966); John McEuen, banjo, guitar, fiddle, (1967–86); Chris Darrow, guitar, fiddle (1968); Jimmy Ibbotson, bass, vocals (1969–76, 1983–present); John Cable, guitar, bass, vocals (1976–77); Jackie Clark, bass, guitar (1976–77); Michael Buono, drums (1976–77); Bob Carpenter, keyboards, vocals (1979–present); Al Garth, saxophone, violin (1978–82); Richard Hathaway, bass (1978–82); Merle Brigante, drums (1978–79); Vic Mastriani, drums (1980–82); Michael Gardner, bass (1980–82); Bernie Leadon, guitar, banjo (1987–88).

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band was the group that introduced many second-generation rock 'n' rollers to music outside of the bubblegum pop that AM Top 40 radio served during the late 1960s and early 1970s. With such hits as "Mr. Bojangles" (written by Jerry Jeff Walker), the NGDB led interested fans to other singer/songwriters and the country-rock scene. Its sprawling, landmark 1972 three-record set, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*, brought unadulterated folk and roots country stars to rock fans' ears. The collection was a multi-generational gathering, including traditional musicians from Mother Maybelle Carter and Doc Watson to Opry founders Roy Acuff and Merle Travis, with the long-haired Dirt Band members playing backup and proving they listened to a wider range of music than many of their fans. The band's catholic stylistic sense came from its roots in the halcyon LA folk-rock scene of the mid-1960s. The NGDB first formed as a jug band. When multi-instrumentalist John McEuen joined, the core group was set for most of the rest of its career. Its records at various times were more rock than country (the 1975 *Dream* LP even included a spacey banjo opus that sounded like Pink Floyd for hillbillies), but by the 1980s, with myriad personnel changes and a stint officially calling themselves the Dirt Band, the core members settled in as something of a country-music institution; their music hadn't changed, but in the post-punk era, twangy music found itself unhip and relegated to country radio. Although it wasn't as much of a revelation the second time around, the Dirt Band also released an updated version of *Circle* in 1989, a songfest featuring some of the original legends (Roy Acuff, Earl Scruggs) as well as the new Nashville set (Rosanne Cash, John Hiatt, Emmylou Harris, Marty Stuart, Bruce Hornsby). Having passed its 30th year, the band is without a major-label deal for the first time ever, but it's still a staple on the road and seems far from quitting, having settled

into an acoustic sound that reaches back to its roots. The Dirt Band's most recent release is *The Christmas Album*, recorded largely around the band's longtime home of Aspen, Colorado with pals including McEuen, bluegrass star fiddler Alison Krauss, veteran fiddler Vassar Clements, and Poco founder Richie Furay, a pastor these days in Boulder, Colorado. Of all the many members who've passed through the NGDB, multi-instrumentalist McEuen has sustained the closest thing to a solo career; though hitless, McEuen is well regarded and performs steadily on the acoustic circuit.

what to buy: *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1972, prod. William E. McEuen) is the hands-down, must-own release by the NGDB, although it's not as much a reflection of the band's own music as it is a testament to its roots. The music was already old by then but sounded fresh in this context. And it hasn't aged in the quarter-century since.

what to buy next: *Uncle Charlie and His Dog Teddy* ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1970, prod. William E. McEuen) includes the group's biggest hit, "Mr. Bojangles," as well as a minor-hit version of Michael Nesmith's great "Some of Shelley's Blues" (recently covered by the Continental Drifters) that's typical of its hippie eclecticism. The mid-career, three-LP compilation *Dirt, Silver & Gold* ♪♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1976, prod. various) collects the good stuff and filters out the dross. Much of the NGDB's catalog is available on CD via various labels' reissue lines, or on import labels.

what to avoid: Outside of collections and concept albums, much of the NGDB's mid-era output included such tepid fodder as *Jealousy* ♪♪ (Liberty, 1981) and *Let's Go* ♪♪ (Liberty, 1983).

the rest:
Ricochet ♪♪ (Liberty, 1967)
Pure Dirt ♪♪ (Liberty, 1968)
All the Good Times ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1971)
Stars and Stripes Forever ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1971)
Dream ♪♪♪½ (United Artists, 1975)
20 Years of Dirt ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986)
Hold On ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987)
Best of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1987)
More Great Dirt ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1989)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990)
Live Two Five ♪♪ (Capitol Nashville, 1991)
Not Fade Away ♪♪ (Liberty, 1992)
Best Of ♪♪ (Curb, 1993)
Acoustic ♪♪½ (Liberty, 1994)
The Christmas Album ♪♪½ (Rising Tide, 1997)
Best Of ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1997)

editor's choice
11 slack key guitar albums

Gabby Pahinui, *Hawaiian Band: Vol. 1* (Edsel)
Sonny Chillingworth, *Sonny Solo* (Dancing Cat)
Keola Beamer, *Mauna Kea: White Mountain Journal* (Dancing Cat)
Keola Beamer, *Moe'uhane Kika (Tales from the Dream Guitar)* (Dancing Cat)
Barney Isaacs & George Kuo, *Hawaiian Touch: Acoustic Steel & Slack Key* (Dancing Cat)
Ledward Kaapana, *Led Live: Solo* (Dancing Cat)
Ray Kane, *Punahele* (Dancing Cat)
Various Artists, *Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Masters* (Dancing Cat)
Various Artists, *Songs of the Hawaiian Cowboy (Na Mele O Paniolo)* (Warner Western)
George Kuo, *Aloha No Na Kupuna (Love for the Elders)* (Dancing Cat)
Various Artists, *Ki Ho'alu Christmas* (Dancing Cat)

solo outings:
John McEuen:
String Wizards ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1991)
String Wizards II ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1994)
Acoustic Traveller ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1996)
String Wizard's Picks ♪♪♪ (Vanguard Enhanced CD, 1997)
Wild Jimbos:
Wild Jimbos ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1991)
Wild Jimbos II ♪♪ (Resounding Records, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Carter Family, Weavers, Buddy Holly, Jim Kweskin Jug Band, Byrds
▶▶ Rodney Crowell, Rosanne Cash, Foster & Lloyd, Travis Tritt, Hank Williams Jr., Michelle Shocked, Uncle Tupelo, Continental Drifters

Gil Asakawa

No Strings Attached

Formed June 1978, in Blacksburg, VA.

Pete Hastings, guitar, harmonica (1978–present); Bob Thomas, bass, bass clarinet, bass saxophone (1984–present); Wes Chappell, hammer dulcimer, mandolin, mandola, guitar, pennywhistle, percussion (1978–present); Randy Marchany, hammer dulcimer, synthesizer, piano, percussion (1980–present), Suzy Gorsline (1980–87), Rytas Vilgalys (1980–83), Rusty May (1980–84).

An award-winning quartet based in Roanoke/Blacksburg, Virginia, No Strings Attached actually features hundreds of strings playing music described as "eclectic, jazz on acoustic instruments and world beat." Much like Clark Kent appears ordinary for the most part, only to become Superman after visiting a convenient phone booth, No Strings is superficially a traditional string band focusing on instrumental arrangements, but they consistently stretch the boundaries of string music beyond traditional concepts. The *Washington Post* accurately described them as "one of the more adventurous string ensembles today." While their recordings feature traditional acoustic music, they also incorporate material by Dave Brubeck, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, the Chieftains, and Bill Spence, as well as their own originals. The eclectic brand of music they play and their exciting stage personae—think Cirque du Soleil and you're close—has allowed them to open for such artists as Mary Wilson and the Supremes, Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, Doc Watson, Turtle Island String Quartet, John Hartford, and John McCutcheon. They have played in European venues such as FolkClub Zuriche (Switzerland) and in U.S. venues ranging from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and CBS TV's *Morning News* program to major festivals such as the Pacific Rim International Music Festival in Los Angeles, California. On stage, they typically dance the tango with their instruments, parody old rock and roll bands, clog while playing old-time tunes, and sometimes use the slinky (yes, the old toy) as a percussion instrument. The band members don't cite strong folk music influences. Bassist Bob Thomas comes from the jazz, rock, and bluegrass worlds and is one of the vocalists in the group. He takes his role as "bassist" to heart, playing acoustic bass, bass clarinet, and bass saxophone, with the goal of "owning a bass instrument from every instrument family." Wes Chappell is the other vocalist and the multi-instrumentalist of the group. His background is rock and roll, but he plays in a variety of styles. Harmonica player Pete Hastings has become well known for his virtuosity on the chromatic and diatonic harmonicas, having studied under harmonica master Howard Levy for a number of years. Hastings also doubles as the group's guitarist. Randy Marchany, who plays the hammer dulcimer and keyboards, was trained as a classical pianist. So, given their varied backgrounds, perhaps the band's selection of material isn't all that unusual. This variety of styles is one of the cornerstones of their appeal.

what to buy: *Bellinzona* ♪♪♪♪ (Enessay Music, 1996, prod. No Strings Attached, Bill McElroy) is the group's most recent recording featuring material of David Grisman, Antonio Jobim, Django Reinhardt, Randy Marchany, and several traditional pieces. It is chock full of energy, neat rhythms, and dynamic variations. Hasting's incredible harmonica is featured on a medley of two Irish tunes "Langstrom's Pony" and "Maid at the Spinning Wheel." Chappell's mandolin and Marchany's hammer dulcimer trade exciting leads on Grisman's "Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women." Of course, they say "you know we had to do a song with a title like that!" The group's humor is evident in their liner notes, and outrageous song titles are only part of their appeal. Take a listen to Hastings's excellent bass playing on "Manha du Carnaval," a song from the movie *Black Orpheus*, as he takes a turn with the lead. This recording is available from the Record Depot (1-800-277-5355).

what to buy next: Three of the six albums the group recorded for Turquoise Records are still available. All three were nominated for INDIE awards and *Take Five* ♪♪♪½ (Turquoise, 1988, prod. Pat Martin, Bill McElroy) was a National Association of Independent Record Distributors award winner. *Blue Roses* ♪♪♪½ (Turquoise, 1992, prod. No Strings Attached, Bill McElroy) and *Coffee at Midnight* ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1991, prod. No Strings Attached, Bill McElroy) are both excellent efforts and it is difficult to choose among the three.

worth searching for: The remaining trio of releases the group did for Turquoise are harder to find. *Isles of Langerhans* ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1984, prod. Enessay Music), *Traditional Music of the Future* ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1985, prod. Enessay Music), and *Dulcimer Dimensions* ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1986, prod. No Strings Attached, Pat Martin) are all are in limbo at this point. They aren't available from the label or from the band, which has been in "negotiating standoff" with the label for over a year. Hopefully, their differences will be resolved and we can all get another chance to hear these earlier recordings.

influences:

◀◀ Trapezoid, Bill Spence, Walt Michael, Malcolm Dalglish, John McCutcheon

Steve Schneider

Heidi Cerrigione and Neal Walters

Norman & Kolodner

See: Helicon, Chris Norman

Chris Norman

Born August 5, 1963, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Chris Norman spent his earliest years in Nova Scotia, where he acquired a taste for the Celtic-flavored music of Cape Breton, but he soon moved to the United States, where he studied orchestral flute at the Indiana University School of Music and the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Even when he turned from the metal flute to the Celtic wooden flute of his childhood, he didn't abandon his classical background entirely. He continues to play with the Baltimore Consort, one of America's leading early-music ensembles, and seeks out opportunities to play with orchestras whenever possible. But his primary pursuit has been the chamber-folk hybrid sound pioneered by the Chieftains. Norman formed a duo with Baltimore's Ken Kolodner and then a trio called Helicon, with Kolodner and guitarist Robin Bullock. He became the flute soloist in Skyedance, the Celtic chamber-folk group led by fiddler Alasdair Fraser. Norman founded and continues to direct the annual Boxwood summer school for the wooden flute in the mountains of Wyoming. In the midst of all this other activity, he still has found time to pursue a very active solo career.

what to buy: The best introduction to Norman's work is *Beauty of the North* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1994, prod. Ronn McFarlane, Chris Norman). Subtitled "Traditional Favorites from Quebec and Maritime Canada," the recording returns the flutist to the fetching Celtic tunes of his childhood, played with a grace and cleanliness of line that owes as much to the early-music branch of classical music as it does to folk dances. Norman's elegant flute work is nicely framed by Bullock, Fraser, and Trian accordionist Billy McComiskey. The classical influence is even more pronounced on *Highlands* ♪♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1997, prod. David H. Walters), which finds Norman collaborating with the Camerata Bariloche, a chamber orchestra from Buenos Aires. Norman commissioned composer Brian Packham to use the traditional melodies of Maritime Canada as the basis for a three-movement "Cape Breton Concerto" for flute and chamber orchestra. Unlike most orchestrations of traditional folk tunes, this one manages to maintain the bouncy lilt of the original sources, even as it greatly expands their harmonic scope. Norman and the Camerata Bariloche, directed by Fernando Hasaj, pull off similar tricks on Packham's arrangement of Hamilton Harty's 1925 tone poem, "In Ireland," and Edward McGuire's arrangement of "The Gaelic Flute—Traditional Gaelic Love Songs of the Sea." Kolodner and Bullock reunite with Norman on the climactic "South American Suite," a collection of traditional Andean melodies also arranged by Packham.

what to buy next: The title of Norman's first solo album, *Man with the Wooden Flute* ♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1992, prod. Ronn McFarlane), is a take-off on James Galway's tag line as the "Man with the Golden Flute." Like Galway, Norman balances an interest in both classical music and Celtic folk music, even if the scale is tilted differently. The album is subtitled "Traditional Flute Music of the British Isles, America, Quebec, and Cape Breton," and Norman is joined by Metamora fiddler Pete Sutherland, Helicon guitarist Bullock, and Ann Marie Morgan on viola da gamba. Norman joins soprano vocalist Custer LaRue, his bandmate in the Baltimore Consort, for the duo album, *Lullaby Journey* ♪♪♪½ (Dorian, 1996, prod. Douglas Brown, Chris Norman, Custer LaRue). LaRue is a spellbinding singer, and the harmonies on these traditional children's lullabies from around the world will put a listener of any age at ease.

worth searching for: Before they formed Helicon, Kolodner and Norman released a duo album called *Daybreak* ♪♪♪ (Jeb Records, 1985, prod. Ken Kolodner, Chris Norman). They were still trying to get a handle on their musical personalities, but the interplay between Norman's classical training and Kolodner's self-taught Appalachiana, between Norman's fluttering flute and Kolodner's piercing hammer dulcimer, pointed toward the distinguished careers to come. In addition to the Celtic and Appalachian tunes, the album included two Mozart pieces, which boasted a folksy warmth, even as the folk tunes benefited from a classical discipline.

influences:

Matt Molloy, James Galway

Linda Hickman, Seamus Egan

see also: *Helicon, Baltimore Consort*

Geoffrey Himes

Northampton Harmony

See: Cordelia's Dad

Northern Lights

Formed as How Banks Fail, 1975, in Boston, MA.

Taylor Armerding, mandolin, vocals; Bill Henry, guitar, vocals; Mike Kropp, banjo; Jake Armerding, fiddle; Chris Miles, bass, vocals. For-

mer members include Bob Emery, banjo; Alison Brown, banjo; Oz Barron, bass; Jeff Horton, bass.

During the past two decades, Northern Lights' distinctive fusion of folk music and bluegrass has paid dividends consistently. The recipient of a Boston Music Award as "Outstanding Country Act of 1991," the band has propelled itself to the top of contemporary bluegrass. In addition to their own concerts, Northern Lights has provided instrumental accompaniment and vocal harmonies for Peter Rowan, Vassar Clements, and Jonathan Edwards. Northern Lights was initially conceived by banjo player Bob Emery and mandolinist Taylor Armerding. Although they released a self-titled album in 1976, the first version of the band dissolved the following year with Emery and Armerding going on to form a similar band, String Fever, in 1981. The second edition of Northern Lights came together in late 1982 when banjo wiz Alison Brown, who was then a sophomore at Harvard University, phoned Armerding. The band, which expanded to include acoustic guitar virtuoso Bill Henry, released its second album, *Before the Fire*, in 1984. When Brown graduated, in mid-1984, and moved back to California, she was replaced by Earl Scruggs–influenced banjo player Mike Kropp. The heyday of Northern Lights began in 1986 when the group finished third in a "best new Bluegrass band" contest sponsored by Kentucky Fried Chicken. They released their third album, *On the Edge*, as a self-produced cassette. The biggest change in the band's evolution has come with the addition of Armerding's teenage son Jake on fiddle. Although their 1990 album, *Take You to the Sky*, featured guest fiddlers Alison Krauss and Matt Glaser and their 1992 collection, *Can't Buy Your Way*, featured Stuart Duncan, Vassar Clements, and Matt Glaser, the young Armerding has played fiddle for the group since he made his recording debut on the album *Wrong Highway Blues* in 1994. He wrote and sang lead on "Sing to You" and played mandolin on "Ariel's Hornpipe" on the 1996 album, *Living in the City*. In 1996 Chris Miles, a contemporary Christian rock bassist, joined the group.

what to buy: *Take You to the Sky* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Northern Lights, Bil VornDick) reflects the wide range of Northern Lights' approach to the music of the hill country. While their instrumentation remains firmly set in the mandolin-banjo-guitar-fiddle tradition, the band applies their unique stamp to songs by Bill Staines, Little Feat, Jimmy Martin, John Prine, and Jimmie Rodgers and demonstrate their songwriting skills with four original tunes. Henry's "Early Morning Riser" and Kropp's "April Snow" are imaginative instrumentals, while Armerding's "Northern Rail" is an up-tempo ode to railroading and his anthemic "Winterhawk," featuring harmony vocals by Peter Rowan, has become the theme song of the annual Winterhawk bluegrass festival. The most ambitious tune on the album is a medley of Henry's adaptation of J.S. Bach's "Bouree" and his own "Borealis Blues."

what to buy next: *Living in the City* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1996, prod. Northern Lights, Mark Wessell) spotlights the talents of Taylor Armerding's teenage son, Jake. In addition to his expressive fiddle playing, the young Armerding shows his talents as a songwriter on two original tunes. He sings lead vocals on "Sing to You" and plays second mandolin on the instrumental "Ariel's Hornpipe."

the rest:
Northern Lights ♪♪ (Revonah, 1976)
Before the Fire ♪♪ (Revonah, 1984)
On the Edge ♪♪♪ (self-produced cassette, 1987)
Can't Buy Your Way ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992)
Wrong Highway Blues ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994)
Vanishing Borders ♪♪ (Gourd, 1994)
Music of Contemplation for a New Age (Finlandia, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Seldom Scene, Peter Rowan, Hot Rize
▶▶ Alison Brown, Alison Krauss, Chesapeake

Craig Harris

Billy Novick

Born October 12, 1951, in Mineola, NY.

The ragtime, stride, and swing of early twentieth-century jazz are resurrected through the melodic clarinet, saxophone, and pennywhistle playing of Billy Novick. Alternating between a traditionally jazz-rooted band, the New Black Eagle Jazz Band, and a duo that he shares with guitarist Guy Van Duser, Novick brings an excitement and spirit to his treatment of the musical past. A veteran of David Bromberg's band, Novick toured with Leon Redbone and Jonathan Edwards during the mid-1970s. He met Van Duser, a former accompanist of Bill Staines, in 1976 while performing the music for a modern dance production. After Novick performed on Van Duser's debut album, *Finger-Style Guitar Solos*, in 1977, the two musicians agreed to formally pool their resources. Over the next decade, the duo were regulars of the East Coast coffeehouse scene and recorded several albums together. Novick and Van Duser also occasionally performed, along with Bill Staines, Mason Daring, and Jeannie Stahl, in the Passim All-Stars. Although he joined the New Black Eagle Jazz Band in 1986 and also performs and records

with his own band, Shades of Swing, Novick has continued to periodically renew his partnership with Van Duser. He served as musical director and arranger for Dave Van Ronk's jug band treatment of "Peter and the Wolf" in 1991.

what to buy: Recorded during two 1985 performances at the Coffeehouse Extempore in Minneapolis, Minnesota, *These n' That n' Those* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986, prod. Guy Van Duser, Billy Novick) documents the enthusiasm and fun of the duo's concerts. With Van Duser displaying a virtuoso mastery of the six-string acoustic guitar, Novick crafts melodies on his woodwinds and reeds. Although none of the tunes are originals, the duo adapt compositions by Fats Waller ("I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling"), Duke Ellington ("Caravan"), Jelly Roll Morton ("Buddy Bolden's Blues"), Sidney Bechet ("Georgia Cabin"), and John Philip Sousa ("Semper Fidelis") to their unique acoustic approach.

what to buy next: *Raisin' the Rent* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982, prod. Guy Van Duser, Billy Novick) was the duo's first truly successful collaboration. Accompanied by acoustic bass player Brian Torff and drummer Bob Jackson, Novick and Van Duser show their versatility with songs ranging from Fred Koehler's "Happy as the Day Is Long" and Duke Ellington's "Jubilee Stomp" to DeSilva-Brown-Henderson's musical theater classic, "You're the Cream in My Coffee."

what to avoid: While Novick has greatly expanded the musical vocabulary of the pennywhistle, the novelty wears thin on *The New Pennywhistle Album* ♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1978, prod. Billy Novick, Guy Van Duser).

the rest:

(With Guy Van Duser) *Get Yourself a New Broom. . . .* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979)
(With Guy Van Duser) *Exactly like Us* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989)
Swing So Softly ♪♪½ (Daring, 1992)
(With Guy Van Duser) *Guy and Billy* ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1994)
(With Shades of Swing) *Remembering You* ♪♪½ (Daring, 1994)
(With Guy Van Duser) *Every Little Moment* ♪♪½ (Daring, 1996)
(With Herb Pomeroy) *This Is Always* ♪♪½ (Daring, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Benny Goodman, Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Sidney Bechet

▶▶ New Black Eagle Jazz Band, Dave Van Ronk, David Bromberg

see also: *Guy Van Duser*

Craig Harris

The Nudes

Formed January 1992 in New York, NY.

Walter Parks, guitar, bass, vocals; Stephanie Winters, cello, vocals.

The Nudes were formed when Walter Parks, a Florida-born jazz guitarist, placed an ad in the *Village Voice* for a musical partner; his ad was answered by Stephanie Winters, a classically trained cellist. The two create jazz-tinged folk songs with that stylish, fluid sound indigenous to New York City–based folk. Winters pioneered the use of cello in a singer-songwriter setting before *MTV Unplugged* nearly turned it into a cliché. Parks writes and arranges most of the group's songs (although a version of "Norwegian Wood" appears on *Velvet Sofa*). The Nudes are more than the sum of their parts. The duo's enthusiasm elevates sometimes pedestrian songs into performances worth hearing.

what's available: *The Nudes* ♪♪♪½ (Nudes, 1993, prod. Walter Parks, Stephanie Winters) has a pleasant, low-key jazz-folk sound. The rock radio–friendly *Velvet Sofa* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic America, 1996, prod. Walter Parks, Stephanie Winters) improves slightly on its predecessor, particularly in terms of songwriting. The Beatles cover is disappointing, except for some enticing guitar licks by Parks.

influences:

◀◀ Gordon Lightfoot, Simon & Garfunkel

▶▶ Kennedys

Pamela Murray Winters

Scott Nygaard

Born July 30, 1955, in Champaign/Urbana, IL.

After serving his musical apprenticeship in the Pacific Northwest playing in jazz, Celtic, and old-time country bands, guitarist Scott Nygaard stepped into the national spotlight when he joined Laurie Lewis and Grant Street in 1989. Nygaard made his recording debut on that band's *Singing My Troubles Away* and made his solo debut shortly after that. One of the most versatile and tasteful guitarists on the acoustic music circuit, Nygaard has played since 1992 with acclaimed singer-songwriter Tim O'Brien, touring and recording as one of the O'Boys. He has also done extensive session work, guesting on albums by such artists as Jerry Douglas, Tim and Mollie O'Brien, Linda Waterfall, John Reischman, Tony Furtado, and Sally Van Meter.

what's available: *No Hurry* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Laurie Lewis, Scott Nygaard) illustrates Nygaard's eclecticism, as the all-

instrumental album ranges from the "Irish calypso" of "Mary and the Soldier" to the jazz original "It Happened," with stops along the way for old-time music ("Red Apple Rag" and "Fiddle Tune Medley") and a nod to Clarence White on "Bury Me beneath the Willow." *Dreamer's Waltz* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Scott Nygaard), as diverse as its predecessor but a bit more cohesive, showcases Nygaard (and guests like Tim O'Brien, Jerry Douglas, and Dirk Powell) on a program of mostly Nygaard originals. Standout cuts include "Crawfeet," "The Lost Word," "Beaten to the Puncheon," and the Brazilian choro-influenced "Fog and Flame."

influences:

⏪ Clarence White, Russ Barenberg

⏩ Peter McLaughlin, Chris Thile

Jon Hartley Fox

The Nylons

Formed in 1979, in Toronto, Canada

Paul Cooper (1979–90); Marc Connors (1979–91); Micah Barnes (1991–94); Billy Newton-Davis (1991–94); Claude Morrison, tenor vocals; Arnold Robinson, bass vocals; Garth Mosbaugh, tenor vocals; (1994–present); Gavin Hope, baritone vocals, (1994–present).

Billboard magazine's *Book of American Singing Groups* calls the Nylons "one of the few groups to bring dominant vocal harmony to the American charts in the 1980s." Speaking of their hit "Na Na Hey Hey (Kiss Him Goodbye)," *Billboard* said, "with an a cappella intro at varying tempos, the Nylons launched into three minutes and 23 seconds of possibly the most exciting power-packed harmony and percussion of any record in the '80s." The Nylons were formed in 1979 when Paul Cooper, Marc Conners, and Claude Morrison, three actors from the Toronto theater scene, met up with Arnold Robinson, a native of Wilmington, North Carolina who had been touring with the Sonny Turner Platters. Initially the four started vocalizing at parties, combining their love of classic doo wop with more contemporary material. They were discovered by a local nightclub owner who told them to put together a name and some solid material and they could have a regular spot at his club. They began working at the local dinner club to rave reviews that eventually led to a recording contract with Attic Records. Over the next seven years, the Nylons went on to record six albums for Attic, selling over 2,000,000 records. They are known for their dynamic live performances; on one occasion, when the sound system failed, they were able to sing effectively to 15,000 hushed fans who broke into a roaring ovation at the conclusion of their number. After almost a decade of success, Cooper, the group's most prolific songwriter, got tired of touring and decided to leave. He was replaced by Micah Barnes. In 1991 Marc Connors died. He had been the driving force behind the group's onstage persona, which featured multiple costume changes, dramatic stage sets, and razor-sharp choreography. Less than a month later, the Nylons were back on stage with new member Billy Newton-Davis. They signed a new record deal with Los Angeles–based Scotti Bros. Records and went after a younger audience, experimenting with rap, funk, and rhythm and blues songs. In 1994 Barnes and Newton-Davis returned to solo careers and were replaced by Garth Mosbaugh, a cast member from the Toronto productions of *Miss Saigon* and *Les Miserables,* and Gavin Hope, who had worked with the a cappella group the Earthtones.

what to buy: *Fabric of Life* ♪♪♪♪ (Primarily A Capella Records, 1997, prod. Ian Prince, Garth Mosbaugh) features some of the best grooves of their career, including "I Can't Go for That" and "Monkey," as well as an extraordinary rhythm and blues version of the Beatles' "Let It Be." One of the most heralded vocal groups in the world, the Nylons continue to provide dazzling harmonies and smooth, sophisticated arrangements.

what to buy next: *Run for Cover* ♪♪♪½ (Attic Productions, 1994, prod. Peter Mann) marked a return to the Nylons' roots—a capella work with only the bare bones of rhythm tracks—and features renditions of the Beatles' "Lady Madonna" and the Beach Boys' "God Only Knows." *Perfect Fit* ♪♪♪ (Attic Productions, 1997, prod. various) is a compilation of 14 tunes originally released in the 1980s.

the rest:

The Nylons ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1982)
One Size Fits All ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1982)
Seamless ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1984)
Happy Together ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1987)
Rockapella ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1989)
4 on the Floor ♪♪♪ (Attic Records, 1991)
Live to Love ♪♪♪ (BMG/Scotti Bros, 1992)
The Best of the Nylons ♪♪♪ (BMG/Windham Hill, 1993)
Harmony ♪♪♪ (BMG/Scotti Bros, 1994/1997)
Because ♪♪♪ (BMG Scotti Bros, 1994)
The Nylons ♪♪♪ (BMG/Windham Hill, 1995)
Hits of the '60s A Capella Style ♪♪♪½ (BMG/Scotti Bros, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Chiffons, Beatles, Shirelles

⏩ Boyz II Men, Take 6

Neal Walters

Laura Nyro

Born Laura Nigro, October 18, 1947, in the Bronx, NY. Died of cancer, April 8, 1997.

One of the best and brightest songwriters of the late '60s, Nyro is essential listening for anyone seeking out the roots of rock's singer-songwriter movement. Nyro was a mere 18 years old when she recorded her first album, *More Than a New Discovery*, a remarkable debut that showcased her prodigious musical talent and gutsy, swooping voice. Throughout a 30-year career, Nyro has written and released a sterling catalog of angst-bearing, confessional music inflected with R&B, soul, and gospel touches. While she has had only one recording reach the Top 100 (her cover of the Drifters' "Up on the Roof" in 1970), her own songs have been major hits for artists such as Barbra Streisand ("Stoney End"), the 5th Dimension ("Wedding Bell Blues"), Blood, Sweat & Tears ("And When I Die"), and Three Dog Night ("Eli's Coming"). With her 1971 album *Gonna Take a Miracle*, Nyro became one of the first rock-era songwriters to release an album of cover material in tribute to past mentors.

what to buy: Basically a re-release of Nyro's 1966 debut album, *The First Songs* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1973, prod. Milton Okun) is a remarkable debut from an 18-year-old woman whose wisdom, voice, and talent belie her years. Featuring numerous songs that later became hits for other artists ("Wedding Bell Blues," "And When I Die," "Flim Flam Man," and "Stoney End"), the album spins out a continuous stream of first-class, introspective music. Another bona fide classic, *New York Tendaberry* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1969, prod. Laura Nyro, Roy Halee) is the culmination of the style Nyro began developing on her debut, a dramatic *noir* journey through love and its loss. Supporting her expressive vocal work with piano and delicate instrumental accompaniment, she explores a vast spectrum of human emotions with music that memorably touches the core of expression.

what to buy next: *Eli & the 13th Confession* ♪♪♪♪ (Sony, 1968, prod. Charlie Calello, Laura Nyro) is a mini-progression from *The First Songs*. Nyro is more soulful and more introspective, presenting a stellar collection of memorable songs that range from R&B ("Stoned Soul Picnic") to gospel ("Poverty Train") and powerful ballads ("Lonely Women"). Nyro changed the pace on her fourth album, *Gonna Take a Miracle* ♪♪♪♪ (Sony, 1971, prod. Leon Gamble, Kenny Huff), teaming with soul-funk group Labelle for joyful and inspired readings of 1960s R&B hits such as "Jimmy Mack," "Spanish Harlem," and "Nowhere to Run."

what to avoid: Although Nyro's work can never be considered weak, *Mother's Spiritual* ♪♪ (Line, 1984, prod. Laura Nyro) is not among her best works. The urgent passion of her earlier music is replaced here by a cooler, more politically attuned sensibility that's respectable but not compelling.

the rest:

Smile ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1976)
Live at the Bottom Line ♪♪♪ (Cypress, 1990)
Walk the Dog & Light the Light ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1993)
Stoned Soul Picnic: Best Of . . . ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1997)

worth searching for: At the height of Nyro's comeback during the late '70s, Columbia Records planned a double LP of Nyro performing her greatest hits in concert with an all-star lineup. By the time the album was released as *Season of Lights* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977), it had been trimmed back to a single live LP featuring 10 songs that had been significantly rearranged from their studio versions. The two-album set can be found on bootleg.

influences:

◀◀ Joan Baez, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan, Labelle, Carole King, Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell, Aretha Franklin

▶▶ Todd Rundgren, Barbra Streisand, Carole King, Fifth Dimension, Blood, Sweat & Tears, Randy Newman, Rickie Lee Jones, Carly Simon, Chaka Kahn, Des'ree, Alanis Morissette

Christopher Scapelliti

Tim O'Brien /Tim & Mollie O'Brien

Born March 16, 1954 in Wheeling, WV.

Tim O'Brien was the leader of the traditional bluegrass band Hot Rize (and their humorous, more countrified alter-egos Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers) from 1978 to 1992. He later went on to record with guitarist Scott Nygaard and bassist Mark Schatz as Tim O'Brien and the O'Boys, and through the years with sister Mollie, whose soulful voice found a perfect harmony with her brother's clear-as-a-bell tenor. The pair have both moved in bluegrass and folk circles for years, involving themselves in their own solo and duet recordings, as well as those of other artists, whether in a writing or singing capacity. Their

blended family harmony is a precious thing, and their albums together are a rare, enjoyable treat.

what to buy: *Oh Boy! O'Boy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Jerry Douglas), recorded with the O'Boys, is a stellar album. Mary Chapin Carpenter lends subtle harmonies to the aching and tender "Time to Learn." There's also a foreshadowing of Tim's Dylan full album tribute with the inclusion of "When I Paint My Masterpiece."

what to buy next: Tim and Mollie's *Away out on the Mountain* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Tim O'Brien) is the finest of their duet CDs. Its standouts include two Gillian Welch covers, "Wichita" and "Orphan Girl."

the rest:
Hard Year Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)
(With Mollie O'Brien) *Take Me Back* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Odd Man In ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991)
Remember Me ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993)
Rock in My Shoe ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1995)
Red on Blonde ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)
When No One's Around ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

solo outings:
Mollie O'Brien:
Tell It True ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

influences:
Hot Rize, New Grass Revival
John Gorka, Maura O'Connell

see also: *Hot Rize*

Stephen L. Betts

Phil Ochs

Born December 19, 1940, in El Paso, TX. Died April 9, 1976, Far Rockaway, NY.

Phil Ochs remains an enigma more than two decades after his death. He loved John Wayne flicks, country music, and rock and roll, but became a folk singer. He went to military school, but became a radical. He loved John F. Kennedy, but despised the social order Kennedy represented. He wanted fame and fortune, but chose a path that could never give it to him. As a college journalist at Ohio State University, Ochs began to write regularly. Soon a friendship with a folk-music enthusiast led him to learn to play guitar and write songs, all infused with his growing interest in left-wing politics. In 1962, with just months to go before graduating, he left school for Greenwich Village. There, he set out to make his mark on the scene that was heady with a "folk music boom." Ochs recorded a number of songs included on folk compilations before he was signed to Elektra Records in 1963. He recorded three albums dominated by protest songs for that label, all the while pulling for Bob Dylan to become a major rock star. Ochs even defended Dylan's stylistic jumps against attacks by outraged folk fans. Dylan insulted Ochs as being nothing but a journalist, but there are wells of emotion and insight in Ochs's music that belie that. Ochs suffered from depression that may have been passed down genetically from his dad, and that probably factored into his inability to turn the corner toward greater popularity. Certainly, "There but for Fortune" and "Changes" showed he was capable of going there. When Ochs moved to A&M records in 1967, his lyrical direction was more poetic and his musical direction orchestral. Part of this was the flavor of the day, but Ochs had always done more than point fingers. For instance, he set Edgar Allen Poe's "The Bells" and Alfred Noyes's "The Highway Man" to music on his first two albums, and "There but for Fortune," with its empathy and neutral politics, also came from the protest days. He went through one other major stylistic change, trying to work a down-home, Elvis Presley approach in 1970. In theory, this finally would bring Ochs in touch with the real people that his protest songs had been about. In practice, it alienated his old folk audience and drew almost no one outside that small circle. It also ended his recording career. Ochs's version of "The Highway Man" may actually be one of the most telling in his catalog. Obviously, a tale of rebellious people should appeal to a protest singer. Perhaps more important is that it's about a romantic who throws his life away in a burst of passion. In his last days, at the end of a five-year downward spiral, with a voice permanently damaged by a mugging in Africa, without a recording contract, and with no firm direction for his muse, Ochs must have felt defeated. Whether in final protest or in a burst of passion, he hung himself on April 9, 1976.

what to buy: Sadly, most of the albums Ochs released in his lifetime are out of print. Of the "protest" albums available, *I Ain't Marching Anymore* ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1965/Hannibal, 1995, prod. Jac Holzman) offers a glimpse of Ochs hitting his stride. And what a stride! Ochs crafted his greatest anthem, "I Ain't Marching Anymore," and his best lampoon, "Draft Dodger Rag." (Note too, that despite the pacifism of the former, he blasts the draft dodger's lack of moral rectitude in the latter.) The non-protest songs—"That Was the President," "The Highway Man," "Hills of West Virginia," and "The Men behind the

Guns"—are finely sensitive, and Ochs's voice becomes unusually tender at times. There's nothing of politics when he sings of JFK, "a man so full of life, even death was caught off guard." *In Concert* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1966/Rhino, 1995, prod. Mark Abramson, Jac Holzman) was not a collection of favorites from the past but Ochs's latest pack of tunes when it was released. The set list was strong, starting out with the cocksure "I'm Going to Say It Now" and ending with the melancholy "When I'm Gone." In between those bookends are "There but for Fortune," "Changes," and "Love Me, I'm a Liberal." *Farewells & Fantasies* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Elektra Traditions/Rhino, 1997, comp. prod. Gary Stewart, Michael Ochs, Megan Lee Ochs), a three-CD set, gathers work from his entire major-label career. Every standout tune is here (in fact, all of *In Concert* is here), as well as the long-out-of-print electric version of "I Ain't Marching Anymore" and some previously unissued cuts. More importantly, the set captures the arc of his career—the way his initial optimism and fire gave way to intimations of despair.

what to buy next: *All the News That's Fit to Sing* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1964/Hannibal, 1994, prod. Jac Holzman) finds Ochs just shy of the standard he soon would set for himself. Nonetheless it's a good album with evergreen songs such as "One More Parade," "The Bells," and "Bound for Glory" balancing out the more timely (and somewhat more disposable) songs such as "Talking Vietnam" and "Talking Cuban Crisis." *There but for Fortune* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1989, comp. prod. Michael Ochs) compiles Ochs's first three albums, but unless your budget is tight, it's superseded by *Farewells & Fantasies*. With some important exceptions, the same might be said of *The War Is Over: The Best of Phil Ochs* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1988, prod. Jeffrey Gold, Geoffrey Schulman), which compiles songs from the A&M albums. It also includes two non-album rarities: "Kansas City Bomber," Ochs's rejected attempt to write a theme for the Raquel Welch movie, and a live version of "I Ain't Marching Anymore" from the 1968 Toronto Peace Festival. *A Toast to Those Who Are Gone* ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1986, prod. Michael Ochs) allows listeners to peer into the head of the budding protest writer. It's a collection of demos circa 1964 that are almost as strong as the material he officially released on Elektra.

the rest:

The Broadside Tapes, Volume I ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1963)
There and Now: Live in Vancouver ♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1991)
Live at Newport ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1996)
Fairwells & Fantasies N/A (Rhino, 1998)

worth searching for: *Pleasures of the Harbor* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1967, prod. Larry Marks), *Tape from California* ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1968, prod. Larry Marks), and *Rehearsals for Retirement* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1969, prod. Larry Marks) are all worth a search for the original vinyl. *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1970/Edsel, 1993, prod. Van Dyke Parks), the album on which Ochs tried to channel a still-living Elvis, is available as a CD on the import label Edsel. Another must is *Gunfight at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M Canada, 1974, prod. Phil Ochs), the live album, recorded in 1970, that's a startlingly frank chronicle of how his audience reacted to Ochs in gold lame.

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Bob Gibson, Elvis Presley

▶▶ Billy Bragg, John Wesley Harding

Salvatore Caputo

Maura O'Connell

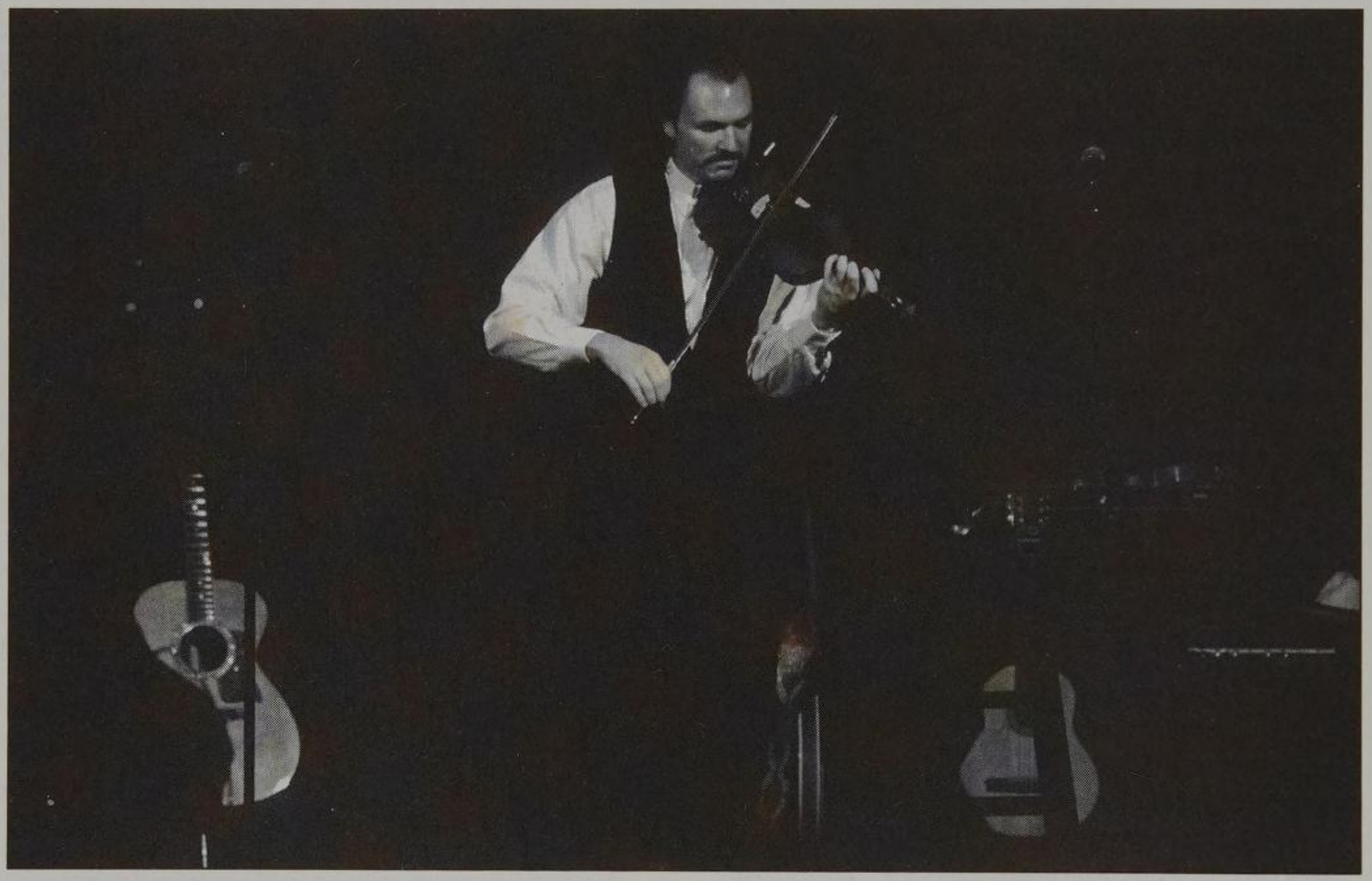
Born September 16, 1958, in Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland.

Blessed with a rich, powerful voice and a talent for finding excellent songs and rendering them with heartfelt poignancy, Maura O'Connell is one of country music's finest singers, though her insistence on exploring the full range of country music's possibilities has meant she has often been overlooked within the narrowest center of the Nashville mainstream. O'Connell first rose to prominence with the Irish band De Danann, recording on its album *Star Spangled Molly*, and became a celebrity in her home country before moving to Nashville in 1987 and falling in with the likes of New Grass Revival and other boundary-pushing pickers within the city's acoustic music scene. After a debut album on Rounder, O'Connell was picked up by Warner Bros. for three albums before settling at Rykodisc/Hannibal.

what to buy: *Helpless Heart* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1989, prod. Béla Fleck) remains O'Connell's most endearing effort; Paul Brady's "Helpless Heart" became a signature song of sorts for her, while versions of Nanci Griffith's "Trouble in the Fields" and Karla Bonoff's "Isn't It Always Love" gave the originals a run for their money. Gerry O'Beirne's stunningly beautiful "Western Highway" is the best single song she's done to date. *A Real Life Story* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1990, prod. Greg Penny) featured an intriguing version of Tom Waits's "Broken Bicycles" as well as first-rate selections by John Hiatt, Shawn Colvin, and Hugh Prestwood.

what to buy next: *Blue Is the Colour of Hope* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1992, prod. Jerry Douglas) is highlighted by the slowly

602 *mark o'connor*



Mark O' Connor **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

burning "Blue Train" and also features songs written by Mary Chapin Carpenter and the team of Paul Carrack and John Wesley Harding. The standout on *Stories* ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc/Hannibal, 1995, prod. Jerry Douglas) is a gorgeous version of the Lennon/McCartney staple "If I Fell."

what to avoid: *Just in Time* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1988, prod. Béla Fleck) didn't live up to O'Connell's potential in terms of either song selection or the quality of her singing.

the rest:
Wandering Home ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc/Hannibal, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Dolores Keane, Linda Ronstadt, New Grass Revival

⏩ Eleanor McEvoy, Niamh Parsons

see also: *De Danann*

Peter Blackstock

Mark O'Connor

Born August 5, 1961, in Seattle, WA.

Few musicians have done as much to blur the lines between what is perceived as high and low art as has Mark O'Connor. A child prodigy on the fiddle, O'Connor is also master of the mandolin, guitar, and other instruments, and he has used them to play bluegrass, country, jazz, rock, fusion, classical, and all kinds of music in between. For years O'Connor was part of Nashville's A-Team of session players, and his credit can be found on literally hundreds of recordings made during the last couple of decades. As a solo artist he has been responsible for bringing divergent constituencies together in the recording studio and the concert hall, and for breaking down barriers between genres. A noble cause, perhaps, but the results sound great, too.

what to buy: At once a celebration of the Music City's session scene and his declaration of independence from it, *The New*

Nashville Cats ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1991, prod. Mark O'Connor, Jim Ed Norman) marked O'Connor's "retirement" from playing sessions in favor of playing his own music. *Cats* features a stellar cast, including Vince Gill, Steve Wariner, Ricky Skaggs, Béla Fleck, and Marty Stuart, plus lots of other musicians whose names you might not recognize, but whose work you've heard hundreds of times. *Heroes* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1993, prod. Mark O'Connor) takes O'Connor's genre-busting mission to a higher level, bringing him together with his favorite players from across the musical spectrum, including Jean-Luc Ponty, Bill Monroe, L. Shankar, Pinchas Zuckerman, Stephane Grappelli, Vassar Clements, Johnny Gimble, and others. The music ranges from a playful "Ain't Misbehavin'" (with Grappelli) to a beautiful reading of "Ashokan Farewell" (with Zukerman) to a scorching treatment of Charlie Daniels's "The Devil Came Back to Georgia" (with Daniels, Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, and Johnny Cash).

what to buy next: For fans willing to dabble a little in classical music, look no further than *Appalachia Waltz* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sony Classical, 1996, prod. Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor), a triumphant collaboration with world-class cellist Yo Yo Ma and noted composer/bassist Edgar Meyer. The album mixes Celtic and Texas fiddle traditions with classical music in ways that are accessible, yet instructive. O'Connor's title track is intoxicatingly beautiful. If you get past that recording, try *The Fiddle Concerto* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1995, prod. Mark O'Connor). After all, are there two words that bespeak a hybrid of different styles any more than "fiddle" and "concerto"?

what to avoid: The early recording *On the Rampage* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1979) is a lesser light in a largely stellar catalog.

the rest:
Markology ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978)
Soppin' the Gravy ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979)
False Dawn ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1982)
Stone from Which the Arch Was Made ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1987)
Retrospective ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
Elysian Forest ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1988)
On the Mark ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1989)
The Championship Years ♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1990)
Liberty! Original Soundtrack ♪♪♪½ (Sony Classical)

influences:
◀◀ Benny Thomasson, Vassar Clements, L. Shankar, Johnny Gimble, Stephane Grappelli
▶▶ Rob Hajacos, Chris Thile, Luke & Jenny Anne Bulla, Kenny Kosek

Daniel Durchholz

Martin O'Connor

See: De Danann

Molly O'Day

Born July 9, 1923, in McVeigh, KY. Died December 5, 1987, in Huntington, WV.

Molly O'Day's legend is based on 36 songs recorded for Columbia between 1946 and 1951, when she renounced a successful recording and performing career to devote her life to her faith. With her powerful, evocative, and sincere vocal style, she excelled at sentimental ballads and traditional songs of Appalachia. O'Day was an early interpreter of Hank Williams's work, recorded the most popular version of the classic "Tramp on the Street," and many other old time and gospel standards, not a few of which have entered the bluegrass repertoire as standards, including "The Drunken Driver," "At the First Fall of Snow," "Matthew 24," "Too Late, Too Late," "The Evening Train," "Poor Ellen Smith," and "Teardrops Falling in the Snow." After her last Columbia session in 1951, she vowed never to perform in public outside church again, although she and husband and performing partner Lynn Davis maintained a radio ministry for many years.

what's available: *Molly O'Day & the Cumberland Mountain Folks* ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1992, prod. Art Satherly) contains all 36 songs recorded for Columbia. Definitive.

influences:
◀◀ Lulubelle & Scotty, Lilly May Ledford
▶▶ Hazel Dickens, Laurie Lewis

Randy Pitts

Odetta

Born Odetta Gordon, December 31, 1930, in Birmingham, AL.

Odetta is one of folk music's most influential performers. Since the late 1950s, her soulful vocals and musicologist-like repertoire of folk songs, blues, gospel hymns, and work songs have inspired everyone from Joan Baez and Sweet Honey in the Rock to Tracy Chapman and Whitney Houston. Accompanying herself on the acoustic guitar that she affectionately calls "baby," Odetta has embodied a continuing link to the traditional melodies and spirit of the Afro-American experience. Odetta, who grew up in San Francisco, studied classical piano and operatic singing as a youngster. She turned her focus to folk music shortly after performing as an actress in a touring pro-

604 *eugene o'donnell*

duction of *Finian's Rainbow.* Performing in Bay Area clubs, she began to attract critical acclaim. Following a year-long engagement at the Tin Angel, she was booked for a two-week stand at the Blue Angel in New York. From the moment she hit the Big Apple, Odetta was embraced by the folk community. Harry Belafonte featured her during his ground-breaking concerts at Carnegie Hall, while Pete Seeger invited her to be a guest performer at his Town Hall shows. For the next two decades, she continued to be one of folk music's best-loved artists and released 19 top-selling recordings. A live album recorded in 1986 in Wisconsin, *Movin' It On* marked her first release in 12 years.

Odetta has appeared in several movies, including *The Last Time I Saw Paris, Cinema Holiday,* and *Sanctuary,* as well as in the TV film *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman.*

what to buy: Recorded during a November, 1986, concert at the Union Theater in Madison, Wisconsin, *Movin' On* ♪♪♪♪ (Rose Quartz, 1987, prod. Elizabeth Karlin) was Odetta's first album in 12 years. A mixture of traditional folk and blues tunes including "Sail Away Ladies," "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," "Take This Hammer," "House of the Rising Sun," and "This Little Light of Mine," the album hearkens back to the eclectic sounds of her earliest work.

what to buy next: With the release of *My Eyes Have Seen* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1959/1994), Odetta furthered the acclaim she had received with her performances at Chicago's Town Hall and her impressive debut album, *Ballads and Blues* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1956). Accompanying herself on guitar and joined by Bill Lee on string bass, she displays the depths of her repertoire and the power of her vocals with soulful renditions of traditional folk songs, including "Motherless Children," "I Know Where I'm Going," "Saro Jane," and "No More Cane on the Brazos." The album, which features liner notes by Harry Belafonte, includes a studio version of Odetta's unique medley of the American folksongs "I've Been Driving on Bald Mountain" and "Water Boy."

the rest:

Sometimes I Feel like Cryin' ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1960)
Sings of Many Things ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1961)
It's a Mighty World ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1962)
And the Blues ♪♪♪ (Riverside, 1962)
At Town Hall ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1962)
Odetta ♪♪♪½ (Verve, 1963)
Sings Folk Songs ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1963)
One Grain of Sand ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1963)
At the Gate of Horn ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1964/1998)
Sings Dylan ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1965)
The Ballad for Americans and other American Ballads ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
In Japan ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
Odetta ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
Best Of Odetta ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967)
At Carnegie Hall ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967)
Sings the Blues ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1968)
Golden Odetta ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1972)
Christmas Spirituals ♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1988)
The Essential ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1989)

worth searching for: Odetta's live version of "I Gotta Be Me" is included on *Philadelphia Folk Festival* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978). Two songs—"I've Been Driving on Bald Mountain/Water Boy" and "A Hole in the Bucket"—recorded during her ground-breaking 1960 guest performance are included on the album *Belafonte Returns to Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1961, prod. Bob Bollard).

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Mahalia Jackson, Harry Belafonte

▶▶ Tracy Chapman, Joan Armatrading

Craig Harris

Eugene O'Donnell

Born 1932, in Derry City, Northern Ireland.

Frequently in the '80s and '90s, all-star programs of Irish folk musicians would be mounted at schools and theaters on America's East Coast, and the line-up would be full of fast-fingered hot shots. More often than not, though, the show would be stolen by an elderly gentleman with snow white hair and an old wool suit. He couldn't play as fast or as accurately as many of the youngsters, but he played with more feeling than any of them. When he tackled slow airs, he caressed the high notes with a whispery tenderness and dug into the low notes with a hard scrape of the bow, producing an ineffable longing for towns, loves, and years left behind. The man was Eugene O'Donnell, and he had been quite a dancer when he grew up in Northern Ireland. He won six All-Ireland Step-Dancing Championships, was the first Irish dancer to appear on TV in London, and is still a licensed adjudicator for Irish dancing. He immigrated to Philadelphia in the late '50s and soon became the lead fiddler in the city's best Ceili band. He met folklorist/musician Mick Moloney at the 1973 Philadelphia Folk Festival, and Moloney began play-

Odetta **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

liam o'flynn

cajun music

Cajun music is intended for dancing and its steady, solid heartbeat always throbs just beneath the melody. While the jaunty two-steps often catch the ear of the outsider, it is the waltzes that pull at the heart strings of the Cajuns. A band will alternate between the two all night long. Cajuns took their own Acadian songs and added elements from the cultures they assimilated: syncopation and improvisatory singing from their Creole neighbors, blues from African Americans, fiddles from Anglo Americans, guitars from the Spanish, accordions from the Germans, and the whoops and steady beat from Native Americans. Early Cajun music was the sound of two fiddles. Accordions became popular in the 1920s and were paired with fiddles. Fiddle-led string bands dominated the music scene during the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, Cajuns again embraced the accordion, particularly the music of Iry Lejeune. By the late 1960s Cajun culture was being overwhelmed by mainstream America until a cultural revival was spearheaded by Dewey Balfa. His efforts revitalized the music and saw the rise of a new generation of musicians. These younger players have begun to use the mass media to promulgate the sounds of Cajun music throughout the world.

Jared Snyder

ing with the old pro whenever possible. And when Moloney became an informal advisor for Green Linnet Records in Connecticut, he made sure the label documented O'Donnell's under-recorded talent.

what to buy: *Slow Airs & Set Dances* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1978, prod. Mick Moloney) is O'Donnell's best, for it captures him near the peak of his powers and it showcases him prominently. Set against Moloney's spare accompaniment, O'Donnell squeezes all the aching yearning out of traditional Irish slow airs such as "The Celtic Lament." Almost as good is *The Foggy Dew* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Eugene O'Donnell, James MacCafferty). When O'Donnell returned home to Derry City in 1983, he taped a series of fiddle-and-piano duets with his childhood friend James MacCafferty. When those tapes were finally released in 1988, they revealed music of a patient austerity and patent beauty.

what to buy next: O'Donnell joined his two younger Philadelphians, Moloney and Seamus Egan, on *3 Way Street* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Mick Moloney). The old man gets less room in this three-generation showcase, but the mutual admiration and affection among the three men is palpable.

worth searching for: O'Donnell made two more albums with Moloney that haven't yet seen reissue on CD. *Mick Moloney with Eugene O'Donnell* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1978, prod. Patrick Sky) is dominated by Moloney, but O'Donnell's lovely bowing can be heard on nine of the 14 tracks, while American folkie Patrick Sky produced and played tin whistle. *Uncommon Bonds* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1984, prod. Mick Moloney) finds Moloney and O'Donnell playing traditional Irish tunes with a varying assortment of Irish-American and bluegrass musicians, including Egan, Liz Carroll, Robbie O'Connell, and Norman and Nancy Blake.

influences:

⏪ Michael Coleman, Paddy Killoran, James Morrison

⏩ Eileen Ivers, Mick Moloney, Seamus Egan

Geoffrey Himes

Liam O'Flynn /Liam Ó Floinn

Born 1950, in Kill, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

Having first come to prominence as a member of the 1970s Irish group Planxty, but more recently associated with orchestral works like *The Brendan Voyage*, Liam O'Flynn is widely recognized as one of Ireland's finest performers on the uilleann pipes. Born in a musical family, O'Flynn started playing the whistle at an early age and has his first taste of the pipes through the playing of Tom Armstrong. However, he credits Leo Rowsome, Willie Clancy, and Séamus Ennis as his main musical influences. As the folk boom was taking Ireland by storm in the early 1970s, O'Flynn was asked by singer Christy Moore to participate in the making of the album *Prosperous*, featuring Andy Irvine, Dónal Lunny, and a few others as accompanists. After the album came out in 1972, the foursome decided to perform together under the name Planxty. Over the next 10 years, the band went on to record six albums, each featuring O'Flynn's piping prominently. By the

time Planxty broke up in the early 1980s, O'Flynn had become involved in performing the compositions of his good friend Shaun Davey, who was experimenting with bringing together uilleann pipes and symphony orchestra. Recorded in 1980, the first and still the best known of these pieces is *The Brendan Voyage*, evoking the sixth-century sea voyage of St. Brendan, Abbot of Clonfert, to North America. In 1988 O'Flynn finally recorded his first solo album, released on his own label and featuring Seán Keane and Dónal Lunny. *The Fine Art of Piping*, produced for the British company Celtic Music, followed in 1989, and the fine trio album *The Fire Aflame*, with Seán Keane and Matt Molloy, in 1992. O'Flynn's most recent albums, *Out to an Other Side* (1993) and *The Given Note* (1995), which clearly show the influence of the piper's collaboration with Shaun Davey, are no match for his earlier output.

what's available: While O'Flynn's piping is immaculate throughout, his most recent albums, *Out to an Other Side* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1993, prod. Shaun Davey) and *The Given Note* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1995, prod. Shaun Davey), would hardly meet with the approval of traditional music lovers. The influence of O'Flynn's collaboration with Davey is clearly heard in the overwhelmingly busy and popish-sounding arrangements. Although only distantly related to traditional music, Davey's orchestral suites like *The Brendan Voyage* ♪♪♪½ (Tara, 1980, prod. Shaun Davey), *The Pilgrim* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1983, prod. Shaun Davey), *Granuaile* ♪♪♪½ (Tara, 1985, prod. Shaun Davey), and *The Relief of Derry Symphony* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1990, prod. Shaun Davey) have been successful in their own way. On *The Seville Suite* ♪♪♪ (Tara, 1992, prod. Bill Whelan, Dónal Lunny), O'Flynn performs with Andy Irvine and Lunny on "Timedance '92," the piece that was to evolve into Whelan's award-winning show *Riverdance*.

worth searching for: Unfortunately, O'Flynn's best recordings of traditional music remain his earlier ones, therefore the ones hardest to find. During his Planxty heyday, he appeared on Mick Hanly and Mícheál Ó Domhnaill's beautiful *Celtic Folkweave* ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1974, prod. Dónal Lunny). Although there were some experiments with the accompaniment on O'Flynn's first solo LP, *Liam O'Flynn* ♪♪♪½ (LOF, 1988, prod. Dónal Lunny), Lunny's production kept it away from the excesses of the later, Davey-produced albums. *The Fine Art of Piping* ♪♪♪♪½ (Celtic Music, 1989) is just that, excellent solo piping by a master of the instrument. On *The Fire Aflame* ♪♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1992, prod. Seán Keane, Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn) O'Flynn collaborated with Matt Molloy (flute), Séan Keane (fiddle), and Arty McGlynn (guitar) to produce a remarkable album of deftly played traditional music.

influences:

- Tom Armstrong, Leo Rowsome, Seamus Ennis, Willie Clancy
- Mick O'Brien, Jimmy O'Brien-Moran

see also: *Planxty, Seán Keane, Matt Molloy*

Philippe Varlet

editor's choice

18 folk albums from across the usa

Bill Staines, *The Alaska Suite*

Tony Trischka, *A Robot Plane Flies over Arkansas*

Mary McCaslin, *Sunny California*

Norman Blake, *Slow Train through Georgia*

Gabby Pahinui, *The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band*

Greg Brown, *The Iowa Waltz*

Earl Scruggs, *Live at Kansas State*

Bill Monroe, *Kentucky Blue Grass*

Tracy Schwarz, *Louisiana and You*

Mississippi John Hurt, *Best of Mississippi John Hurt*

Bayou Seco, *Songs of New Mexico and Beyond*

Betty Smith, *Songs Traditionally Sung in North Carolina*

Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, *Tennessee Dream*

Bob Wills, *Bob Wills' Texas Playboys (1930s–1940s)*

Deseret String Band, *Utah: Songs of Statehood*

Margaret MacArthur, *Vermont Heritage Songs*

The Carter Family, *Mid the Green Fields of Virginia*

Ginny Hawker and Kay Justice, *Pathway to West Virginia*

Mary Margaret O'Hara

Born in Toronto, Canada.

Mary Margaret O'Hara is Canada's *other* kinda arty/kinda country cult figure. In contrast to k.d. lang, however, O'Hara is a little less country and a lot cultier. Think Patsy Cline crossed with David Byrne. The sister of SCTV comedienne Catherine O'Hara, Mary Margaret began her music career after graduating from Ontario Art College. After first playing first with a band called Dollars and then leading the Go Deo Chorus, of which she was a member from 1976–83, O'Hara landed a solo deal with Virgin Records. Her debut, *Miss America*, was released in 1988. It received critical acclaim that's grown only more fervent with time. (It was named one of the best 100 albums of all time in a 1995 *Mojo* critics poll.) In addition, O'Hara's debut has been championed by the likes of Kristen Hersh, Morrissey, and Michael Stipe. R.E.M.'s frontman has called her "one of the most powerful singers I've ever heard." *Miss America*, however, didn't sell well. O'Hara adopted a low profile through most of the '90s, appearing as a guest on albums by Morrissey, Gary Lucas, This Mortal Coil, and John & Mary. Through the years, she's also made infrequent film appearances (*The Hunter, Candy Mountain, The Events Leading up to My Death*). She stepped from the shadows during the mid-'90s with the reissue of *Miss America* and 1991's *Christmas E.P.* She contributed to *Sweet Relief 2: The Songs of Vic Chesnutt* and sang on two albums by the Canadian group the Henrys.

what to buy: *Miss America* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1988/KOCH International, 1996, prod. Mary Margaret O'Hara, Michael Brook) finds O'Hara exploring a variety of environments, from torch music to quirky rock that recalls mid-period Talking Heads. She's most at home with such drifting stream-of-consciousness originals as the intoxicating "Body's in Trouble" and the romantically obsessed "Help Me Lift You Up." O'Hara's vocals are theatrical yet conversational. She dwells on words and phrases, stuttering through them with singular intensity.

what to buy next: *Christmas E.P.* ♪♪♪♪ (KOCH International, 1996, prod. Mary Margaret O'Hara), a brief seasonal treat, is the only follow-up to *Miss America*. Recorded in 1991 but first available in the United States in 1996, *Christmas E.P.* consists of one original (the simple but insistent "Christmas Evermore"), plus incandescent treatments of "Blue Christmas," "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?," and "Silent Night." All are calm, all are bright.

influences:

◀◀ Patti Smith, Marianne Faithfull

▶▶ Throwing Muses, Tanya Donnelly

Steven Stolder

Old Blind Dogs

Formed 1990 in Aberdeen, Scotland.

Jonny Hardie, fiddle, mandolin, bouzouki, guitar, backing vocals; Buzzby McMillan, cittern, electric bass, whistle, backing vocals; Fraser Fifield (1996–present), border pipes, soprano saxophone, whistles; Davy Cattanach, percussion, backing vocals; Ian F. Benzie, guitar, lead vocals.

The group Old Blind Dogs blends Scottish tunes and instrumentation with Eastern-flavored percussion. The distinctive percussion is credited to Davy Cattanach, who cut his teeth on reggae, rock, and blues before joining Old Blind Dogs. Cattanach's arsenal includes djembe and congas, neither of which is commonly found in northern Scotland. Jonny Hardie's driving fiddle and Buzzby McMillan's bass add to the strength of the band's rhythms. Lead vocalist Ian F. Benzie has a 30-year musical career that began in the Scottish folk revival.

what's available: *Five* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Lochshore, 1997, prod. Old Blind Dogs, Niall Mathewson) opens with the evocative instrumental "Trip to Pakistan" and moves through a choice collection of songs and tunes, highlighted by "Parcel of Rogues," with Benzie's dreamlike vocal. *Legacy* ♪♪♪♪ (KRL, 1995, prod. Old Blind Dogs, Niall Mathewson) is somewhat more traditional.

influences:

◀◀ Archie Fisher, Scott Skinner, Silly Wizard

▶▶ Whirligig

Pamela Murray Winters

Old & in the Way

See: Grateful Dead, David Grisman

David Olney

Born March 23, 1948, in Providence, RI.

One of Nashville's most revered writers among his peers, David Olney is a master storyteller, inhabiting his characters the way an actor who specializes in villains assumes his roles. His songs may be sarcastic or simply funny, acerbic or tender, and the qualities play off one against another, adding depth to each emotion. Olney's one-time band, the X-Rays, achieved local cult status before breaking up in the mid-1980s, and he's spent the

last decade performing primarily solo. His songs aren't often recorded by Nashville's stars, but the occasional discriminating judge of material—Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt among them—will cover his songs.

what to buy: *Deeper Well* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1988, prod. Thomas Goldsmith, Joe Fleming) is a stunning album, not just because the songs are great (they are), but because of the kinds of song they are. In "Jerusalem Tomorrow," Olney writes a song about a religious charlatan during Jesus's time that resonates through the centuries without ever leaving the era. Harris recorded his "Deeper Well," and Ronstadt recorded "Women across the River"—two very different songs about the quest for wisdom.

what to buy next: *Roses* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Tommy Goldsmith, Jim Rooney) is more blues-oriented than most of Olney's albums, but he carries it off well in a variety of settings, from the brutal humor of "Luckiest Man" to the Southern-raised rock 'n' roll of "Lee's Highway/Bamaloo." The album also contains versions of Robert Johnson's "Last Fair Deal" and Townes Van Zandt's "Rex's Blues."

what to avoid: From about 1978 to 1985, Olney fronted a bar band called the X-Rays. The one album he recorded under that name, *Contender* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1981/1995), has some moderately clever songs, but the band is uninspired, making *Contender* sound like a third-rate Springsteen pretender.

the rest:
Eye of the Storm ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1987/1996)
High, Wide, and Lonesome ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1995)
Live in Holland ♪♪♪ (Strictly Country, 1995)
Real Lies ♪♪½ (Philo, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Randy Newman, Guy Clark, John Prine, Townes Van Zandt
▶▶ Steve Earle, Tom Russell, Kevin Welch

Brian Mansfield

Kristina Olsen

Born May 26, 1957, in San Francisco, CA.

Kristina Olsen is proud of her heritage as a California flower child. Her music and manner are unabashedly warm and inviting. Olsen is a folk singer in the most literal sense of "folk"; even in the throes of bluesy longing, her voice and delivery draw the listener into the circle. She's a skilled interpreter of blues songs, often accompanying herself on steel guitar; one of her best is "Come on in My Kitchen" by Robert Johnson by way of David Bromberg. Her own compositions have improved over the years, demonstrating her good sense for a clever turn of phrase. Although touring extensively and internationally, Olsen has still found time to record an album with Australian cellist Peter Grayling.

what to buy: *Live from around the World* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1997, prod. various) is almost as good as attending an Olsen concert. It includes many of her best-known songs—"Come on in My Kitchen," "Your Little Brother Sure Can Dance," "Better than TV," and "Cry You a Waterfall"—interspersed with her offbeat stories about being a traveling musician.

what to buy next: Olsen has three studio albums. *Love, Kristina* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1993, prod. Nina Gerber) reveals a talented performer in search of a direction. "The Power of Loving You" is a Hallmark card from a straight woman to her gay friends, and "Keeping This Life of Mine" places the protagonist in an abusive relationship, but neither song quite convinces. The final two songs suggest Olsen's best path. "This Bed of Ours" is an understated torch song; "Live Man in the Dead of Night" fills that troubled bed quite nicely. *Hurry on Home* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1995, prod. Nina Gerber) is a rather somber offering. "Love Is a Sometimes Thing" and "Love Isn't Safe" are both strong compositions delivered with heart and soul, and all of the compositions show a marked growth in her songwriting skill.

the rest:
Kristina Olsen ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Joan Baez, Mance Lipscomb, David Bromberg, John Prine
▶▶ Joan Osborne

Pamela Murray Winters

The Osborne Brothers

Formed 1953, in KY.

Bobby Osborne (born December 7, 1931, in Hyden, KY), mandolin, vocals; Sonny Osborne (born October 29, 1937, in Hyden, KY), banjo, vocals.

One of the few bluegrass acts to have a mainstream country following, Bobby and Sonny Osborne's progressive approach to their music—they used electric guitar, pedal steel, drums, even strings when it suited their purposes—brought them a number of radio hits during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Before the

group formed in 1953, Bobby played with the Lonesome Pine Fiddlers while Sonny backed Bill Monroe and Jimmy Martin. Once together, the brothers went after any audience they could find: They joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1964, but also frequented college campuses and folk festivals. The duo's widespread appeal even brought them the Country Music Association's award for vocal group of the year in 1971. Since leaving Decca, where they had most of their hits, for independent labels, the Osborne Brothers' music has grown more traditional. It's still not without its surprises, though; the group has recorded albums of songs associated with songwriters Felice and Boudleaux Bryant (1977's *From Rocky Top to Muddy Bottom*) and Ernest Tubb (1995's *The Ernest Tubb Song Folio, Volume I*). The roster has changed frequently behind the two brothers; some of the more prominent members of their backup band have included Bennie Birchfield, Ronnie Reno, Gene Wooten, and Bobby Osborne Jr.

what to buy: *Best of the Osborne Brothers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1982) is a great collection of the group's recordings made during their peak commercial period, with all the hits: "Rocky Top," "Georgia Pineywoods," "Tennessee Hound Dog," and "The Kind of Woman I Got." Even today, the Osborne's cross-pollination of bluegrass and electric country ideas sounds adventurous.

what to buy next: With most, if not all, of their Decca catalog out of print by the early 1990s, the Osbornes decided to revisit some of the songs they'd made during their stay at the label. *Once More, Volumes I & II* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. Sonny Osborne) combines the two *Once More* albums issued separately and puts them on one CD with more than an hour of music. Singles like "Rocky Top" and "The Kind of Woman I Got" aren't here, but Osborne favorites like "My Favorite Memory," "I'll Be Alright Tomorrow," and "Blue Moon of Kentucky" are. The sound is more traditional, but this is still a fine, well-stocked collection.

the rest:
From Rocky Top to Muddy Bottom ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1977/1991)
Bluegrass Collection ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1978/1989)
The Osborne Brothers and Mac Wiseman ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1979/1987)
I Can Hear Kentucky Calling Me ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1980)
Once More, Volume I ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1986)
Once More, Volume II ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1987)
Singing, Shouting Praises ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Hillbilly Fever ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1991)
When the Roses Bloom in Dixieland ♪♪♪ (Pinecastle, 1994)
Our Favorite Hymns ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1995)
The Ernest Tubb Song Folio, Volume I ♪♪♪½ (Pinecastle, 1995)
Greatest Bluegrass Hits, Volume 1 ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1996)
Country Bluegrass ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1996)
Class of '96 ♪♪♪½ (Pinecastle, 1996)
Some Things I Want to Sing About ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill)
#1 ♪♪♪½ (CMH)
Bluegrass Concerto ♪♪♪½ (CMH)
Bobby and His Mandolin ♪♪♪½ (CMH)

worth searching for: The CD single "Rocky Top '96" ♪♪♪ (Decca, 1996, remix prod. Scott Rouse) contains the original 1968 version plus three re-mixes by Scott Rouse.

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Jimmy Martin
▶▶ New Grass Revival, Diamond Rio

Brian Mansfield

Ossian

Formed 1976, in Glasgow, Scotland. Disbanded 1991; re-formed 1997.

Billy Ross, vocals, guitar, dulcimer, whistle; George Jackson, cittern, mandolin, fiddle, whistle, flute, guitar, vocals; John Martin, fiddle, cello, vocals; William Jackson, harp, uilleann pipes, whistles, vocals, bass, synthesizer, piano, bodhrán; Tony Cuffe, vocals, guitar, tiple; Iain MacDonald, bagpipes, flute, whistle, jew's harp, vocals; Stuart Morison, fiddle, cittern, mandolin, vocals; Iain MacInnes, Scottish smallpipes, whistles; other members, including Maggie MacInnes, harp, vocals; Norman Chalmers, concertina, harp, whistles, vocals.

Named after the bard of the Fianna in Celtic mythology, and at the same time after one of Scotland's most famous and infamous works of literature, the folk band Ossian was a gentler alternative to the fiery Tannahill Weavers and the electrified Battlefield Band for the entire 1980s and a couple of years more. The group grew out of Glaswegian folk-rock group Contraband, which included John Martin, George Jackson, and William "Billy" Jackson. These three, plus singer Billy Ross, comprised Ossian's original lineup, which formed in 1976 and established the band's trademark sound, a soft, classically informed, and subtle style that could nonetheless burn with intensity. In 1980 Ross was replaced by singer and guitarist Tony Cuffe, a veteran of such groups as Alba and Jock Tamson's Bairns. Cuffe's voice and full, round guitar-playing became further hallmarks of the group. To complete its growth, Ossian added one final distinctive ingredient in 1982: the sensitive highland pipe and flute playing of Iain MacDonald.

Apart from one tour on which William Jackson was replaced by Maggie MacInnes because of a broken hand, this classic Oss-

ian lineup remained constant until 1990, when Jackson and Cuffe both moved to the United States. At that point, although Ossian did not break up right away, several of the band members sought new opportunities and, as a result, George Jackson and William Jackson were sometimes not available to tour with them. They were replaced for those tours by multi-instrumentalist Norman Chalmers. Although Ossian remained together for a short time after that, the pressures on a band based in two countries ultimately won out and they broke up. After a short time Martin was recruited into the Tannahill Weavers and MacDonald into the Battlefield Band, while Cuffe and William Jackson performed as solo artists. Ossian was reborn in 1997, when the group Smalltalk, composed of Ross, Iain MacInnes, and Stuart Morison, added William Jackson, who had since moved back to Scotland, to its membership. Although only Jackson and Ross were former members of Ossian (MacInnes and Morison having passed through the ranks of that other Scottish musical institution the Tannahill Weavers), they decided to play music in the spirit of Ossian's work during the '70s and '80s. Smalltalk changed its name to Ossian and recorded an album. Whether this new version of Ossian will be as successful and long-lived as the previous incarnation remains to be seen.

what to buy: *The Best of Ossian* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Iona, 1994, prod. Ossian) is undoubtedly the place to start for the uninitiated. It contains tracks from all of Ossian's recordings for the Iona label, which means all but the first of the original group's recordings. The selection of tracks is terrific, and manages really to capture what was best about each Ossian lineup: Ross's beautiful Gaelic vocal on "S Gann Gunn Dirich Mi Chaoidh," Cuffe's equally affecting singing in Scots on songs like "The Road to Drumleman" and "I Will Set My Ship in Order," and piper MacDonald's rousing playing on several sets of tunes. Of course, the contributions of stalwart members John Martin, William Jackson, and George Jackson, the group's founders who remained with it through almost its entire life as a touring and recording band, are without peer in Scottish music. There would be only one way to make this better: more tracks; at 56 minutes it's not exactly skimpy, but there's room on a CD for considerably more.

what to buy next: *Borders* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Iona, 1984, prod. Ossian) was the best of Ossian's original albums. It was produced after the band had been together for some time, and had really learned what worked best about their sound. The combination of highland pipes and harp, right from the start of the album, is more compelling than it had been on their previous album, *Dove across the Water*. The arrangements are unusual, confident, and quite lovely. Cuffe mined several collections of songs, especially John Ord's *Bothy Songs and Ballads*, to find unusual and beautiful traditional songs to sing, composing melodies where none existed and writing extra verses when necessary. In short, this was both their most traditional and their most original album. *Seal Song* ♪♪♪♪½ (Iona, 1981, prod. Ossian) comes in a close second. It did not yet have the highland bagpipes, which were to be an important part of Ossian's palette, but it nonetheless has a full and rich sound, due in part to new member Cuffe. Cuffe's strong guitar playing, influenced by Martin Carthy and by Nic Jones, added melodic, harmonic, and percussive dimensions to the band, and his voice is magnificent. Even so, the band was already excellent without Cuffe, as is evident on *St. Kilda Wedding* ♪♪♪♪ (Iona, 1978, prod. Ossian). The group's deft handling of many and diverse instruments gives this album a light, airy, and appealing feeling. Despite the repertoire of entirely Scottish material, the band at this stage sounded more like an Irish group in the mold of Planxty than like contemporary Scottish acts, with uilleann pipes, cittern, whistle, and guitar taking center stage. Nonetheless, Martin's fiery fiddling and Ross's undeniably Scottish singing in both Gaelic and Scots made their Scottish identity quite evident. Ross's singing is also a major ingredient on the re-formed Ossian's debut, *The Carrying Stream* ♪♪♪½ (Greentrax, 1997, prod. Ossian). On this CD, the new band does not quite succeed in reproducing the classic Ossian sound, but they do come close; MacInnes's Scottish smallpipes are a sort of compromise between the highland and uilleann pipes featured on the original band's albums. Jackson's harp takes a more dominant role, and his piano fills out the sound in places. Ross's voice, guitar, and dulcimer sound as delicate and practiced as they did back 20 years ago, and Morison's strong fiddling, while not identical to Martin's, is nonetheless stirring. Of the many solo and duet albums produced by Ossian's members, the best is Cuffe's *When First I Went to Caledonia* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Iona 1988, prod. Tony Cuffe). Cuffe's firm, sure guitar playing gets much more of a chance to shine on solo tunes like "The Lass O' Patie's Mill," and his singing is never more lovely than on the title track. It is one of the best solo albums of a Scottish singer/guitarist ever.

the rest:
Dove across the Water ♪♪♪ (Iona, 1982)
Light on a Distant Shore ♪♪♪ (Iona, 1986)

worth searching for: The band's self-titled debut LP *Ossian* ♪♪½ (Springthyme, 1976) featured the same lineup as *St. Kilda Wed-*

612 *peter ostroushko*

zydeco music

The essential core of any zydeco band is the combination of accordion and rubboard (locally called "frattoir"). The accordionist pumps out the melody and normally is the leader and singer. The rubboard acts as the foil, providing the steady scraping rhythm that makes for zydeco's identifiable sound. During a night's performance, the band will "drop out," leaving just the accordion and rubboard to hold up the rhythm and keep the dancers moving. This is the litmus test that separates the boys from the men. The words of zydeco music are still often sung in the local French, though more and more commonly in English. The repertoire consists of Creole tunes, waltzes, and two-steps shared with the Cajun repertoire, Louisiana R&B standards, Swamp Pop hits, blues, and whatever else can help a band win popularity on the dance floor. Zydeco, a music for and about dancing, often sounds like it is coming more from the north end of the Caribbean than from the deep South of the United States. With its national visibility, zydeco music has become a source of pride in the Creole community, its unique contribution to the American musical landscape.

Jared Snyder

ding. There are some nice songs and tunes on this somewhat tentative debut.

influences:

Planxty, Battlefield Band, Jock Tamson's Bairns, Alba, Contraband

Tony Cuffe, William Jackson, Smalltalk

Steve Winick

Peter Ostroushko

Born August 12, 1953, in Minneapolis, MN.

Peter Ostroushko is an eclectic multi-instrumentalist whose style includes traditional folk, bluegrass, Eastern music, and Ukrainian folk tunes. He has toured with Robin and Linda Williams and Dakota Dave Hull. In 1974 he played on Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks* and started a 12-year run on the syndicated *Prairie Home Companion* radio show, the last five as musical director. He has also performed with the Minnesota and Rochester Symphony Orchestras and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Since 1989 he has toured with guitarist Dean Magraw.

what to buy: On *Pilgrims on the Heart Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997, prod. Peter Ostroushko), his most fully realized album yet, Ostroushko blends the serious folk of "Miracle" with the whimsical Dixieland of "My People." The net result is a song cycle whose world-beat flourishes create an exotic strain of Americana. A stunner.

what to buy next: In *Buddies of Swing* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1990, prod. Peter Ostroushko), Ostroushko leads an all-star group—including Jethro Burns on mandolin and Johnny Gimble on fiddle—through original and traditional tunes, with a little George Gershwin and Fats Waller thrown in.

what to avoid: *First Generation* ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. Bertram Levy, Sandy Bradley), a comic operetta featuring Bertram Levy, is closer to Gilbert and Sullivan than to Homer and Jethro.

the rest:

Peter Ostroushko Presents the Mando Boys ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1986)
Blue Mesa ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1989)
(With Dean Magraw) *Duo* ♪♪½ (Red House, 1991)
Heart of the Heartland ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1995)

worth searching for: The early albums *Down the Streets of My Old Neighborhood* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987) and *Slúz Dúz Music* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985) are rare treats, lessons in how to mix bluegrass, Dixieland, and folk with some bone-dry humor.

influences:

Bill Monroe, David Grisman

Michael Hedges, Sam Bush

Bob Cannon

The Oyster Band

Formed 1981, in England.

John Jones, lead vocals, melodeon, accordion, piano; Ian "Chopper" Kearey, bass, cello, tiple, vocals; Ian Telfer, fiddle, viola, tenor concertina; Russell Lax (Lee), drums, percussion, hammer, vocals; Alan

Prosser, guitar, banjo, mandolin, violin, vocals; Cathy LeSurf, vocals (1981); Chris Taylor (1981–84).

The Oyster Band is a one-of-a-kind punk band of master musicians leaning on Celtic and English dance traditions while rocking harder than most of the mainstream. Criminally underappreciated, the band explores the political and personal landscape with intensity and consistency, generating high-spirited power-folk led by the assertive vocals of Welchman John Jones and the incisive electric fiddle of Telfer. The Oysters are frequently transcendent on disc, though no release has ever approached the band's incendiary live performance. The Oyster Band had its genesis in two bands, the Whitstable Oyster Co. Ceilidh Band (later the Oyster Ceilidh Band), which first took the stage in 1975, and Fiddler's Dram, founded in 1972 by violinist David Arbus, known for his work with East of Eden and the Who. Fiddler's Dram, then consisting of Prosser, Telfer, Taylor, and LeSurf, made the album *To See the Play*, notable for a "posthumous" hit novelty single in 1979, "Day Trip to Bangor." The hit's success forced the band to make another album, where they were joined by Kearey, among others. Meanwhile, much of Fiddler's Dram enjoyed a parallel existence in the Oyster Ceilidh Band, with LeSurf, Prosser, Kearey, Telfer, and Taylor joining Jones on the dance hall circuit. In 1981 the band dropped "Ceilidh" from its name, LeSurf departed, and the Oyster Band became essentially the unit that exists today. The Oysters have occasionally collaborated with English folk singer June Tabor.

what to buy: *Ride* ♪♪♪♪♪ (PolyGram, 1989, prod. Dave Young) comes closest to the glorious assault of their live show. Cuts range from the rollicking "New York Girls" to the pensive "This Year, Next Year," closing with the itchy fiddle cover of New Order's "Love Vigilantes." *The Shouting End of Life* ♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1995, prod. Pat Collier) is led by the fiddle and guitar pyrotechnics of "Blood-Red Roses" and a pulsating reworking of Bruce Cockburn's "Lovers in a Dangerous Time." *Deserters* ♪♪♪♪ (Ryko, 1992, prod. John Ravenhall) is a hard-edged beauty that includes the reeling "All That Way for This" and the working class anthem "Fiddle or a Gun."

what to buy next: The band's one full-fledged experiment with June Tabor, *Freedom and Rain* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1990, prod. Oyster Band), is an atmospheric near-masterpiece that includes tunes by Shane McGowan, Richard Thompson, and Billy Bragg.

what to avoid: Though a poor Oyster recording is not to be had, *Little Rock to Leipzig* ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1991, prod. Oyster Band, Dave Young) is a less compelling collection of studio and live odds and ends best left to die-hard fans.

the rest:
Step Outside ♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1986)
Wild Blue Yonder ♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1987)
Holy Bandits ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1993)
Trawler (Cooking Vinyl, 1996)
Deep Dark Ocean (Cooking Vinyl, 1997)

worth searching for: Several early Oyster recordings were released on the band's own Pukka label, and are not readily available: *English Rock 'n' Roll—The Early Years 1800–1850*, *Lie Back and Think of England*, *20 Golden Tie Slackeners*, and *Liberty Hall*. The CD single "Cry Cry" (Rykodisc, 1994) from the *Holy Bandits* album includes three previously unreleased tunes, including an astonishing "Star of the County Down."

influences:
◀◀ Fairport Convention, Pentangle, the Clash
▶▶ The Pogues, Spirit of the West

Martin Connors

The Pahinui Brothers /Cyril Pahinui /James "Bla" Pahinui

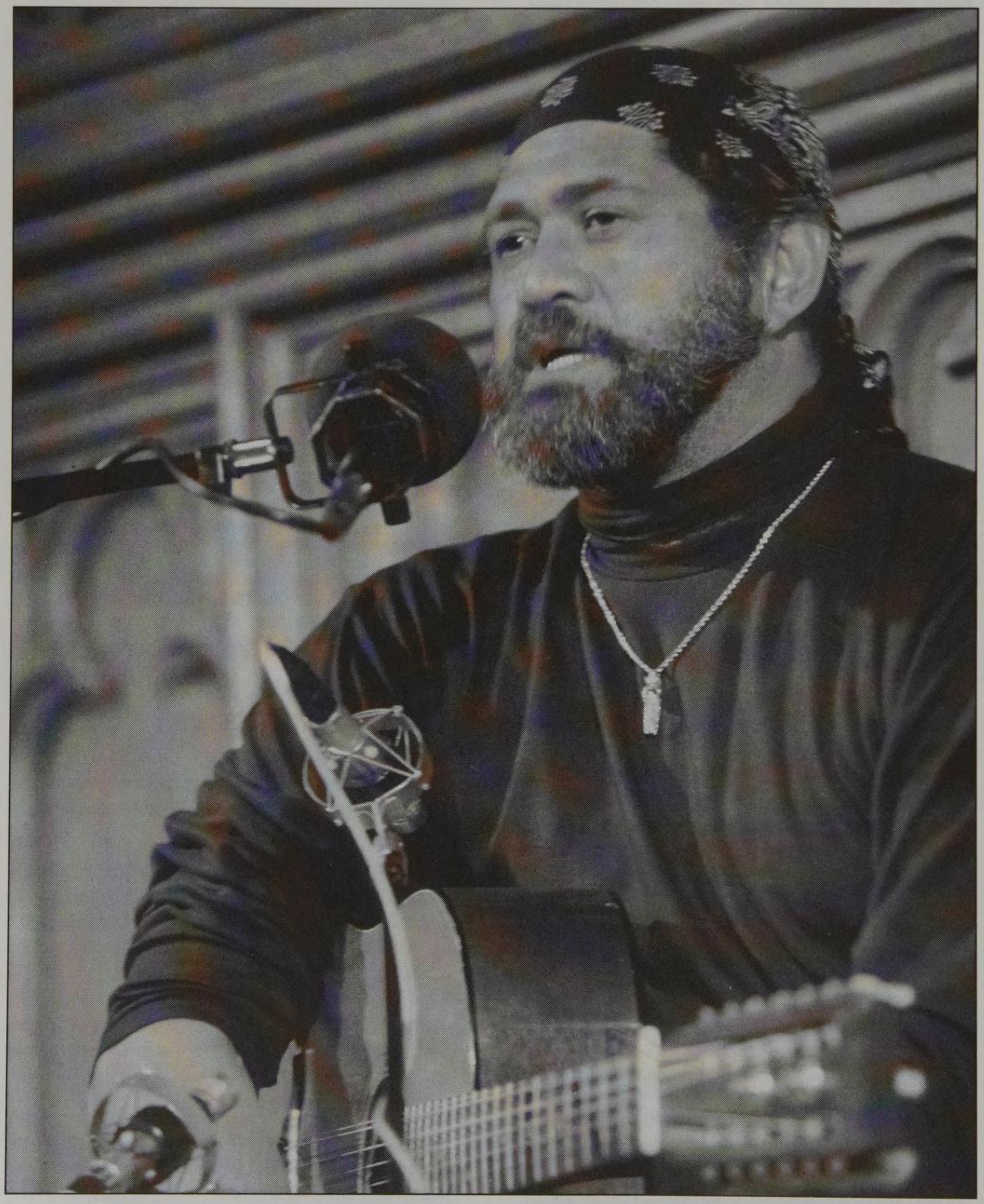
Formed in HI.

Cyril Pahinui (born April 21, 1950, in HI), guitar, ukulele, vocals; James "Bla" Pahinui (born 1942, in Waimanalo, HI), guitar, ukulele, vocals; Martin Pahinui, bass, vocals.

As sons of one of Hawaii's musical legends, the Pahinui Brothers have had big shoes to fill. Though they performed on their own, they came to the forefront of Hawaiian music when four of Gabby Pahinui's sons joined their father in the Gabby Band during the early 1970s, shortly after Gabby left the Sons of Hawaii. Since Gabby's death in 1980, the brothers have continued performing and recording, both separately and together. Cyril, James (usually called "Bla"), and Martin recorded an album for Private Music in 1992, and Cyril and Bla have each recorded solo for Dancing Cat.

what's available: *The Pahinui Bros.* ♪♪♪ (Private Music, 1992, prod. Steve Siegfried, Witt Shingle, Ry Cooder) takes a mainstream, mainland approach to slack-key playing, mixing

the pahinui brothers



tunes by John Lennon ("Jealous Guy") and Steve Earle ("My Old Friend the Blues") with otherwise largely traditional fare. The session band includes lap-steel player David Lindley, drummer Russ Kunkel, and guitarist Ry Cooder. Both Cyril and James subsequently signed with George Winston's Dancing Cat Records and released solo albums. Cyril Pahinui, the ninth of Gabby's 10 children, made his solo debut with *Six- and 12-String Slack-Key* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1994, prod. George Winston) after working not only with his father, but with a variety of other artists. Half instrumental and half vocal, *Six- and 12-String Slack-Key* offers exactly what its title suggests, with Cyril playing each instrument solo in a variety of tunings. James "Bla" Pahinui has recorded more often, though his early solo albums are out of print. Bla's *Mana* ♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat, 1997, prod. George Winston, Howard Johnson) shows the influence of his interest in both Latin music and doo-wop (he does a vocal medley containing "Silhouettes (on the Shade)," "Goodnight My Love," and "Can't Help Falling in Love (with You)"). That's a little odd, but, like the rest of the album, it has an endearing quality to it. James is a left-handed guitarist who plays his instrument updside down and backwards: He plays all the songs here in a "Dropped D" tuning that runs D-A-D-G-B-E from the highest-pitched string to the lowest.

worth searching for: Cyril and Bla both play guitar on the Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band's classic *The Baggy Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1975/1987, prod. Panini).

influences:

◀◀ Gabby Pahinui, Sonny Chillingworth, Ry Cooder

▶▶ George & Moses Kahumoku, Ozzie Kotani, George Kuo

see also: *Gabby Pahinui*

Brian Mansfield

Gabby Pahinui

Born Charles Philip Pahinui, 1921, in HI. Died October 13, 1980.

Gabby Pahinui was one of Hawaii's great slack-key guitarists, and the one who introduced many mainlanders to the style. He ushered in the modern slack-key era when he made his first recordings in 1947, and continued recording and performing—both as a frontman and a sideman—until his death more than 30 years later. His many recordings, along with his virtuosic playing style and evocative falsetto singing, earned him the name "father of modern slack-key guitar." Pahinui played in many well-known Hawaiian bands, including the Sons of Hawaii and the Hawaiian Serenaders. During the '70s, he led his own band, the Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, which featured four of his children. Guitarist Ry Cooder helped bring his talents to mainland attention, but there is probably not a guitarist in the Hawaiian islands who's not directly influenced by Pahinui's music.

what's available: Though Pahinui recorded often throughout his career, most of his albums are no longer in print or are very difficult to find outside Hawaii. Fortunately, his watershed album *The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1975/1987, prod. Panini) is readily available as a British import. It features a band including Sonny Chillingworth, Cyril and James "Bla" Pahinui, and Ry Cooder. It's an outstanding recording—made with a generator-driven studio in a remote section of the island of Hawaii in 1974. This is probably the best place to start for someone who's just getting interested in Hawaiian music. Pahinui and Atta Isaacs, who often played together, can be heard in duo fronting a five-piece band on *Two Slack-Key Guitars* ♪♪♪½ (Tradewinds, 1996, prod. Margaret Williams). The age of the recording shows, but the playing is exceptional.

influences:

◀◀ Sonny Chillingworth, Atta Isaacs

▶▶ James "Bla" & Cyril Pahinui, George Kuo, Kahumoku Brothers, Ozzie Kotani, Keola Beamer, Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, Ledward Kaapana

see also: *The Pahinui Brothers*

Brian Mansfield

Cyril Pahinui **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Cyril Pahinui

See: Pahinui Brothers

James "Bla" Pahinui

See: Pahinui Brothers

Tom Paley

See: New Lost City Ramblers

Gram Parsons

Born Cecil Ingram Connor, November 5, 1946, in Winterhaven, FL. Died September 19, 1973, in Joshua Tree, CA.

A Harvard dropout who played with both the Byrds and the Flying Burrito Brothers before going solo, Gram Parsons gave rock 'n' roll a country martyr it could claim as its own. Parsons serves much the same function for such 1990s "alternative country" acts as Son Volt and the Jayhawks that Hank Williams serves for mainstream country—he drank too much, wrote sad songs, and died before he hit 30. Parsons's storytelling gift is enhanced by his tragic legend, and it didn't hurt that he helped introduce Emmylou Harris to the music world. When Parsons died, his road manager and a friend stole his body, cremated it, and scattered the ashes at Cap Rock, a California national monument.

what to buy: *G.P./Grievous Angel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1990, prod. Gram Parsons, Rick Grech) is a two-fer classic that combines Parsons's two solo albums. California country-rock doesn't come more influential than this.

what to buy next: *Sleepless Nights* ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1976, prod. various), a posthumous release, was compiled from solo material and tracks from Parsons's days with the Flying Burrito Brothers.

the rest:
Gram Parsons and the Fallen Angels Live ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1992)

worth searching for: *Safe at Home* ♪♪ (Shiloh, 1968/Sundown, 1991) is an early record with the International Submarine Band that shows the direction Parsons would travel. Also worth uncovering is *Warm Evenings, Pale Mornings, Bottled Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Raven, 1994), an Australian compilation.

influences:
◀◀ Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, Elvis Presley, Byrds
▶▶ Emmylou Harris, Eagles, Jayhawks, Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Son Volt, Bottle Rockets

see also: *Byrds, Flying Burrito Brothers*

Brian Mansfield

Niamh Parsons

See: Arcady

Deb Pasternak

Deb Pasternak was headed for a field career in marine biology when a bout of rheumatoid arthritis intervened. During her recovery, she decided to turn her avocation of performing music into a career, and began writing songs and learning guitar in earnest. In recent years, Pasternak has garnered a slew of Boston area music awards, and has recently started performing with a full band.

what to buy: *More* ♪♪♪½ (Signature Sounds, 1997, prod. Chris Rival), Pasternak's first full-blown studio album, is a marvelous collection of songs cut with top Boston-area talents like guitarists Chris Rival (who also produced) and Duke Levine, trumpeter Scott Aruda, and saxophonist Gordon Beadle. Highlights include the blues-rocker "Walking South" and the cool jazz ballad "Woman of Action." Pasternak's unique vocal style comes through on "Shadow" (with some great, sinuous sax) and the skeletal "Sweet Addiction."

what to buy next: *Trust Me, I'm Soulful* ♪♪½ (Independent CD, 1994, prod. Jackie Mollet), Pasternak's debut solo CD, is a no-frills live recording that showed why she had already generated such a buzz in the Boston area.

influences:
◀◀ Rickie Lee Jones, Joni Mitchell, Lyle Lovett
▶▶ Martin Sexton

Michael Parrish

Sandy & Caroline Paton

Formed 1957.

Sandy Paton (born January 22, 1929, in Jacksonville, FL), guitar, vocals; Caroline Paton (born August 31, 1932, in East Chicago, IN), mountain dulcimer, vocals.

The tradition of passing music from person to person and generation to generation often is considered the essence of folk music. For Sandy and Caroline Paton, who run Sharon, Connecticut's Folk-Legacy Records as a labor of love, it is a tradition dear to their hearts. Consequently, they have traveled the United States, the British Isles, and Canada meeting people, hearing their stories, singing along with them, and bringing home the musical gems, both new and old, that would be lost on today's money-driven record dynasties. For the Patons, the story behind the song is almost as important as the song itself. Many of their albums include the stories about how they came to learn the songs, along with song histories. Caroline first became interested in folk music as a counselor at summer camp, and that interest never waned. Sandy had studied art and began studying acting when he learned about folk music. Though they came from different parts of the country, they met by chance at a concert in Berkeley, California, and married in

1957. Their association with "The Golden Ring" seems a natural connection. The Golden Ring is a gathering of singers that includes the Patons and their friends Ed Trickett, Gordon Bok, Cathy Barton, Dave Para, and many others. Along with Lee Haggerty, the Patons formed Folk-Legacy in 1961. Over the years they have recorded a half-dozen albums together with their friends, though they have produced more than 120 others. Playing guitar, Appalachian dulcimer, and autoharp, their music is soft-spoken, filled with fun, tongue-twisting songs, touching ballads, and warm harmonies achieved with their own, delightful choral singing. In 1993 they were named Connecticut's official State Troubadours. And they are passing on the tradition through their sons: Robin Paton sings, plays banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and guitar, and has written songs. He joins his brother, concertina virtuoso David Paton, on David's recording *Music from the Mountain* (Folk-Legacy, 1992). Suffice it to say that Sandy and Caroline Paton maintain the essence of folk music. They have inspired countless people who foster homemade music, from people who enjoy in-house ceilidh singing and house concerts to people who play in and put on church coffeehouses.

what to buy: Though much of the Patons's music involves group singing, they have a couple of albums on which they are featured. Most enjoyable is *New Harmony* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1987, Sandy Paton, Caroline Paton), which offers a lovely blend of traditional, original, and contemporary folk songs sung by either just the Patons or with friends Dave Para and Gordon Bok. Their group singing is superb in the traditional "All Gone for Grog." The title track by Craig Johnson is nostalgic, reminiscent of country life, performed with rich harmonies. The traditional a cappella of "Joshuay" shows the Patons' singing talents as they sing the melody a fifth apart. Also featured are the wonderful Wade Hemsworth–penned "Log Driver's Waltz" and Bob Franke's rousing "The Great Storm Is Over," sung with a delicious vocal blend. Among the duo's best efforts is their first, *Sandy and Caroline Paton* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1966, prod. Sandy and Caroline Paton), which is produced on cassette by Folk-Legacy upon request.

what to buy next: Representative of the group singing and acoustic instrumentation that the Patons enjoy is *For All Good People—A Golden Ring Reunion* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1992), which includes an a cappella rendition of Craig Johnson's "Damned Old Piney Mountains," based on the story of an old logger, and a medley of Gail Davies's "Grandma Song/The Reindeer Song," which has roots in traditional English folk and the Ozarks. Like all their CDs, this one is a full 72 minutes. Joining them are Cathy Barton, David Para, their son David Paton, Ed Trickett, and Harry Tuft.

the rest:

I've Got a Song! ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1984)
When the Spirit Says Sing ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1988)
'Twas a Night like This—A Christmas Legacy ♪♪♪ (Folk- Legacy, 1989)
The New Golden Ring—Five Days Singing, Volumes I and II ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1996)

influences:

Pete Seeger, Burl Ives, Leadbelly, Cisco Houston, Ewan MacColl, Jeanie Robertson, Jean Ritchie, Hally Wood

Judy Collins

Stephen Ide

Patrick Street

Formed 1986, in Dublin, Ireland.

Andy Irvine, vocals, bouzouki, mandolin, harmonica (1986–present); Kevin Burke, fiddle (1986–present); Jackie Daly, button accordion (1986–present); Arty McGlynn, guitar (1986–94); Ged Foley, guitar, Northumbrian smallpipes (1995–present).

Imagine Woody Guthrie singing with the Bothy Band, and you get some idea of the heady mix achieved by Ireland's all-star folk group, Patrick Street. Andy Irvine is a lifelong Guthrie devotee and sings songs charged with political passion, irreverent humor, and sharp-eyed detail with the requisite harmonica and roughened baritone. He is backed, however, by two of Ireland's finest instrumental soloists, fiddler Kevin Burke and accordionist Jackie Daly. As a result, Patrick Street's albums and concerts bounce back and forth between moving songs and dazzling dance tunes—and sometimes fusing the two into wonderful medleys. Irvine, Burke, Daly, and guitarist Gerry O'Beirne first toured together as the Legends of Irish Music in the United States in 1986. They enjoyed the experience so much that they returned in 1987 with a new name, Patrick Street; a new guitarist, Arty McGlynn; and a debut album, *Patrick Street*. The quartet had ties to some of the finest Irish folk bands of the post-Beatles era. Irvine was a co-founder of Sweeney's Men in 1966 and of Planxty in 1972, and has also played with Paul Brady, De Danann, and others. Burke played with Christy Moore before replacing the legendary Tommy Peoples in the Bothy Band in 1976. He later formed his own band, Open House, in his adopted home of Portland, Oregon. Daly was a member of De Danann and Kinvara before joining Patrick Street. McGlynn had been the rhythm guitarist of choice for

6 1 8 *charley patton*

everyone from Christy Moore and Tommy Makem to Paul Brady and Van Morrison. Moreover, Donal Lunny, who produced and played on Patrick Street's first album, had played with Planxty and the Bothy Band. The liner notes of that album claim the band was named after an old fiddler named Patrick Street, but the band later admitted that was a shaggy-dog story. Ultimately, however, Patrick Street outshone all its fabled predecessors by staying together longer than any of them and growing tighter and brighter as a result.

what to buy: For *Irish Times* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1990, prod. Gerry O'Beirne, Patrick Street), Patrick Street grew from a quartet to an octet with the temporary addition of fiddler James Kelly, keyboardist Bill Whelan, piper Declan Masterson, and guitarist O'Beirne. This little-big-band enables the group to achieve an astonishing density of sound on five songs and five instrumental medleys. Especially effective is their Ceili version of the Penguin Café Orchestra's "Music for a Found Harmonium." By the time the band tackled *All in Good Time* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Bill Whelan), Patrick Street had achieved a longevity and a corresponding cohesiveness known to no other Irish band but the Chieftains. The pay-off came in the exquisite arrangements and well-earned rapport of songs and tunes on this album. The highlight is the seven-and-a-half-minute medley, "Lintheads," which threads together two songs about textile mills with evocative instrumentals. The instrumental highlights of *No.2 Patrick Street* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Patrick Street) include the jigs and reels written by Daly for his effortlessly flute-like accordion figures. Vocal highlights include Irvine's revamping of Guthrie's "Tom Joad" to the tune of "John Hardy" and Irvine's own stirring song about Sacco and Vanzetti. McGlynn was replaced by Battlefield Band guitarist Ged Foley on *Corner Boys* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Patrick Street), and he helped Burke and Daly forego all tentative and ornamental notes to carve out confident, surprising melodic variations. And whether accompanying each other's solos or Irvine's vocals, these pickers know how to push without shoving.

what to buy next: Even on their debut album, *Patrick Street* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Donal Lunny), the promise of this illustrious band was already obvious. Burke's fiddle and Daly's accordion improvise grand leaps over the pulsing rhythms of McGlynn's guitar and Irvine's bouzouki. The highlights, though, were the three ballads which Irvine sings with a whispery intimacy that brings a genuine affection to his themes of loss. On *Made in Cork* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Patrick Street), the group seemed content to rely on proven methods rather than push forward with any innovations. These methods prove as pleasurable as ever, however.

influences:

◀◀ Bothy Band, Planxty, De Danann

▶▶ Celtic Thunder, Solas

Geoffrey Himes

Charley Patton

Born April 1891, in Bolton, MS. Died April 28, 1934, in Indianola, MS.

Thanks to Eric Clapton and the marketing power of Sony Records, the great Delta bluesman Robert Johnson has become an American icon. Patton, whose dark and occasionally frightening delivery influenced Johnson, Son House, and Howlin' Wolf, to name a few, is still known mainly to historians and hard-core blues fans. After he started playing guitar in 1907, his talent made him a celebrity in his native Mississippi, where he drew unprecedented, large crowds to hear him sing. Like his successors Johnson and Lightnin' Hopkins, Patton's songs were obsessed with death: "Oh Death," "Prayer of Death," "Jesus Is a Dying-Bed Maker," and "Poor Me" were among his better-known titles. What's really jarring, even upon hearing the static-filled 1929 recordings that constitute his legacy, is the emotional desperation in his deep voice and the urgent one-*two* rhythm of his acoustic guitar. Just five years after record-store owner H.C. Speir tracked him down and took him into the studio, Patton died of a chronic heart condition.

what's available: Unlike Johnson, Patton was a prolific studio musician, recording 43 sides in his first year and continuing until his death. The two collections of this output, *King of the Delta Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo/Shanachie, 1991) and *Founder of the Delta Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Yazoo/Shanachie, 1989), have been impeccably transferred to CD with thorough accompanying liner notes and an R. Crumb portrait.

worth searching for: The multi-volume *Complete Recorded Works* ♪♪♪ (Document, 1994–95) has absolutely everything, but it's hard tracking down all three volumes. *Masters of the Delta Blues: The Friends of Charley Patton* ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo/Shanachie, 1991, prod. various) has excellent performances by Patton followers Willie Brown, Son House, Bukka White, and several others.

influences:

◀◀ Blind Lemon Jefferson, Earl Harris, Jim Jackson

▶▶ Robert Johnson, Willie Brown, Booker Miller, Lightnin' Hop-

kins, Howlin' Wolf, Skip James, Eric Clapton, John Hammond Jr.

Steve Knopper

Ellis Paul

Born 1966, In Fort Kent, ME.

Ellis Paul was raised in Presque Isle, a small town in northern Maine. He hails from a family whose past generations earned their living by potato farming. He learned the ethic of hard work and perseverance that is reflected in the characters of his songs, and this background has greatly influenced his perception of the modern world in which he now travels. After attending college in Boston on a track scholarship, Paul began playing his music at various open mikes and was soon selling out clubs on his own. He was discovered by New England singer-songwriter Bill Morrissey, who produced his first album, *Say Something*. He has since developed a strong national following by playing 200-plus shows a year, performing in major festivals, night clubs, and church basements. He is a six-time winner of the Boston Music Awards, a 1994 winner of the prestigious Kerrville New Folk Award, winner of the Acoustic Underground Competition, and a *USA Today* selection as a "best bet for stardom." Few singer-songwriters in recent years have received the critical and popular acclaim accorded Paul and he is proving to be one of the most original voices on the scene today.

what to buy: *A Carnival of Voices* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1996, prod. Jerry Marotta) is Paul's latest and features an all-star cast including bassist Tony Levin of King Crimson, guitarists Duke Levine and Bill Dillon, and vocalists Jennifer Kimball, late of the Story, and Patty Griffin. From the opening "Midnight Strikes Too Soon" to the striking "Deliver Me," Paul demonstrates considerable lyrical skill and a unique voice that you won't mistake for anyone else. "Never Lived at All" describes how three people deal with their unrealized dreams in different ways. *Guitar Player* magazine said, "think T.S. Eliot or Ezra Pound set to a crisp, arty soundtrack." If you haven't heard Paul yet, this would be the best place to start.

what to buy next: *Stories* ♪♪♪½ (Black Wolf, 1994/Philo/Rounder, 1995, prod. Duke Levine), Paul's second album, discusses everything from the death of River Phoenix to the "Autobiography of a Pistol," a story told from the point of view of a .45. The production is first rate and the supporting cast is a worthy match for Paul's incisive and confessional lyrics as well as his Dylanesque voice. The album was originally released on Black Wolf Records but was picked up by Rounder who then signed him to the recording contract that produced *A Carnival of Voices*.

the rest:
Say Something ♪♪♪ (Black Wolf, 1993)

influences:
⏪ Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Bill Morrissey

Neal Walters

Gayla Drake Paul

Even if you're a splendid songwriter with an unusually evocative voice, it's not easy to distinguish yourself in an ocean of would-be songsmiths. And even if you're an exceptional guitarist with an original and distinctive style, it can be a while before you're noticed, given the endless supply of guitar-slingers vying for the world's attention. The question is: if you're both of these things, does that give you an advantage, or does it make things twice as difficult? Such is the dilemma for Gayla Drake Paul, who suffers the additional disadvantage of being from Ely, Iowa, a long way from the dense circuits of the coasts. One imagines that if Paul were based in, say, Philadelphia, her career would have attained a much broader arc by now, her audiences caring little whether she's a songwriter queen or a guitar goddess. As it is, Paul continues to seduce audiences and wow critics on the club and festival circuit, as well as firmly establishing her reputation as a guitarist, appearing at Muriel Anderson's elite Guitar Night in Nashville and doing appearances and ads for Gallagher guitars and John Pearse strings.

what to buy: Her first album, the gemlike *Gayla Drake Paul* ♪♪♪♪ (Ivanhoe Road, 1994, prod. Curtis Paul), is her one project that weds songs, voice, and guitar into one evocative, seamless whole. Paul's voice has a dark, introspective quality that invites comparison to June Tabor or Sandy Denny, great traditional singers whose austere styles are more powerful for their understatement. Her own guitar accompaniment seems a perfect compliment to that voice—playing almost exclusively in a modal "D" tuning (à la Pierre Bensusan), providing a velvety backdrop, and occasionally bursting into silvery pyrotechnics.

what to buy next: *How Can I Keep from Singing? Works for Solo Guitar* ♪♪♪½ (Ivanhoe Road, 1997, prod. Curtis Paul), her third release, holds its own and then some among the widening array of self-produced fingerstyle guitar recordings. Sweet-toned and skillful throughout, it's a program of original music with a sprinkling of traditional Celtic tunes—staples of the fingerstyle repertoire but somehow much more convincing in the

hands of a masterful tone-monger like Paul. Warning: this CD was issued in a plastic slipcase, akin to the way radio or retail promo CDs are packaged, rather than the conventional jewel box, or the environmentally-friendly paper gatefold. Retailers are reluctant to carry CDs in oddball packages; this one may be a little harder to find.

what to avoid: While by no means a bad album, *Waiting for the Spark* ♪♪♪ (Ivanhoe Road, 1995, prod. Curtis Paul) may have been a little too self-consciously a departure from the first CD. Though some heavyweight guests like John Hartford, Gordon Stone, Bob Black, and others play well (as they always do), the result sounds like a lot of other singer-songwriter efforts, and some of the intimacy and understated power of the first album is lost.

influences:

◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Nick Drake, Pierre Bensusan

▶▶ Ariane Lydon, Steve Baughman

Chris Rietz

Pat Paulsen

See: Smothers Brothers

Tom Paxton

Born October 31, 1937, in Chicago, IL.

Tom Paxton never became as popular as his songs. "Ramblin' Boy," "I Can't Help but Wonder Where I'm Bound," and "The Last Thing on My Mind" inspire sing-alongs almost any time they are played at folk gatherings. Paxton, who made his primary impact on the New York folk scene during the early and mid-'60s, charted with a few albums but never seemed in danger of becoming a major pop phenomenon like Bob Dylan. His modest popular acceptance, though, has allowed him to continue a career as a topical songwriter long after "protest songs" went out of vogue. With his gentle tenor, Paxton always seemed more prone to laugh at the foibles that produced inequities than to moralize. Not that he wasn't serious. Such sensitive social tunes as "Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney" and "The Death of Stephen Biko" illustrate that Paxton's humanity—the same element that helped his mellower tunes become anthems—has been more important than his politics. Woody Guthrie's influence is clear in such political Paxton numbers as "Ain't That News," which tout the values of organizing to battle inequities, but Paxton's true strength as a protest singer lays in such winking satires as "The Willing Conscript" and "Talking Vietnam Potluck Blues." In the decades since his heyday, he's kept his hand in it with such satires as "Little Bitty Gun" and "You Can Eat Dogfood." Since the '70s, Paxton, like a number of folkies since Guthrie, has recorded fun-filled children's music as well.

what to buy: *Heroes* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1978, prod. Jeff Zaraya) marked a high point in Paxton's post–Vietnam era career. "The Death of Stephen Biko" and "There Goes the Mountain" showed there were still "protest" topics available. *Even a Gray Day* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1983, prod. Bob Gibson) offers Paxton in a mellow but blue mood with an atypical collection dominated by love songs. *The Marvelous Toy and Other Gallimaufry* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984, prod. Bob Gibson) proves the best of Paxton's kid collections, sparked by the same sense of humor and humanity that make his political satires worthy.

what to buy next: *The Very Best of Tom Paxton* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Bob Gibson) doesn't quite live up to its title, but it does give a good picture of Paxton's songwriting strengths. *Live for the Record* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Jim Rooney) starts off with too many of what Paxton himself describes as "short shelf-life songs," like "Tonya Harding" and "Let's Go to Michael Jackson's House." Overall, though, the album gives an excellent snapshot of a Paxton's '90s performing style and social concerns. *A Child's Christmas* ♪♪♪½ (Sony Kids' Music, 1992, prod. Bob Gibson) is the next-best on Paxton's list of children's albums.

the rest:

New Songs from the Briarpatch ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1977)
One Million Lawyers and Other Disasters ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)
And Loving You ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
Politics: Live at Old Town School of Folk Music ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
It Ain't Easy ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)
Wearing the Time ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)
Goin' to the Zoo ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)
I've Got a Yo-Yo ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997)

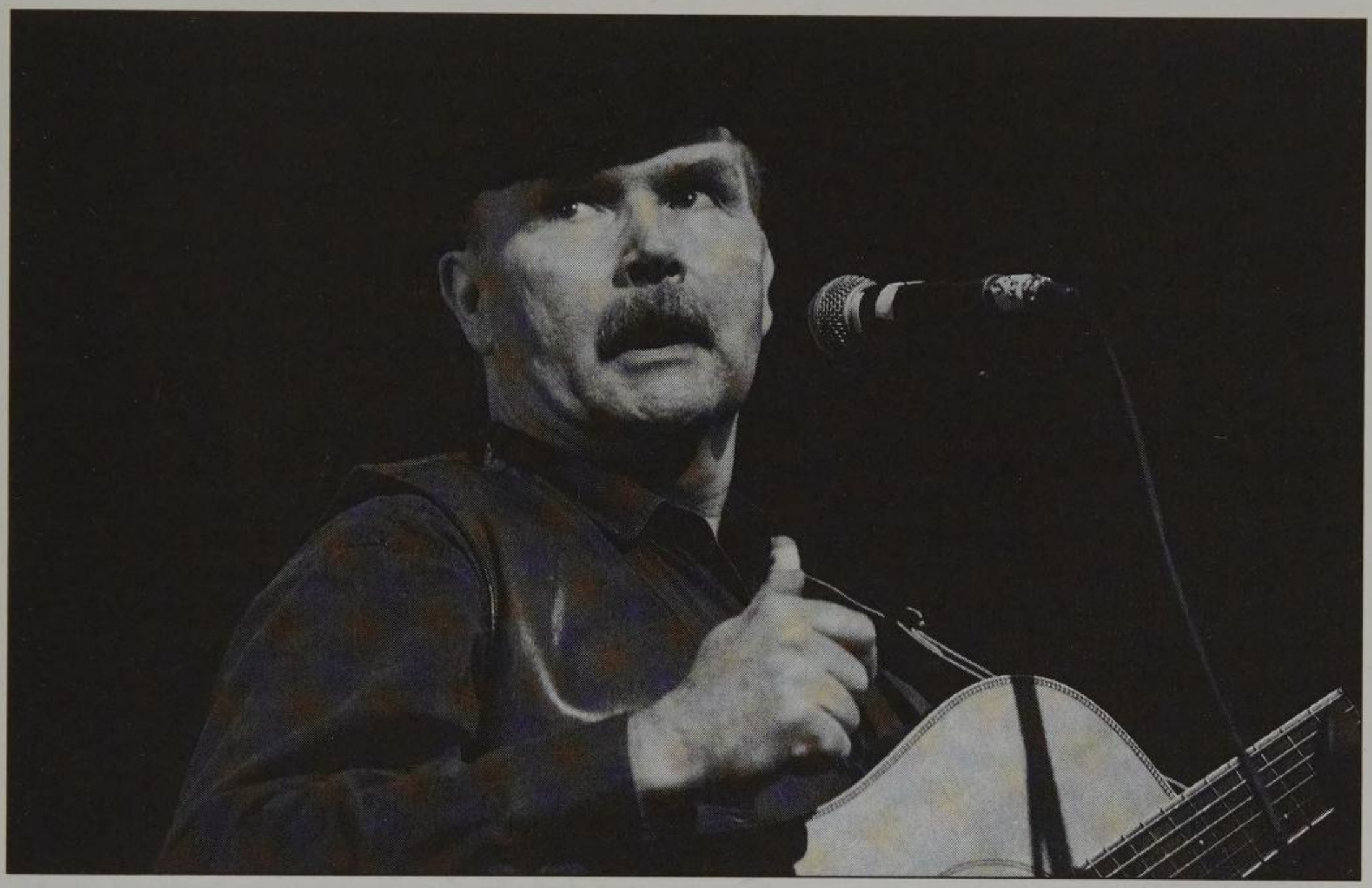
worth searching for: Paxton's initial spurt of songwriting produced some of his most enduring songs, so any of his Elektra titles are well worth the search. The tunes on *Ain't That News* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1965) include the romantic "Hold onto Me Babe," the satiric "The Willing Conscript," and such timely protest tunes as "Lyndon Johnson Told the Nation." *Paxton Primer* ♪♪♪♪ (Pax, 1986, prod. Tom Paxton) captures Paxton's best material on one vinyl LP on his own label.

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger

▶▶ Bob Gibson, Michael Cooney

Salvatore Caputo



Tom Paxton **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

Herb Pederson

See: Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Don Pedi

Born May 2, 1947, in Boston, MA.

Don Pedi grew up in New England but moved to North Carolina in 1974. Inspired primarily by the playing of Richard Fariña, he took up the mountain dulcimer in 1968 and is entirely self-taught. Patrick Sky and Howie Mitchell were also early influences. Around 1982 he started playing regularly with fiddler Bruce Greene, developing a repertoire of archaic tunes and a playing style that fits the dulcimer to the fiddle as if they were made for each other. Pedi lives in western North Carolina but plays and teaches at music and dance camps around the country.

what's available: Pedi's first CD offering is *The Hog Went through the Fence Yoke and All* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Class IV Records, 1995, prod. Adam Greenberg, Don Pedi). The other musicians assisting Pedi on this disc are Steve Millard on guitar, John Herrmann on bass, Barry Benjamin on banjo, Helen Stewart on feet, and—notably—Bruce Greene on fiddle. With someone like Greene on board, you might be tempted to think that this disc will present the dulcimer as a backup instrument. Well, don't. Pedi takes the dulcimer into a realm where it complements the fiddle perfectly, not as accompaniment but as an equal. These two have been playing together for a long time, and it shows, but what comes across most strongly is how surprisingly well these two instruments can be put together. Despite the crookedness of some of these tunes, the dulcimer and fiddle are in perfect sync and equalized at perfectly matched levels. They are mostly tunes that Greene learned in his travels around Kentucky, many of which are not recorded elsewhere. They're played at a slightly faster pace than Greene would play them solo, and they take on a new dimension. "Old Tobacco Hills," while retaining its stately presence, makes for a dance tune that would probably empty the chairs in the first two measures. There are also selections where the dulcimer takes the lead and is backed by guitar, bass,

6/2/2 *ann peebles*

or banjo. If you've listened to a lot of mediocre old-time music, you might think a dulcimer/banjo duet wouldn't work; Benjamin's clean, spare clawhammer playing is perfect for this role, making "Liza Jane" a standout. There are a few dulcimer solos, most of which are also Kentucky fiddle tunes set to the dulcimer. The recording quality is excellent, sources are credited in the liner notes, and tunings are given for fiddle and dulcimer. This disc might be difficult to find in record stores, but is available from Class IV Productions, 9 Busbee View Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28803.

influences:

⏪ Bruce Greene, Richard Fariña

⏩ Alan Freeman, David Schnaufer

Dave Shombert

Ann Peebles

Born April 27, 1947, in St. Louis, MO.

Often overlooked in the vast shadow of Al Green's success, Ann Peebles's seven albums for Memphis-based Hi Records contain some of the finest music of the '70s soul era. Like Green, Peebles's records were produced and arranged by Willie Mitchell, and they featured the same superb Hi Records house band. But while Green sang of "Love and Happiness," Peebles mined a darker vein of bitter loss, betrayal, and regret with tunes such as "I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down" and "Feel like Breakin' Up Somebody's Home." And Mitchell's musical arrangements for Peebles were sparer, more intimate—emotionally attuned to a voice soaked in longing and pain. Her high point came with the 1974 album *I Can't Stand the Rain* and its oft-covered title tune. During the late '70s, she abruptly retired from music to raise a family, though she was coaxed back into a Memphis studio for an excellent 1992 comeback record, *Full-Time Love*.

what to buy: *The Best of the Hi Records Years* ♪♪♪♪ (The Right Stuff, 1996, prod. Willie Mitchell) provides an overview of Peebles's Hi Records recordings. Containing all the essential hits, it's the place to start. *Ann Peebles's Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Willie Mitchell) is also a fine collection. Anyone who loves classic soul should own a copy of *I Can't Stand the Rain* ♪♪♪♪ (Hi, 1973/The Right Stuff, 1993, prod. Willie Mitchell).

what to buy next: *Full Time Love* ♪♪♪ (Bullseye Blues, 1992, prod. Ron Levy) is Peebles's long-overdue return to the studio, backed by many of the original Hi Records studio musicians. Despite the absence of Mitchell's guiding hand, its high points (such as a brilliant version of Delbert McClinton's "Read Me My Rights") reach the level of her finest Hi recordings.

the rest:

Straight from the Heart ♪♪♪½ (Hi, 1971/The Right Stuff, 1993)
It Must Be Love ♪♪♪½ (Capitol Special Products, 1994)
Fill This World with Love ♪♪♪ (Bullseye Blues, 1996)
St. Louis Woman, Memphis Soul ♪♪♪♪ (Hi, 1996)

worth searching for: Most of Peebles's original Hi albums are available now only as imports. Look for *If This Is Heaven* ♪♪♪½ (Hi U.K., 1978, prod. Willie Mitchell), which has been packaged with *Tellin' It* (Hi, 1976, prod. Willie Mitchell).

influences:

⏪ Mahalia Jackson, Aretha Franklin, Sam Cooke

⏩ Toni Braxton, Annie Lennox, Otis Clay

Doug Pippin

Bob & Carole Pegg

See: Mr. Fox

George Pegram

Born August 5, 1911, in Oak Ridge, NC. Died September 12, 1974.

Banjo player George Pegram has a place in folk history, if only for inspiring the formation of the pivotal Rounder Records imprint during the early '70s. By the time label founders Ken Irwin and Bill Nowlin happened upon the North Carolina native, however, he already had decades of performing experience under his belt. Pegram picked up the banjo when he was around nine. In the '40s, he performed at horse shows and fiddler conventions while working an assortment of jobs in North Carolina and Virginia. In 1949 folk-festival promoter Bascom Lunsford came across the lanky picker supposedly when Lunsford's car broke down and Pegram came to his aid. Pegram earned local acclaim through the '50s playing at dances, fairs, and festivals where he displayed an innate showmanship. For a period, he formed a duo with harmonica player Red Parham, with whom he recorded for the Riverside label. The partnership dissolved due, it's said, to Parham's discomfort with Pegram's unrestrained showboating. In the late '50s, he began playing with the Bushy Mountain Boys, an association that continued into the '60s. Later in the decade, Pegram was hired to perform at Southern Railroad conferences, which took him around the country. An appearance at the 1969 Mountain Dance and Folk Festival in Asheville, North Carolina, brought him additional exposure, prompting string-band devotee Charles Faurot to record Pegram. When the Kanawha label passed on the record,

two undergraduates in Boston decided to put together their own label to release it, and Rounder Records was born. Pegram continue to perform during the '70s before his death in 1974 of bone cancer.

what to buy: *George Pegram* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1970/1995, prod. Charlie Faurot) demonstrates the appeal of this engaging rustic. Backed by mandolin, fiddle, and guitar, Pegram picks and hoots his way through an assortment of old-time and gospel standards with unbridled merriment. The CD builds upon its vinyl source (released as Rounder 0001) by adding a half-dozen previously unreleased tracks.

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon, Bill Monroe, Ola Belle Reed

▶▶ Wayne Erbsen, Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin

Steven Stolder

Pentangle

Formed 1967, in England. Disbanded 1973; re-formed 1983.

Bert Jansch, guitar, vocals (1967–73, 1983–94); Jacqui McShee, vocals; Terry Cox, drums, percussion (1967–73, 1983–89); John Renbourn, guitar, vocals, sitar (1967–73, 1983–85); Danny Thompson, bass (1967–73, 1983–85); Mike Piggott, guitar (1985–89); Nigel Portman-Smith, bass (1985–89); Gerry Conway, drums (1990–present); Peter Kirtley, guitar (1990–94); Spencer Cozens, keyboards (1995–present).

The original Pentangle grew out of the collaborations of British finger-style guitarists Bert Jansch and John Renbourn. Both on their own and in their duets they display a great appreciation for the subtle swing and interplay of jazz, and so it now seems a very natural evolution that they added a rhythm section. Thompson played upright bass and had an affinity for Charles Mingus (a favorite of Renbourn and Jansch) and Cox was comfortable playing with brushes at a time when drum sets were growing louder and larger. On top of this singer McShee's crystalline vocal sang lyrics and melodies that drew from American and British folk traditions, but her inflections had more in common with the cool trumpet of Miles Davis than Cecil Sharp's ballad singers. The overall combination made for a remarkably elegant hybrid of Celtic, folk, jazz, and blues. In hindsight, the music seems all the more impressive when contrasted with the overwrought studio albums that followed *Sergeant Pepper* or the roar of the psychedelic sound that dominated the airwaves at that time. After three extremely well-made records, the group struggled along, disbanded in 1973, and re-formed briefly from 1983 to 1985. Jansch and McShee then kept together one version or another until 1994, when Jansch left. McShee now works with drummer Conway and keyboardist Cousins and the trio continues to use the name Pentangle.

what to buy: There isn't a false step in Pentangle's brief career. *Basket of Light* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise/Transatlantic, 1969/Castle, 1996, prod. Shel Talmy) is perhaps the most commercially successful effort, yielding two modest hits in the United Kingdom: "Once I Had a Sweetheart" and "Sally Free and Easy."

what to buy next: *Sweet Child* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1968/Castle, 1996, prod. Shel Talmy) is a double album that explores most of the themes on subsequent releases. It's maybe the most diverse record ranging from updated arrangements of traditional Celtic tunes, to a tribute to Manhattan street composer Moondog, to Thompson's solo rendering of Mingus's Haitian Fight Song.

what to avoid: *Open the Door* ♪♪ (Varrick, 1985/Shanachie, 1985, prod. Pentangle) is a disappointing return after a lengthy absence and holds none of the magic of the early recordings.

the rest:

The Pentangle ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1968/Castle, 1996)
In the Round ♪♪ (Varrick, 1986)
So Early in the Spring ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1990)
Think of Tomorrow ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1991)
People on the Highway (1968–1971) ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1992/1994)
Collection ♪♪♪½ (Castle, 1992)
Live at the BBC ♪♪♪♪ (Band of Joy, 1995)

worth searching for: *Cruel Sister* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1971/Castle, 1996, prod. Shel Talmy) introduced electric guitars into the group's arrangements; understated and flowing, its focus is more exclusive of Celtic folk. The 18 minutes of "Jack Orion" organically builds and builds in a way few bands could do. *Early Classics* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. various) is a good overview, but the flow and segues from the original recordings are missed.

influences:

◀◀ Charles Mingus, Davey Graham, Ian Campbell Group, Miles Davis

▶▶ Nick Drake, John Martyn, Clannad

Jared Snyder

Tommy Peoples

Born September 20, 1948, in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

In his book *Notes from the Heart*, Irish record producer P.J. Curtis writes about taking an American friend to a session in a

tommy peoples

Clare pub and of his friend's disbelief when it was revealed that the fiddler playing there was none other than Tommy Peoples. One of the few true masters of Irish traditional fiddle playing, one whose sound can be instantly identified, Peoples remains an unassuming man, generous with his music, and happy to lead a simple life in the countryside of County Clare—he doesn't even have a phone at home. Peoples grew up in a musical family in the village of St. Johnston, in the eastern part of County Donegal that borders with Northern Ireland. Peoples's father, Tom, who was a fiddle player himself, and especially his cousin Joe Cassidy, were Tommy's first source of inspiration and instruction on the fiddle. By all accounts, he was already an impressive player by the time he reached his teenage years. After leaving school, Peoples moved to Dublin where he soon joined in the growing traditional music scene, playing at sessions with the likes of Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn, James and Seán Keane, and Mary Bergin. By the early 1970s, Peoples was living in Clare where he had married the daughter of Kitty Linnane, piano player for the famed Kilfenora Ceili Band. He became a member and participated in a 1974 recording of the band produced by Mick Moloney for the American label Tradition. During that same period, he was also involved for a time with 1691, a short-lived group that toured and recorded in Brittany. Among other members of the band were singer and clavinet player Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill and flute player Matt Molloy, with whom Peoples would soon become a member of the legendary Bothy Band in 1975. The band's debut album, which remains a revered classic, featured Peoples's fiery fiddle-playing prominently. However, the pressures of the road did not agree with Peoples, who parted company with the band in 1976 and settled in Clare once again. That same year, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (Irish Musicians' Association) released an album of live recordings of Peoples made between 1974 and 1976, still regarded as an essential record. In 1976 the fiddler also made a brand new album, *The High Part of the Road*, with guitarist Paul Brady as his accompanist, for the New York label Shanachie. Out of Peoples's participation in informal sessions in Dublin came the exhilarating *Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples*, recorded for Dónal Lunny's Mulligan label in 1977 and released the following year. That same year, Peoples appeared on Paul Brady's celebrated *Welcome Here Kind Stranger*. In 1985 Peoples renewed his ties with Shanachie and recorded *The Iron Man*, with Dáithí Sproule providing the guitar accompaniment. Since then, Peoples has recorded a couple more solo albums, released only in Ireland, but their poor production hasn't done justice to his playing. He continues to appear in concert and teach for workshops. His daughters Siobhán and Gráinne carry on the family tradition with distinction, as does his nephew Séamus Gibson, who strives with great success to emulate his uncle's playing style. And if you are ever in Ennis or Kilfenora, County Clare, you may well run into Tommy Peoples at the local session.

what's available: *The High Part of the Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1976, prod. Richard Nevins, Daniel Michael Collins) was Peoples's first album to be distributed in the United States. His playing has its characteristic urgency and rough edge, even with Paul Brady's guitar playing lending an air of civility. There are some great tunes here associated with Donegal, for instance the reels "The Oak Tree" and "The Pinch of Snuff." *Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mulligan, 1978/Green Linnet, 1985, prod. Dónal Lunny, Paul Brady), sounding much as if the three musicians were having a bit of a session in a Dublin pub, is one of those albums that belong at the top of any list of Irish recordings. It is pure energy and a thrilling listening experience. It would be impossible to list highlights of the album, for each new track is better than the previous one. *The Iron Man* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Daniel Michael Collins, Richard Nevins), with Dáithí Sproule contributing his usual stellar guitar backing, recaptures the atmosphere of Peoples's 1976 album, with some of the rougher edges having been smoothed over. Once again, most of the tracks are of reels, but the medley of strathspeys, including the title tune "The Iron Man" and the hornpipe "Kitty O'Shea," are things of wonder.

worth searching for: Peoples appears with his daughter Siobhán (fiddle) on several tracks of the wonderful live recording *Maiden Voyage* ♪♪♪♪½ (Celtic Music, 1991, prod. Páraic MacDonnchadha, Kevin Crawford), made on location at Peppers Bar in Feakle, County Clare. There are other local performers involved, the music is varied and excellent throughout, and it retains the feel of a live session. If you are very lucky, you may come across Peoples's very first solo LP, *Tommy Peoples* ♪♪♪♪½ (Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, 1976, prod. Séamus MacMathúna). Do not let it pass; it is one of the most exciting records of Irish fiddle playing ever made. Paul Brady's *Welcome Here Kind Stranger* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mulligan, 1978, prod. Dónal Lunny, Paul Brady), an outstanding album recently reissued on compact disc in Ireland and worth looking for in any case, happens to feature the playing of Peoples on several tracks, including the spectacular set of reels "The Boys on the Hilltop/Johnny Goin' to Céilidh."

influences:

Matt Peoples, Joe Cassidy, Vincent Campbell, Frank Kelly, Jimmy Hueston

Siobhán Peoples, Gráinne Peoples, Séamus Gibson, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Paddy Glackin, Paul O'Shaughnessy

see also: *Bothy Band, Matt Molloy, Paul Brady*

Philippe Varlet

Larry Perkins

See: Lonesome Standard Time

Ken Perlman

Born 1949, in New York, NY.

Not content to be merely a talented multi-instrumentalist (banjo, fiddle, and guitar), New York City native Ken Perlman has achieved a well-deserved reputation in the folk music world over the last 20 years as a writer, teacher, and musicologist. In addition to his recordings, he is a regular contributor to such folk-music publications as *Sing Out!* and *Banjo Newsletter,* has produced several instructional videos, and has written a number of instructional books in the popular Mel Bay series. While in his own words, he was "swept away" by the folk-music boom of the early '60s, he found himself being attracted more and more to traditional music and material wherever he could find it. Rather than play this traditional music in the traditional way, however, he began to develop his own approaches to the music. In particular, he devoted much energy and thought to arranging tunes for instruments, especially the five-string banjo, that were considered extremely difficult if not impossible to play on that instrument. Eventually, he became one of the relatively few banjo players to master his own distinctive, melodic clawhammer style. The typical banjo style (old-time or bluegrass) tends to contain more "filler" notes than actual melody, but Perlman's style allows him to perform recognizable tunes on the banjo as a solo instrument. While researching material for a Mel Bay book, he visited Canada's Prince Edward Island and came under the spell of Maritime fiddlers like George MacPhee, Eddy Arsenault, and Peter Chaisson. The fiddling tradition of the island province is so strong, he discovered, that fretted instruments and the people who play them are viewed with a mixture of amusement and suspicion. After absorbing a great many of the Maritime dance hall fiddle tunes, he set to work translating them to the clawhammer banjo, and the result was his 1996 release *Island Boy*. While in recent years players like Béla Fleck, Tony Trischka, and Alison Brown have taken the bluegrass banjo style into previously uncharted territory bordering on jazz and rock, Perlman continues to mine new veins in the traditional realm.

what to buy: The reels, jigs, and strathspeys of the Scottish settlers who came to the Canadian Maritime provinces, specifically Prince Edward Island, form the basis of Perlman's 1996 release *Island Boy* ♪♪♪♪ (Wizmak, 1996, prod. Ken Perlman, John Rossbach, Pete Sutherland, Eric Kilburn). Entirely instrumental, the 16 tracks are presented as medleys done in Perlman's intricate melodic style, covering a total of 41 tunes. Most of the tunes will be unfamiliar to American ears, with the popular "St. Anne's Reel" being a notable exception. Perlman's liner notes for the album go into detail about each tune, and true to his calling as a teacher, he includes the key and banjo tuning for each piece for those who want to learn, or just play along.

the rest:

Devil in the Kitchen ♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1993)

worth searching for: *Live in the U.K.* ♪♪♪ (Halstead, 1987), currently available on cassette only, may be released on CD in the near future. *Clawhammer Banjo and Fingerstyle Guitar Solos* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1984, prod. Andy Polon) and *Melodic Clawhammer Banjo* ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1977, prod. Ken Perlman) are out-of-print LPs that can sometimes be found in the stalls of record dealers at folk, bluegrass, and old-time festivals.

influences:

Walt Koken, Howie Bursen, Kathleen Collins, Andy McGann

Tony Ellis, Carroll Best, Will Keys

John Lupton

Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss

Formed 1978, in Seattle, WA.

Cliff Perry (born January 16, 1944), guitar, vocals; Laurel Bliss (born November 6, 1951), guitar, Dobro, vocals.

Cliff Perry and Laurel Bliss rank among the best of the current crop of old-time country song interpreters. Bliss is blessed with an unusual vocal timbre, which is by turns deep, rugged, and airy. Perry's mellow baritone fuses with her dusky alto, creating understated homespun harmonies that are pure and sweet as mountain spring water. Veterans of the Seattle, Washington old-time and bluegrass scene, their exquisite blend of forthright country harmonies is a standout because of its subtle (and occasionally quirky) ornamentation; Perry and Bliss have thoroughly internalized the vocal style of a bygone time and place, and have made it their own. In 1987, after years of

singing together as members of the legendary Pacific Northwest bluegrass band Southfork, Perry and Bliss made a home recording of eight of their favorite old-time country duets. Seven years later, they re-recorded those songs, and added six more in the same genre; this lovely recording is their only commercially available one.

what's available: *Old Pal* ♪♪♪♪ (Telegraph Music, 1993, prod. John M. Miller) peacefully evokes the old-time way of life in the Southern mountains, with its simple but powerful arrangements of songs by the Carter Valley, the Blue Sky Boys, and other early country music singers. Recorded direct to DAT (without any mixing, splicing, or overdubbing), *Old Pal* garnered rave reviews from such icons of old-time music as Jody Stecher, who calls the album "superb." Perry and Bliss have spent many years absorbing the ethos of early country music of the 1920s and 1930s, and this is expressed in their vocal approach, which is straightforward and plain, but emotionally intensely direct. The backup is very simple indeed, consisting solely of Perry on guitar and Bliss on guitar and Dobro; *Old Pal* is definitely an album of songs, rather than a showcase of instrumental virtuosity, but mention must be made of Bliss's melting Dobro tone, which reflects the influence of Dobroist Sally Van Meter.

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Blue Sky Boys, Monroe Brothers

▶▶ Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, Any Old Time Stringband, Delta Sisters, Sally Van Meter

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Peter & Gordon

Formed 1963, in London, England; disbanded 1968.

Peter Asher (born June 22, 1944, in London, England), vocals, guitar; Gordon Waller (born June 4, 1945, in Braemar, Scotland), vocals, guitar.

Peter Asher and Gordon Waller began singing together as schoolmates at London's Westminster School for Boys. Asher became friends with Paul McCartney in the early days of Beatlemania when Paul was dating Asher's younger sister, Jane. Peter and Gordon's first three hits, including their chart-topping breakthrough "A World without Love," all came from McCartney's prolific pen, and during 1964 and '65, the duo was constantly on the charts. In addition to McCartney, Peter and Gordon tapped Del Shannon, Phil Spector, and Buddy Holly (the red-headed Asher wore Holly-like spectacles in tribute to the late rocker) for its soft-rocking material, and although the duo often wrote songs together, most of the twosome's bluesier originals were relegated to album cuts and b-sides. Besides Holly, the duo's early influences ranged from Woody Guthrie and Charlie Parker to Elvis Presley, with the Everly Brothers providing firm common ground. After Peter and Gordon's hits stopped coming, Asher went on to become an in-demand producer and manager, playing key roles in the careers of numerous contemporary folk-tinged artists including James Taylor and Linda Ronstadt.

what's available: *The Best of Peter and Gordon* ♪♪♪½ (Rhino 1991, comp. prod. Bill Inglot) traces the duo's entire 1964–68 career, including the four Paul McCartney–penned chartbusters and all their other hits. As their material became increasingly middle-of-the-road, it lost much of its spark, so many of the latter songs here are curiosities at best, like their precious late mini-hit "Sunday for Tea" (a second-rate attempt to create a Ray Davies–like slice of life scene) and a clueless stab at Phil Ochs's topical "The Flower Lady." *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (CEMA Special Products, 1992/1994, prod. various) offers just the hits, no filler or surprises on this specially priced, 10-track collection.

worth searching for: For a real flashback to mid-'60s British pop with folk and blues leanings, *I Go to Pieces* ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1965, prod. Norman Newell, John Burgess, Dave Dexter Jr.) showcases the duo's harmonies in a more relaxed setting then you get when you hear just the hits. Along with the Del Shannon–composed title track, you get several of Peter and Gordon's best originals, oddly appealing covers of songs by Leadbelly and Pomus/Shuman, and a very Everlys-esque version of "All Shook Up."

influences:

◀◀ Paul McCartney, Everly Brothers

▶▶ Linda Ronstadt, Hollies

David Sokol

Peter, Paul & Mary

Formed 1961, in New York City; disbanded 1970; reunited 1978.

Peter Yarrow (born May 31, 1938, in New York, NY), guitar, vocals; Noel "Paul" Stookey (born November 30, 1937, in Baltimore, MD), guitar, vocals; Mary Travers (born November 11, 1937, in Louisville, KY), vocals.

Following their 1961 debut at Greenwich Village's Bitter End coffee house, Peter, Paul, and Mary went on to become the most successful folk group of the decade. Emulating the Weavers'

tradition of blending classic with contemporary repertoire, the trio recorded 19 hit singles (six in the Top 10), and 11 hit albums (eight going gold) before 1970. Their lush three-part harmonies and their commitments to promoting social justice have produced such timeless hits as "Blowin' in the Wind" (Bob Dylan), "If I Had a Hammer" (Pete Seeger and Lee Hays), "Leaving on a Jet Plane" (John Denver), and "Puff the Magic Dragon" (by Peter, Paul, and Mary's own Peter Yarrow). In 1970 the trio split to pursue three moderately successful solo careers, reuniting only in 1976 to produce their "25th Anniversary Concert"—one of the most popular PBS fund-raisers in history. In 1978 Peter, Paul, and Mary officially restated their vows and have since maintained a steady career of performing and recording: members divide their time between group and solo projects, playing about 45 dates a year as a trio. And true to their roots, Peter, Paul, and Mary support benefits for homelessness, world hunger, anti-apartheid, and other worthy causes. Their career as a trio now spans 19 albums and two generations, as they bring their magical vocal blend—and a piece of their 1960s idealism—to the children of their earliest fans.

what to buy: *Peter, Paul, and Mary* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1962, prod. Albert Grossman) marks the trio's recording debut, bringing folk music to the vast American public and to the top of the charts. The liner notes accurately describe their blend as "an angel, and two cellos playing guitars." Shining with youthful enthusiasm and virtue, the album serves as a reminder of our nobler selves and of the social consciousness in which folk music is rooted. The double-sided hit "Lemon Tree" and "If I Had a Hammer" is a classic pairing of musical story telling and political activism—the later becoming an anthem of the civil rights movement. "Cruel War" and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" speak eloquently of the personal sacrifices supporting a costly war in Vietnam. And "Autumn to May" introduces the trio's wonderful gift for interpreting children's songs. If you fancy yourself a folk collector, this album belongs on your list of classics. *Lifelines* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1995, prod. Phil Ramone) unites three generations of folk singers, as Peter, Paul, and Mary sing with their mentors, their contemporaries, and the new singer-songwriters who carry on the time-honored folk tradition. Participants include Ronnie Gilbert and Fred Hellerman (formerly of the Weavers), Richie Havens, Tom Paxton, Dave Van Ronk, John Sebastian, Buddy Mondlock, and Susan Werner. Regarding the diversity of this talented choir, Peter, Paul, and Mary note: "the sum is greater than the parts—that's what folk music is all about." The remake of "The Great Mandella (The Wheel of Life)" (with Havens, Carly Simon, and Lucy Simon) is as fresh as the trio's 1967 version. And Stookey's recent composition "For the Love of It All" (sung with Emmylou Harris) reveals the faith of a maturing soul: "For the Love of it all, like the stars and the sun, we are hearts on the rise, separate eyes with the vision of one." *In Concert* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1964, prod. Albert Grossman, John Court) highlights a cornucopia of classics, with definitive performances of "Rolling Home," "Leaving on a Jet Plane," "No Other Name," and the trio's signature anthem "The Song Is Love." For a touch of levity, Travers sings "I'm in Love with a Big Blue Frog" and Stookey presents his wry monologue "Paul Talk." This album presents the still-developing Peter, Paul, and Mary in better form than in their earlier studio recordings of these numbers. And, notably, "Single Girl" gives an early look at the feminist ideals that would characterize the civil rights movement in decades to come.

what to buy next: Peter, Paul, and Mary's million-seller *Album 1700* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1967, prod. Albert Grossman, Milton Okun) is a worthwhile musical outing for the seasoned follower. In addition to the Top 40 hit "Leaving on a Jet Plane" (which helped establish songwriter Denver's stellar career), the collection reveals some notable artistic experiments. Stookey presents two originals: "What's Her Name," a casual recitation recalling lost love, and "I Dig Rock and Roll Music," a biting satire on a growing movement that would eventually reduce the trio's popularity. And Yarrow's original "The Great Mandella (The Wheel of Life)" takes a 1960s peak at Eastern philosophy. This set presents works that miss entry onto Peter, Paul, and

editor's choice
7 autoharp albums

Mike Fenton, *The Best of Mike Fenton 1984–1996* (Heritage)

Karen Mueller, *Clarity* (Streamline)

Bryan Bowers, *By Heart* (Flying Fish)

June Maugery, *Shining Bright Like Gold* (Studio du Mont-Blanc)

Les Gustafson-Zook, *Gather at the River* (Raindrop)

Mike Herr, *Gander in the Pratie Hole* (MH/CP)

Alan Mager, *Hear the Colors* (AFM)

peter, paul & mary

Mary's list of classics, but are artistically valuable nonetheless. The album title *Peter, Paul, and Mommy Too* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1993, prod. Peter Yarrow, John McClure) represents a word play on the trio's 1969 release *Peter, Paul, and Mommy*—a nickname coined by Travers's daughter Erika. This Grammy-nominated album was taped at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Majestic Theatre with a live audience of children and their families. Peter, Paul, and Mary's way with youth is nicely preserved with such classics as "Puff, the Magic Dragon," "The Fox," "The Garden Song," "Blowin' in the Wind," "Inside," and "If I Had a Hammer." The album *See What Tomorrow Brings* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1966, prod. Albert Grossman) is best described in the liner notes: the group's "message is the same as that of any artist through the centuries—a sermon of truth and beauty in the context of their times." And indeed, this is another beautiful collection. The rendition of "Early Morning Rain" helped launch Gordon Lightfoot's prolific career, while "The Last Thing on My Mind" put Tom Paxton on the map. And Travers's voice is ever so touching in "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face."

the rest:
Moving ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1962)
In the Wind ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1963)
A Song Will Rise ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1965)
Album ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1966)
Late Again ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1968)
Peter, Paul, and Mommy ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1969)
Best Of ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1970)
Reunion ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1978)
No Easy Walk to Freedom ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1986)
A Holiday Celebration ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1988)
Flowers and Stones ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1990)
LifeLines Live ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1996)

worth searching for: *Eugene McCarthy for President—If You Love Your Country* ♪♪♪♪♪ (1968, prod. Peter, Paul, and Mary) is a pair of singles that the trio recorded in their early prime for a failed presidential campaign. This quirky piece of left-wing memorabilia weaves their trademark vocal harmonies with sound bites of the candidate. *Children* ♪♪♪ (Project Survival, 1985, prod. Peter, Paul, and Mary) is a single recorded March 29, 1985, on stage at the Riverside Theatre in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with all proceeds going to a local non-profit organization providing food and clothing to the needy. 1960s-style social consciousness is still breathing. *Paul and . . .* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1971, prod. Jim Mason, Ed Mattau) is the only solo album by any member of the group to stand any test of time, its moderate success due primarily to the gem "Wedding Song"—a Top 40 hit and nuptial favorite. Stookey's moderate success as a solo artist suggests he is the premiere talent of the famed trio. Look for this in the "analog disk" section of your favorite used-record store.

influences:
◀◀ Pete Seeger, Weavers, Ramblin' Jack Elliot, Dave Van Ronk, Gordon Lightfoot, John Denver, Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton

▶▶ Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell, Holly Near, John Gorka, Nanci Griffith, Carly Simon, John Sebastian, Susan Werner, Darryl Tookes

Art Wojtowicz

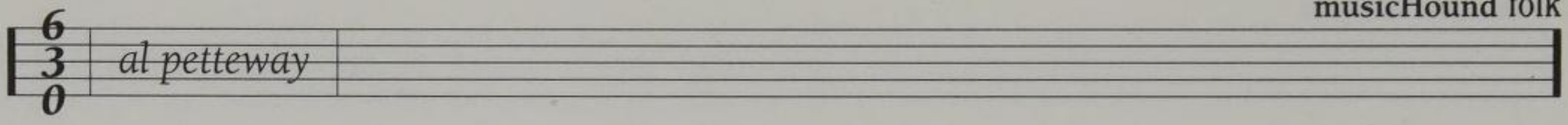
Mary Travers of Peter, Paul, and Mary **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

Ed Pettersen

Born January 29, 1962, in Glen Cove, NY.

A singer-songwriter out of the once-agricultural section of Long Island, Ed Pettersen, like many budding musicians of his era, learned guitar from listening to Beatles records. Unfortunately, it took the deeper lessons from those records a while to take hold: Pettersen spent several years working at a New York ad agency before deciding to become a full-time songwriter and performer. He comes out of the same New York roots scene that inspired cult favorites like the Del Lords, and played guitar behind Dion ("Runaround Sue," "The Wanderer") before setting out on his own. Pettersen released his first album in 1995 and formed his band, the High Line Riders, a couple of years later.

what's available: Pettersen's debut, *Desperate Times* ♪♪½ (DIM, 1995, prod. Dave Kincaid), is a stripped-down roots album that sounds more like a demo than anything else. There are a few choice tunes here, most notably Blind Alfred Reed's "How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live" and "Cheyenne," both previously recorded by friend Scott Kempner's former band, the Del Lords. Pettersen's writing highlight comes at the end, with the Springsteen-influenced working-man anthem "This Hard Land." *Somewhere South of Here* ♪♪♪ (Tangible, 1997) benefits from a regular band, Pettersen's High Line Riders. Kempner has a few more tunes here (three written with Pettersen) and Pettersen's been taking lessons from Nashville writers with songs like "DWIOU" and "How I Lost You (The Official Record)." It's a solid roots-rock record that shows across-the-board improvement since his debut.



influences:

Del Lords, Dion, Bruce Springsteen

Brian Mansfield

Al Petteway

Born October 17, 1952, in Belleville, IL.

Al Petteway began his professional music career at age 11 during the height of the British pop invasion. He played guitar, drums, and string bass with a variety of rock and folk acts in the Washington, D.C., area during the 1960s, becoming a local legend by the time he went to college to study music composition in 1970. During that time, he performed with the Old Dominion University Madrigal Singers, his school's jazz and symphonic bands, and the Norfolk Ballet Orchestra. After graduation he performed with night club dance bands until 1977 when he took a job with the National Geographic Society. His years as supervisor of picture editing for the society's Image Collection gave him the artistic freedom he needed to discover his own musical style on acoustic guitar. From 1981 to 1986, Petteway and mandolinist Akira Otsuka became "house musicians" for the Birchmere, a world-renowned folk club in Alexandria, Virginia, where they backed many nationally known acts. They were also founding members of Grazz Matazz, an exciting group that became one of the premier "new acoustic" acts of the time, performing a mix of bluegrass, jazz, and rock styles on acoustic instruments. Their landmark album *Delinquent Minor* featured guest appearances by such top acoustic musicians as Béla Fleck, Jethro Burns, and Mike Auldridge. It won a "Wammie" for Best Album in 1986, the first of numerous awards that Petteway has received from the Washington Area Music Association. His subsequent studio and live performances with Peter Rowan, Debi Smith, the Smith Sisters, Grace Griffith, Susan Graham White, Cheryl Wheeler, Jonathan Edwards, Tom Paxton, and others, helped gain him a reputation as one of the best accompanists in the music business. In 1987 Petteway's first solo recording, *Dryad Dance*, sparked the formation of the Al Petteway Quartet, an all-instrumental acoustic act featuring Petteway and guitarist John Jennings of Mary Chapin Carpenter fame. His follow-up album *Whispering Stones*, a collection of Celtic-inspired original compositions and unique arrangements of traditional music from the British Isles, caught the attention of Maggie's Music, an Annapolis-based label that specializes in Celtic music. In 1993 it signed him and has since released *Whispering Stones* and *The Waters and the Wild*, exposing his music to an international audience for the first time. In autumn of 1993, the National Geographic Society presented "The Waters and the Wild" as a multi-media event that showcased Petteway's music and photography. Images of fresh-water locations in the mid-Atlantic region that have served as inspiration for Petteway's compositions were projected during two live performances of the music at the society's Grosvenor Auditorium. During the same week, he swept the Washington Area Music Awards, winning the highest honors of top artist and musician. In 1994 the environmental aspect of his music and photography attracted the attention of newly elected Vice President Al Gore, who asked him to perform for a private dinner at their home where Tipper Gore had placed a copy of *The Waters and the Wild* at each place setting as gifts for the guests. Petteway left the National Geographic Society to become a full-time musician in the spring of 1995, just before the release of *Midsummer Moon*. An interview with Noah Adams on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, featuring the music from this recording, generated more tape requests than any other music segment ever aired on the program. As a Maggie's Music recording artist, Petteway plays and records regularly with Scottish fiddler Bonnie Rideout and hammered dulcimer player Maggie Sansone. Their 1996 collaborative effort, *A Scottish Christmas*, led to internationally broadcast appearances on *CBS Sunday Morning* and NPR's *Performance Today*. The 1997 release of *Caledon Wood* puts Petteway into a new and more elite class of musician and composer. His unique interpretation of "Celtic" music promises to bring him yet more international acclaim, as will his more contemporary compositions and collaborative efforts with his wife Amy White, an award-winning multi-instrumentalist who played on and co-produced his last two recordings and performs with him in concert.

what to buy: *Caledon Wood* ♪♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1997, prod. Al Petteway, Amy White) is an exceptional album that demonstrates both the subtlety and the power of Petteway's playing. The title track, combining Celtic, African, and South American elements, shows just how far Petteway has come during his short but brilliant career.

what to buy next: *The Waters and the Wild* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1994, prod. Al Petteway, Larry Sifel, Jim Ebert) is Petteway's award-winning tribute to the environment in and around Washington, D.C., from Chincoteague Island to the Great Dismal Swamp.

the rest:

Dryad's Dance ♪♪♪½ (Sifel's Creek, 1987)
Whispering Stones ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1994)
Midsummer Moon ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1995)

(With Bonnie Rideout and Maggie Sansone) *A Scottish Christmas* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1996, prod. Maggie Sansone)

worth searching for: Petteway's album with the band Grazz Matazz, *Delinquent Minor* ♪♪♪ (Matrix Records, 1985), long out of print, is a mix of hot bluegrass and swing rather than the introspective music he now plays. Nevertheless, it is worth snatching if you find an old LP in a cutout bin.

influences:

John Renbourn, Alex di Grassi

Martin Simpson

see also: *Maggie Sansone*

Neal Walters

Pierce Pettis

Born in Fort Payne, AL.

Though he's one of the most thoughtful singer-songwriters around, part of Pierce Pettis's talent comes from his versatility: Listen to his songs closely, and you'll find tracks of rock and R&B influences behind the warmth of his voice and acoustic guitar. A native of Alabama and a former student at Florida State University, Pettis spent time performing in both those states before moving to New York and hooking up with the *Fast Folk* crowd. He recorded an independent album in 1984, later signing with Windham Hill's High Street label and recording three albums. He moved to Nashville's Compass Records in 1996 for *Making Light of It* and currently splits his time between Atlanta and Nashville.

what to buy: The songs on *Tinseltown* ♪♪♪½ (High Street, 1991, prod. Mark Heard) cover a period of about six years, including some from Pettis's first independent album. When he culled the best tunes from that period, he came up with what's probably the strongest album of his career. His spirituality adds a sense of depth to love songs like "Can't Get Away from My Love" and "You Need a Love." Any good writer could get mileage out of the birth of a son, as Pettis does with "Little Man," but Pettis can turn even political tunes like "Mickey Leland," about a congressman who died in a plane crash while on a humanitarian mission, into personal ones.

what to buy next: *Making Light of It* ♪♪♪½ (Compass, 1996, prod. David Miner) is perhaps the most overtly spiritual album of Pettis's career, with songs about Absalom, an heir to the throne of the Hebrew king David, and the Virgin Mary (or Miriam, as she would have been called in her day). "Satellite Sky" is the second song by the late Mark Heard that Pettis has recorded (he cut "Nod over Coffee" on *Chase the Buffalo*); "You Move Me" was later recorded by country superstar Garth Brooks.

the rest:

While the Serpent Lies Sleeping ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1989)

Chase the Buffalo ♪♪♪½ (High Street, 1993)

worth searching for: Pettis's first album, *Moments* ♪♪♪½ (Small World, 1984), came out on a small label and is not easily found. But new versions of both the title track and "Grandmother's Song" made it onto 1991's *Tinseltown*.

influences:

Mark Heard, Bruce Cockburn, David Wilcox, John Gorka

Brian Mansfield

Kelly Joe Phelps

Pacific northwest denizen Kelly Joe Phelps has become an in-demand session player lately, working with cutting-edge artists like Dave Alvin and Greg Brown. Phelps's atmospheric acoustic slide is accomplished by playing a normal acoustic guitar in his lap. A very low-key solo performer, he is an affecting vocalist as well as a very tasteful slide and finger-style guitarist. Although he has only produced two solo albums, Phelps has become a session guitarist of choice in recent years, appearing on albums by, among others, Martin Simpson, Tony Furtado, Greg Brown, and Dave Alvin (with whom Phelps occasionally performs in an acoustic duo).

what to buy: Phelps recorded the 12 solo tracks on *Roll Away the Stone* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1997, prod. Kelly Joe Phelps) either at home in Washington State, or in an abandoned house in Portland. He draws heavily on the classic blues songbook ("See That My Grave Is Kept Clean," "Cypress Grove," "That's Alright"), but his originals, like the slow, plaintive title tune and the mournful "Without the Light," sound like they could have come off of the Mississippi Delta as well. Even on gospel numbers, such as the title track and "When the Roll Is Called up Yonder," Phelps's world-weary vocals contrast strikingly with the lyrical celebrations of salvation. He play fast and intricately on the instrumental "Doxology," but elsewhere he mostly goes for feeling rather than flash.

what to buy next: *Lead Me On* ♪♪♪ (Burnside, 1994, prod. Kelly Joe Phelps), his debut, is in much the same vein as *Roll Away the Stone*, a minimalist blend of traditional blues ("Hard Time

bruce u. "utah" phillips

Killin' Floor Blues," "Leavin' Blues") and gospel numbers ("Motherless Children," "I've Been Converted"). Phelps's clean, intricate slide is flawless throughout.

influences:

David Lindley, Robert Johnson, Bob Brozman

Greg Brown, Dave Alvin, Tony Furtado

Michael Parrish

Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

Born 1935.

When Bruce Phillips, barely out of his teenage years, emerged from military service after the Korean War, he was, by his own admission, an angry and bitter young man, resolved to never again allow anyone—individuals, groups, or faceless bureaucrats—to tell him who his enemies were. Eventually, he crossed paths with Ammon Hennacy and the Catholic Workers Movement, an experience that confirmed him as a dedicated pacifist and anarchist. Though these two stands might appear on the surface to be contradictory ("anarchist" generally thought of as being synonymous with "bomb thrower," after all), it's a measure of Phillips's startling and rare ability to say more about life's absurdities and complexities in a few words or verses than most others can say in an encyclopedia, when he simply states, "An anarchist is someone who doesn't need a policeman to tell him what to do." As the son of parents who were both immersed in the labor struggles of the Depression and ensuing years, Phillips is also a proud, dyed-in-the-wool Wobbly, and much of his music emphasizes his commitment to advancing and protecting the rights of workers everywhere. While employed in the Utah State Archives in 1968, he ran for the U.S. Senate as the candidate of the Peace and Freedom Party, garnering all of 6,000 votes, and losing his job in the process. Prodded by his friend, folksinger Rosalie Sorrels, he packed his life into a VW minibus he christened "Hitler's Revenge" and headed for the legendary Café Lena in Saratoga, New York to begin a performing career that in has led to the 1997 Lifetime Achievement Award from the North American Folk Alliance, in recognition of his standing as one of the most beloved singers, songwriters, organizers, and storytellers of the folk movement. Styling himself as "U. Utah Phillips, the Golden Voice of the Great Southwest" (after the country music idol of his youth, T. Texas Tyler), he has traveled the world for nearly 30 years, joyously iconoclastic, provocatively and beautifully lyrical, and never less than uproariously funny in pointing out just how pompous and silly we all actually are. Although steeped in the traditional, he has an adventurous side as well—in 1996 he collaborated with avant-garde folksinger Ani DiFranco to produce *the past didn't go anywhere*, a fusion of Phillips's spoken words against a background of funk/rap/country rhythm, released on DiFranco's own Righteous Babe label. In recent years, health problems have forced Phillips to severely curtail his touring and performing and retire to his home in Nevada City, California, but his legacy of songs, which include "Room for the Poor," "Green Rolling Hills," "Starlight on the Rails," "Rock Salt and Nails," and many, many more, ensures that his name will be part of the folk music community as long as there are folk songs to be sung.

what to buy: *Good Though* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1973, prod. Al McKenney, Louis Krieg) is Phillips at his overall best, including his legendary "Moose Turd Pie" story, as well as popular favorites "Starlight on the Rails" and "Daddy, What's a Train?" Where his other recordings tend to feature Phillips by himself, accompanied only by his own guitar, he's backed up on *Good Though!* by Jane Voss (vocals), Martin Grosswendt (Dobro, Hawaiian guitar), Danny Coane (acoustic bass), and Scott Campbell (fiddle).

what to buy next: *All Used Up: A Scrapbook* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1975) includes his own recording of "Room for the Poor," as well as versions of songs written by two of his prime influences, Goebel Reeves ("Hobo's Lullaby") and "Haywire Mac" McClintock ("Hallelujah, I'm a Bum"). Recorded without a band, this album leaves the listener with more of a feel of what it's like to hear Phillips perform in person, at least musically.

what to avoid: *the past didn't go anywhere* ♪♪½ (Righteous Babe, 1996, prod. Ani DiFranco) isn't a necessary addition to the Phillips record collection, not because it's a clunker (it isn't), but it's less representative of his music on the whole than his solo projects. DiFranco mixes a variety of rhythms underneath his recorded monologues and, while it's interesting conceptually and entertaining simply because Phillips can't help but be attention-riveting in any context, it's not "folk music" in the traditional sense of the term.

the rest:

El Capitan ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1969)

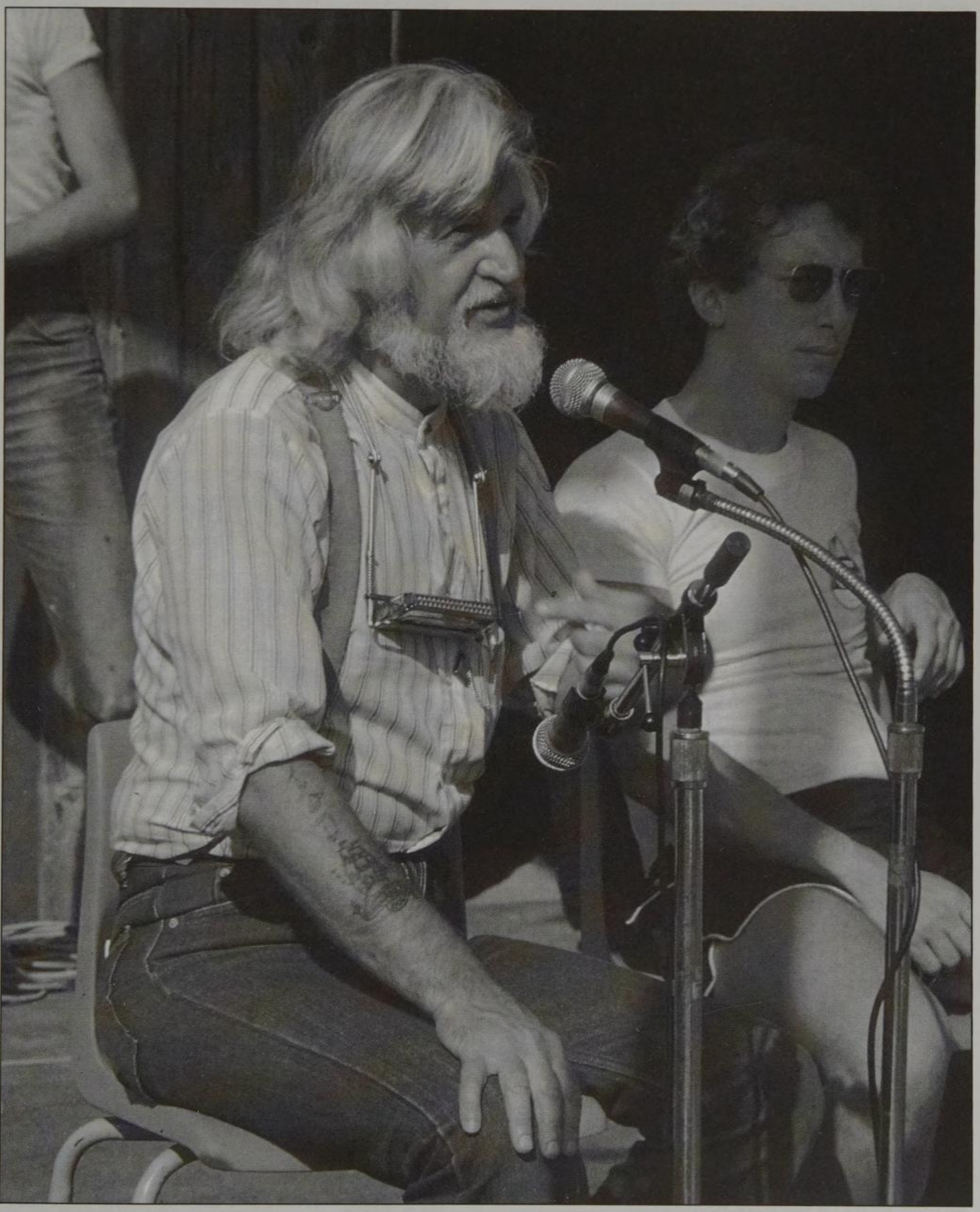
We Have Fed You All for a Thousand Years ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1984)

I've Got to Know ♪♪♪½ (Alcazar, 1991)

Loafer's Glory ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997)

Utah Phillips **(© Robert J. Huffman/Field Mark Publications)**

bruce u. "utah" phillips



todd phillips

worth searching for: *Legends of Folk* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1992, prod. Neenah Ellis) is a CD release of a live performance featuring Utah Phillips, Ramblin' Jack Elliot, and Spider John Koerner. Phillips serves as emcee for the show, and the highlight of the album is his discourse covering folk music, Unitarians, and former president Ronald Reagan in one fell swoop, followed by his version of Sara Carter's "Railroading on the Great Divide." *Heart Songs: The Old-Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997) is an album devoted to several lesser-known, yet beautiful Phillips songs, done by the California husband/wife old-time duet singers Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin, with liner notes written by Phillips. "Orphan Train" and "I Remember Loving You" are special standouts.

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Carter Family, Woody Guthrie, T. Texas Tyler, Goebel Reeves, "Haywire Mac" McClintock

▶▶ Emmylou Harris, Ani DiFranco, Critton Hollow String Band, Rosalie Sorrels, Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Kate Wolf

John Lupton

Todd Phillips

One of today's most versatile and accomplished acoustic musicians, it is no accident that Todd Phillips has so often been at the right place at the right time. A charter member of the David Grisman Quintet, Phillips started his career as a mandolin player before switching to what has become his main instrument, the acoustic bass, during the late 1970s. His subtly intricate bass lines have made him the player of choice for a significant portion of the acoustic/bluegrass community. Over the years, he has played scores of sessions, as well as being a member of the Tony Rice Unit, Montreux, the Bluegrass Album Band (along with Rice, Jerry Douglas, Bobby Hicks, and J.D. Crowe), the Good Ol' Persons, Psychograss, Kathy Kallick's Little Big Band, and Laurie Lewis and Grant Street. In addition to producing four solo albums, Phillips is also an accomplished luthier and has produced albums for artists like Kathy Kallick and David Grier.

what to buy: Phillips produced, engineered, arranged, and played on *True Life Blues: The Music of Bill Monroe* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Todd Phillips), an all-star tribute to the late great father of bluegrass music, and garnered a Grammy for his efforts. The project succeeds in being both reverent and adventurous. The Big Mon would've been proud.

what to buy next: *Timeframe* ♪♪♪½ (Compass, 1985, prod. Todd Phillips), Phillips's second solo disc, is an ambitious, progressive release that features classical and jazz instrumentation along with typical bluegrass instruments.

the rest:

Released ♪♪♪ (Varrick, 1984)
In the Pines ♪♪♪ (Gourd, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, David Grisman, John Coltrane

▶▶ Mike Marshall, David Grier, Rob Wasserman

see also: *Psychograss, Laurie Lewis, David Grier, Mike Marshall, Tony Trischka, Good Ol' Persons*

Michael Parrish

Utah Phillips

See: Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

Washington Phillips

Born 1891, in Freestone County, TX. Died December 31, 1938, or 1939, in Austin, TX.

Washington Phillips is to old-time black country-gospel music what Robert Johnson is to Delta blues. He'll never equal Johnson's fame and notoriety, of course, but, like Johnson, his musical legacy consists of a small treasure-trove of emotionally intense music captured in Columbia field recordings. Also like Johnson, the details of his life are shrouded in mystery and he died in apparent tragic circumstances. (Phillips spent the final eight years of his life in a state mental institution in Austin.) In his recordings, made during three sessions between 1927 and 1929, he performed solo, accompanying himself on a dolceola, an archaic tabletop instrument constructed of a zither-like body with 60 wire strings in a housing similar to an autoharp. It featured a small keyboard and was marketed as a "miniature grand piano." In Phillips's hands, the instrument created a haunting, carousel effect that was a curiously effective complement to the plaintive religious commitment evident in his vocals and lyrics.

what's available: Sixteen of Phillips's 18 recordings have survived and are available on *I Am Born to Preach the Gospel: The Complete Recorded Works of Washington Phillips* ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1991, prod. Richard Nevins) or the compilation album *Storefront and Streetcorner Gospel 1927–1929* ♪♪♪♪ (Document), which also includes seven tracks by the Forehands and two by Luther Magby.

worth searching for: The late-'70s LP *Denomination Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Agram, prod. Guido van Rijn) includes the same material as the titles above, but is worth finding if only for the fine liner notes by van Rijn and Hans Vergeer.

influences:

◀◀ C.A. Tindley, Pace Jubilee Singers, Blind Willie Johnson, Mississippi Fred McDowell

▶▶ Willie Mae Ford Smith, Dixie Hummingbirds, Southern Harps, Sister Rosetta Tharpe

Bryan Powell

Phranc

Born Susan Gottlieb, August 28, 1957, in Santa Monica, CA.

Boy, did Phranc emerge at the wrong time. During the mid-1980s, when Ronald Reagan ruled and even punk rock's lesbians and gay men weren't totally encouraged to come out of the closet, this self-described "all-American Jewish lesbian folk singer" began inflicting her wonderful sense of humor on society at large. After playing in a few punk bands and co-opting the genre's ironic sense of humor, the former Ms. Gottlieb renamed herself Phranc and began a solo career. She sang about her love for female mud-wrestlers, a clever obsession with Kim Novak in the Hitchcock film *Vertigo*, and her hatred for punk's misguided emphasis on sexism and Nazism. In one of her most hilarious songs, she also rewrote the Modern Lovers' famous "Pablo Picasso" to "Gertrude Stein," neatly recasting the feminist icon as a rock 'n' roll rebel. Sadly, when lesbians became hip circa 1996—Ellen DeGeneres, Melissa Etheridge, and even k.d. lang take themselves far more seriously than Phranc ever did—the singer's career suffered personal setbacks. Her brother was murdered in 1991, and she left the music industry for several years, returning with a bizarre Neil Diamond tribute tour and an EP on the gay-friendly riot-grrrl label Kill Rock Stars.

what to buy: Though Phranc's best-known music came out on big record labels, it's hard to find in record stores these days: *Positively Phranc* ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1991) includes a co-written song with macho country-rocker Dave Alvin, a gender-bending take on the Beach Boys' "Surfer Girl," and the gleeful "Gertrude Stein"; the highlight of *I Enjoy Being a Girl* ♪♪♪ (Island, 1989) is "Take off Your Swastika," which Phranc used to sing, courageously, to slam-dancers at punk shows.

what to buy next: The *Goofyfoot* ♪♪♪ EP (Kill Rock Stars, 1995), aside from an inexplicable surf-music obsession, is most notable for its backup musicians, Hole's Patty Schemel and Bikini Kill's Tobi Vail, among others. Who says punks don't take care of their own? With luck, Phranc's comeback will take over the planet.

the rest:

Folksinger ♪♪½ (Rhino, 1985/Island, 1990)

influences:

◀◀ Joan Baez, Sex Pistols, k.d. lang, Beach Boys, Ventures, New York Dolls, Two Nice Girls

▶▶ Melissa Etheridge, Bikini Kill, Hole, Nirvana, Mary Lou Lord

Steve Knopper

Jo Carol Pierce

Born July 20, 1944, in Wellington, TX.

Somewhere between the coffeehouse warblings of Phoebe, Lisa Kudrow's character on TV's *Friends*, and, say, Wittgenstein, there's the work of Jo Carol Pierce. The ex-wife of Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Pierce is a contemporary of the brighter lights along the Austin/Lubbock axis—Gilmore, Joe Ely, Butch Hancock, Terry Allen, Angela Strehli, and David Halley. She wrote her songs in secret during the 1970s, then began writing plays and screenplays. Her works include *Falling*, *Back to School*, *New World Tango* (with music by Ely), *Bad Girls Upset by the Truth*, and *In the West* (which ran in Austin for five years). An infrequent performer, Pierce works by day as a counselor on a state-run child-abuse hot line.

what's available: Pierce's only recording, *Bad Girls Upset by the Truth* ♪♪♪♪ (Monkey Hill, 1995, prod. Frank Quintini, Troy Campbell), is a collection of monologues and music tracing a "bad girl's" complex romantic and religious history. Hilarious, outrageous, and absolutely true to life, the play contains such philosophical musings as "Does God Have Us by the Twat or What?," "Secret Dan," and "I Blame God." Great stuff.

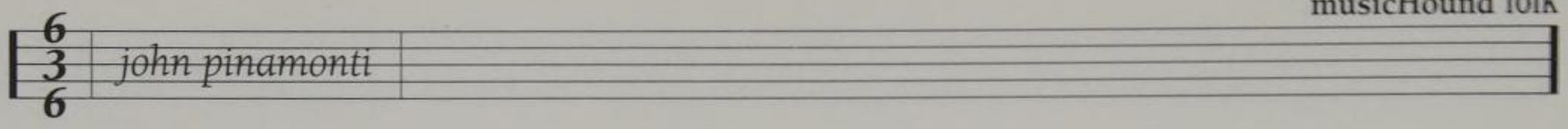
worth searching for: A slightly uneven tribute album, *Across the Great Divide: Songs of Jo Carol Pierce* ♪♪♪½ (Dejadisc, 1992) finds such artists as Gilmore, Allen, Ely, Michael Hall, Darden Smith, and David Halley, among others, performing Pierce's wonderful songs.

influences:

◀◀ Terry Allen, Mary Magdalene, Joan of Arc

▶▶ Shawn Colvin, Mary Chapin Carpenter

Daniel Durchholz



John Pinamonti

Born January 14, 1961, in Los Angeles, CA.

How apt that a songwriter professing a Townes Van Zandt inspiration is on a label that's recently released a Van Zandt album. What John Pinamonti gets from the Texas troubadour is good storytelling sense and deep commitment; what marks Pinamonti as his own man is effectively straightforward language and scintillating acoustic guitar technique. He spent four years playing with African master drummer Obo Addy, touring across the United States and Canada. Raised in Texas and Oregon, for the last few years he has lived in New York City, where he has performed at such venues as CBGB's Gallery and Lounge, Mercury Lounge, and other spots on the city's folk circuit.

what's available: The best song on *Tragico Magico* ♪♪♪♪ (Gregor, 1997, prod. John Pinamonti, Scott Anthony) is "Like Willie Mays," a perfectly limned history of a friendship begun casually and ended by one man's death in the Marines. It's laid out in everyday events moving in their utter naturalness. Pinamonti varies his approach with a tall tale, "Westbound Freight," about being tempted by the Devil; "He asked me for a smoke, but he carried his own flame" is an example of his marvelously dry eye for detail. "The Blues Left Texas" is Pinamonti's most bravura performance, the only overt showcase for his superb guitar playing. Even here it's not a matter of how many notes he can play, but rather perfect proportion and gestures inflected just enough to be dramatic but not so much as to overpower the story. "For Years" effectively varies the album's timbral palette with a little Dylan-esque harmonica by Pinamonti. Otherwise, aside from a few tracks including upright bassist John Abbey, his singing and picking are the whole show until the last of the 12 songs, where he and Abbey are joined by Boo Reiners on banjo and Karen Ramos on vocals, suggesting another fruitful musical direction Pinamonti can explore. *Tragico Magico* is not perfect, however—Pinamonti's vocals are not strong, and his drawl can sometimes sound artificial. But it's a helluva debut, full of exquisite playing and songwriting.

influences:

⏪ Townes Van Zandt, Lefty Frizzell, Jimmie Reed

Steve Holtje

Piney Creek Weasels

Formed 1986, in Sacramento, CA.

Rick Abrams (born in Miami, FL; died, December 1997), clawhammer banjo; Hugh Hoeger, guitar; Eric Anderson, fiddle, mandolin (1995–present); Dave Rainwater, fiddle, mandolin (1986–95); Rocky Rioux, acoustic bass.

Rick Abrams had an early exposure to old-time music. A newspaperman by profession, he began to play the banjo at age 14 and managed to combine his musical and journalistic pursuits throughout his life. Among other newspaper assignments, he covered the Watergate scandal and actually sat in church with Richard Nixon as the scandal was breaking, leading him to remark that "old-time music and calamity complement each other nicely." On the music side of things, he played with the Green Grass Revival while living in Florida for a time. Moving to California to work for the *Sacramento Bee*, he met old-time fiddler Dave Rainwater, a transplanted Pennsylvanian. Finding that they shared a common bond, the two men founded the Piney Creek Weasels in 1986. The band, very successful in its local area, subsequently played bluegrass and old-time festivals on both coasts, including the Galax Old Fiddlers Convention, where Abrams won first place in the banjo competition in 1987. They made no attempt to imitate note for note what you might hear on an old, scratchy 78 rpm record, claiming that while "there's room to treat old-time music with archaeological reverence, there's also room to dig it up and dance to it." Abrams died in 1997 after a long battle with cancer, leaving the band somewhat unsettled but intent upon continuing.

what to buy: *Squirrel Heads and Gravy* ♪♪♪½ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Kerry Hay, Rick Abrams, Piney Creek Weasels) is the band's last album with Abrams. It features some solid playing on 15 tunes, most of them traditional, with emphasis on Abrams's excellent banjo playing. He pays tribute to a few of his banjo heroes, including Uncle Dave Sturgill of Piney Creek, North Carolina, the town from which the band took its name. Abrams's version of Kirk McGee's "Snowdrops" is another highlight.

what to buy next: *Go Long Mule* ♪♪♪ (Heritage, 1993, prod. Piney Creek Weasels) is similar in feeling to *Squirrel Heads and Gravy* and also emphasizes Abrams's banjo playing in a set of all-traditional tunes from such sources as Uncle Dave Macon, Sam and Kirk McGee, Art Rosenbaum, and Kyle Creed.

the rest:

I'll Rise When the Rooster Crows ♪♪♪ (Weasel Productions, 1987) (cassette only)
Bake that Chicken Pie ♪♪½ (Weasel Production, 1989) (cassette only)
Weasels! ♪♪½ (Weasel Productions, 1991) (cassette only)

solo outings:

Rick Abrams:
Wild Goose ♪♪♪ (Heritage, 1987)

influences:

Kyle Creed, Marvin Gaster, Skillet Lickers, Uncle Dave Sturgill

Red Mountain White Trash, Freighthoppers

Neal Walters

The Plaid Family

Formed in Kansas City, KS.

Kelly Werts, fiddle, guitar; Diana Werts, accordion; Princess Harris, hammered dulcimer.

The Plaid Family consists of Kelly Werts, his wife Diana, and Princess Harris. Kelly Werts has been active in music in the Midwest for a decade. In addition to his work with the Plaid Family, he's produced work by other Midwestern artists and done regional television. The Plaid Family's single album is imaginatively produced and promises better things to come.

what's available: *The Flying Book* (Wizmak, 1994, prod. Pete Sutherland) ♪♪♪♪ is a sprightly collection of tunes, mostly traditional but with some Werts originals that hold up well to their companions. English, Welsh, and American traditional tunes are represented.

solo outings:

Kelly Werts:

Christmas on the Plains ♪♪♪ (Wichita Eagle & Beacon, 1993)

Home on the Range: Songs of the Kansas Pioneers ♪♪♪♪ (Wichita Eagle & Beacon, 1993)

influences:

John Kirkpatrick, Bergmann Brothers, Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey

Pamela Murray Winters

Plainsong

See: Iain Matthews, Julian Dawson

Plank Road

See: Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, Brad Leftwich

Planxty

Formed 1972, in Dublin, Ireland. Disbanded 1983.

Christy Moore (1972–74), vocals, guitar; Andy Irvine (1972–75, 1979–83), vocals, mandolin, bouzouki, hurdy-gurdy; Dónal Lunny (1972–73, 1979–83), bouzouki, guitar; Liam O'Flynn (1972–75, 1979–83), uilleann pipes, tin whistle; Paul Brady (1974–75), vocals, guitar; Johnny Moynihan (1973–75), vocals, bouzouki, fiddle, tin whistle; Matt Molloy (1979–80), flute; Bill Whelan (1983), keyboards; James Kelly (1983), fiddle; Nollaig Casey (1983), fiddle; Eoghan O'Neill (1983), bass guitar.

The emergence of Planxty during the early 1970s marked the beginning of an Irish traditional music revival that is still going strong today. The band's music also ushered in a new era when Irish music was no longer seen as the exclusive domain of ballad groups like the Clancy Brothers and the Dubliners. Other bands before them, Sweeney's Men in particular, had experimented with arranging traditional material for folk music audiences, but Planxty's unique stroke of genius was to squarely incorporate it into the band by securing the services of brilliant uilleann piper Liam O'Flynn. As the story goes, it all came about as singer Christy Moore and producer Bill Leader put their heads together to plan the album *Prosperous*, featuring Irvine, Lunny, O'Flynn, and a few other accompanists. After the album came out in 1972 on Leader's Trailer label, the foursome decided to perform together under the name Planxty, a term found in titles of seventeenth-century harp tunes composed in praise of patrons. The immediate success of their single with the song "The Cliffs of Dooneen" was followed by the release in 1973 of the band's first album, known as the "black album" for its black cover with an eerie shot of the musicians caught in the beam of a stage projector. Planxty's following grew rapidly and the band's success continued, despite Lunny's departure after the completion of *The Well below the Valley* in 1973. Replacing Lunny was singer and bouzouki player Johnny Moynihan, a former accomplice of Irvine in Sweeney's Men. Moynihan was featured on the band's third album, *Cold Blow and the Rainy Night*, which was named Melody Maker's folk album of the year for 1974. However, by the time the album was released, Moore had left the band to return to a quieter life in Ireland. Singer and multi-instrumentalist Paul Brady, formerly with the vocal group the Johnstons, was asked to replace Moore, a move frowned upon by Planxty fans at the time as Brady was involved in the California rock scene. As it turned out, Brady embraced this opportunity to return to his roots with enthusiasm, and the Planxty of 1975, although never recorded and short-lived, was at least as good as the original lineup. Not until 1979, with the Bothy Band on its way out, did Lunny and the three other original members decide to try it again, this time with the addition of the great Roscommon flute player Matt Molloy. The reunited Planxty made a smashing comeback, despite a power outage interrupting their set, at the Ballysadare festival in August 1979 (an event also marked by the Bothy Band's final appearance), and released the powerful *After the Break*. Molloy, who unfortunately

planxty

the 1960s

The social tumult of this decade was echoed in the continuous and rapid evolution that occurred within folk music. As the decade dawned, the folk revival was at its peak, with groups like the Kingston Trio and the Limeliters frequent visitors to the pop charts. Some of the earliest murmurings of the protest movement were expressed musically, with veterans like Pete Seeger and new voices like Joan Baez and Bob Dylan stirring the generation's youth to action. The early to mid sixties were a time of incredible popularity for folk music, with tens of thousands of people jamming events like the Newport Folk Festival. The decade was also the time when Flatt and Scruggs made bluegrass a household word through high-profile appearances on the *Beverly Hillbillies* and the soundtrack to *Bonnie and Clyde*. Dylan's switch to electric music heralded a shift in the music's direction, folk rock bands like the Byrds and Fairport Convention were soon reinventing and stretching the boundaries of traditional music, and psychedelic bands like the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead freely plundered and adapted the public domain. The late sixties brought a plethora of talented new singer-songwriters, including Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, Tim Buckley, and Leonard Cohen. Woody Guthrie's son Arlo had a counter-culture hit with "Alice's Restaurant" and serenaded 300,000 people at Woodstock. Folk music may have lost a clearly identifiable persona near the decade's close, but its influences were everywhere.

Michael Parrish

was soon gone to join the Chieftains, also appeared on the band's next album, *The Woman I Loved So Well*, released in 1980. During the early 1980s, Lunny was once again distracted by other projects, namely an experimentation in folk-rock out of which came the great Moving Hearts, and Planxty began winding down slowly but surely. They released their final album, *Words and Music*, in 1983, with the participation of fiddler James Kelly and keyboard player Bill Whelan, well known today as the man behind *Riverdance*. However, all former members of the band continue to participate actively in the Irish music scene, Moore and O'Flynn as solo performers, Irvine with Patrick Street, and Lunny as one of the busiest producers and session musicians in Ireland today.

what to buy: The band's official first album, *Planxty* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1973/Shanachie, 1979, prod. Phil Coulter), remains one of its best. The famous opening song, "Raggle Taggle Gypsy," is left practically unchanged from *Prosperous*, though the fidelity of the studio recording allows a better appreciation of the intricacies of the arrangement, in particular the brilliant transition into the old harp tune "Tabhair Dom Do Lámh (Give Me Your Hand)." Other classic songs on the album include "Arthur McBride," later made into a hit by Paul Brady; "The Jolly Beggar"; "Follow Me up to Carlow," celebrating a rare Irish victory against the Crown; "The Blacksmith," with its Balkan-tinged instrumental conclusion; as well as Andy Irvine's own "West Coast of Clare." O'Flynn's masterful piping is heard on the lovely reel medley "Junior Crehan's Favorite," the multi-part slide "Merrily Kissed the Quaker," and a couple of O'Carolan's harp compositions. Much in the same vein, *The Well below the Valley* ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1973/Shanachie, 1979, prod. Phil Coulter) features Moore and Irvine equally as lead singers, performing such classics as "Cúnla" and the two versions of "As I Roved Out." O'Flynn contributes some of the great pieces of the piping repertoire, including the slip jig "An Phis Fhliuch," and the reels "The Dogs among the Bushes" and "Jenny's Wedding." Despite Lunny's departure (he actually participated in the recording), *Cold Blow and the Rainy Night* ♪♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1974/Shanachie, 1979, prod. Phil Coulter) remains true to the earlier Planxty sound. New member and ex–Sweeney's Men vocalist Johnny Moynihan is the featured singer on "'P' Stands for Paddy," one of the memorable songs on the album. Others include Irvine's "Johnny Cope" and Moore's "The Lakes of Pontchartrain." Instrumental highlights include a set of polkas, now universally known among Irish session goers, and the exotic Balkan tune "Mominsko Horo," following Irvine's self-penned song of Romanian travels. With *After the Break* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1979, prod. Dónal Lunny), Planxty made a stunning comeback. Lunny's "blarge" (five-course bouzouki) brings new depth to the sound, while the sophistication of the mandolin-and-bouzouki arrangements reaches new heights, on "The Good Ship Kangaroo" and "The Pursuit of Farmer Michael Hayes" in particular. The addition of Molloy's expert flute playing makes the instrumentals that much richer—one of them is a spectacular Bulgarian dance tune titled "Smeceno Horo." The

CD reissue of the album includes two additional tracks that had been previously released on the LP sampler *High Kings of Tara*.

what to buy next: Although not officially a Planxty album, Moore's *Prosperous* ♪♪♪♪ (Trailer, 1972/Tara, 1972, prod. Bill Leader) gives us a glimpse at a prototypic form of the band, as Moore gathered Lunny, O'Flynn, Irvine, and a few others to record the album. It features two songs, "Raggle Taggle Gypsy" and "The Cliffs of Dooneen," which Planxty would continue to perform with great success, along with other, equally interesting selections like Bob Dylan's "Tribute to Woody" and Woody Guthrie's "Ludlow Massacre." *The Planxty Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1974/Shanachie, 1979, prod. Phil Coulter) is an excellent sampler based on Planxty's first three albums, to which is added the enormously successful "The Cliffs of Dooneen," from the band's 1972 single. Although not as exciting an album as *After the Break*, *The Woman I Loved So Well* ♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1980, prod. Dónal Lunny, Brian Masterson) contains some fine songs, like Irvine's "Kellswater," learned from the Sam Henry collection, and Moore's epic "Little Musgrave." The instrumental tracks benefit from the presence of guest musicians, particularly the great Clare duet of Noel Hill (concertina) and Tony Linnane (fiddle). *Words and Music* ♪♪♪ (WEA, 1983/Shanachie, 1983, prod. Dónal Lunny) was Planxty's swan song. The influence on its sound of Lunny's experiments with Moving Heart is clearly heard in some of the accompaniments featuring electronic keyboards and electric bass—although the marriage of electronics and traditional music works rather well on the beautiful piping air "Táimse Im' Chodlach." On other instrumental tracks, O'Flynn's pipes are combined with the twin fiddles of James Kelly and Nollaig Casey.

worth searching for: Three Planxty tracks, one being a set of jigs not recorded on any of their studio albums, were included on the Breton-produced *2e Festival Pop' Celtic Kertalg 73* ♪♪♪ (Barclay, 1973, prod. Gwenn Le Goarnic, Hughes de Courson). *High Kings of Tara* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Tara, 1980, prod. Dónal Lunny) contains three Planxty tracks left over from the *After the Break* sessions, two of which were later included in the CD reissue of that album. *Arís* ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1984) is another anthology based on the band's first three albums, with the added interest that it includes the song "Yarmouth Town" from the B-side of Planxty's famous first single. You will be truly lucky if you can find a copy of the two-cassette bootleg *The Best of Planxty Live* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Planxty, c. 1986, prod. Kevin Flynn, Michael Germaine), recorded live at the Olympia Theatre by the original quartet with Nollaig Casey (fiddle) and Bill Whelan (keyboards). The numbers performed span the complete recorded output of the band and its members, from the black album's "The Jolly Beggarman" to Andy Irvine's "Plains of Kildare," first recorded with Paul Brady, to "Pity the Poor Immigrant" and "The Irish March" from the band's final album.

influences:

◀◀ Ceoltóirí Cualann, Sweeney's Men

▶▶ Bothy Band, Touchstone, Moving Hearts, Patrick Street, Dónal Lunny, Dervish

see also: *Andy Irvine, Liam O'Flynn, Paul Brady, Christy Moore*

Philippe Varlet

The Pogues

Formed 1982, in Kings Cross, London, England. Disbanded 1996.

Shane MacGowan, vocals (1982–91); Philip Chevron, guitar (1985–96); James Fearnley, accordion (1982–94); Darryl Hunt, bass (1986–96); Terry Woods, mandolin, vocals (1987–94); Spider Stacy, tin whistle, vocals; Andrew Ranken, drums; Jem Finer, banjo; Cait O'Riordan, bass (1982–86); Jamie Clarke, banjo (1994–96); James McNally, accordion, uilleann pipes (1994–96); David Coulter, mandolin (1994–96).

The Pogues emerged from the London neighborhood of Kings Cross in 1984 with an idea that seemed so good it's surprising it was considered novel: Why not mate the energy of punk with traditional folks songs Irish-born, English-raised band avatar Shane MacGowan had grown up with? Both cultures were rife with rebellion. Neither punk nor folk necessarily required virtuosity (prime movers MacGowan, Spider Stacy, Jem Finer, James Fearnley, Cait O'Riordan, and Andrew Ranken were, to put it kindly, instrumental novices). Perhaps best of all for the hard-drinking crew, both could be played sloshed. Sounded better that way, in fact. After releasing one British album, *Red Roses for Me*, they hooked up with another Englishman with Irish bloodlines, Declan MacManus, a.k.a. Elvis Costello. Costello produced two gems—an acclaimed LP, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash*, and a follow-up EP, *Poguetry in Motion*. Bassist Cait O'Riordan left the band in 1988 after falling for Costello (whom she soon wed) and was replaced by Darryl Hunt. Multi-instrumentalist/vocalist Terry Woods, a one-time member of Steeleye Span, and guitarist/vocalist Phillip Chevron signed on around the same time and considerably elevated the instrumental proficiency of the ensemble. Its lineup solidified, the Pogues hit their critical and commercial peak with 1987's *If I Should Fall from Grace with God* and *Peace and Love*, which arrived two years later. The group's gradual descent began

with 1990's *Hell's Ditch*. MacGowan's self-destructive behavior began to get the better of him and, while there was a surplus of capable writers and vocalists in the group (the Clash's Joe Strummer was a periodic fill-in for MacGowan), a fully functional front man was missed. MacGowan left the band in 1991, resurfacing during the mid-'90s as the leader of a new band, the Popes. The Pogues released two titles without him—1993's *Waiting for Herb* and 1995's *Pogue Mahone*—before giving up the ghost in 1996.

what to buy: *Waiting for Herb* ♪♪♪ (Chameleon/Elektra, 1993, prod. Michael Brook), the group's first post-MacGowan release, finds the boys forging on properly. Their front man–by–committee method works rather well, but falls short of prime Poguetry.

what to buy next: *Pogue Mahone* ♪♪½ (Mesa/Bluemoon, 1995, prod. Steve Brown) is an inconspicuous swan song.

the rest:
Red Roses for Me ♪♪½ (WEA, 1992)
Rest of the Best ♪♪♪½ (WEA, 1994)
Hell's Ditch ♪♪♪ (MSI/WEA, 1997)

worth searching for: Rather shockingly, the Pogues' Island output is currently sans a U.S. label. Given the group's relatively healthy patronage, it seems likely that situation will be rectified before too long. In the meantime, Pogues imports are easy to find and most are well worth tracking down. *If I Should Fall from Grace with God* ♪♪♪♪½ (Island, 1987/1996, prod. Steve Lillywhite) whisked the Pogues sound into the late '80s but the songs remained rooted in a timeless place inhabited by raging revolutionaries, drunken poets, foul-mouthed maiden, and hopeless dreamers. While it contains a single medley of three traditional tunes, such originals as "Thousands Are Sailing," "Lullaby of London," and "Streets of Sorrow" display the same arcane, enduring qualities as the generations-old tunes favored early in the group's history. *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1985, prod. Elvis Costello) is clumsy but charming. Conversely, *Peace and Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1989, prod. Steve Lillywhite) is as close to "slick" as this rag-tag cast of characters was capable. Both albums are carried by strong songs and fervent performances.

influences:
◀◀ Chieftains, Dubliners, Clancy Brothers
▶▶ Low & Sweet Orchestra, Oyster Band

Steven Stolder

The Poodles

See: American Cafe Orchestra

Charlie Poole /Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers

Born March 22, 1892, in Alamance County, NC. Died May 21, 1931, in Spray, NC.

Charlie Poole and his band, the North Carolina Ramblers, played breakdown dances in the Spray-Leaksville area of central North Carolina as early as 1918. From there they went on to record some of the most lilting, rhythmically dynamic string-band music of the 1920s. Poole's three-finger banjo style and vaudeville-inspired "story" songs sound remarkably fresh 70 years later.

what to buy: *Old Time Songs* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1965) includes a handful of songs—"White House Blues," "Don't Let Your Deal Go Down," and "Take a Drink on Me" among them—that became staples in the repertoires of generations of country, bluegrass, and folk performers.

what to buy next: *Old Time Songs: Volume II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1974) contains more fine string band music and tall tales, the best of the latter assaying the virtues and pitfalls of the sportin' life.

the rest:
Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers: Volume I ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1996)
Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers: Volume II ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1996)

influences:
▶▶ New Lost City Ramblers, Nancy & Norman Blake

Bill Friskics-Warren

The Poozies

See: Sileas

Steve Pottier & Sandy Rothman

See: Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Dirk Powell

Born June 7, 1969, in Oberlin, OH.

Dirk Powell began playing traditional music at age 12 when he was inspired to pick up old-time banjo from his grandfather

James Clarence Hay, a highly gifted musician from eastern Kentucky. The fiddle, guitar, and bass soon followed, as Powell found a desire to immerse himself in all aspects of Appalachian music. In the early '90s he met the Balfa family, the great ambassadors of Cajun music, and he quickly developed an interest in the genre (not surprising, as he was also developing an interest in Dewey Balfa's youngest daughter, Christine). Dirk and Christine formed the group Balfa Toujours ("Balfa Forever") shortly after Dewey passed away in 1992, and they have since gone on to record three albums of traditional Cajun music. Besides several projects with his own groups, Powell has recorded with a diverse number of musicians, including Seamus Egan, Tim O'Brien, Bruce Molsky, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, the Freewill Savages, David Grier, Scott Nygaard, and many more. He cherishes the words of his father-in-law Dewey Balfa, "A culture is like a whole tree; you have to water the roots to keep it alive, but you can't cut off the branches every time it tries to grow."

what to buy: *If I Go Ten Thousand Miles* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Tim O'Brien) is proof (as if you needed some) that when Powell started playing Cajun music he did not neglect his old-time roots. This is one of the best old-time CDs that you can buy today from someone of the "Young Fogie" generation. If Powell's playing isn't enough, just lend an ear to Jim Miller's killer vocals on songs such as "Little Satchel." Between some of the best musicianship you're bound to hear and then some of the best singing . . . well, you can see where this album is headed.

what to buy next: Balfa Toujours' *Deux Voyages* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Tim O'Brien) is the best sample of Powell's work with wife Christine Balfa. He really does a great job on the Cajun accordion and vocals. This recording should please even the most hard-core fan of Cajun music.

the rest:
(With Balfa Toujours) *Pop, tu me parles toujours* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow)
(With Balfa Toujours) *A vieille Terre Haute* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1995)

worth searching for: The Wandering Ramblers' *Rambling and Wandering* ♪♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1991, prod. Wandering Ramblers) cassette-only release with Carol Elizabeth Jones, Jim Miller, John Herrmann, and June Drucker is worth looking for, as well as *Dirk Powell and John Herrmann* ♪♪♪♪ (Yodel-Ay-Hee, 1992, prod. Dirk Powell, John Herrmann) (cassette only).

solo outings:
Dirk Powell, Tom Sauber, and John Herrmann:
One Eyed Dog ♪♪♪♪ (Yodel-Ay-Hee, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ James Clarence Hay, Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, George Jones, Dewey Balfa

▶▶ Donna the Buffalo

see also: *Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, Bruce Molsky, Tim O'Brien, Scott Nygaard*

Steve Gardner

Tom Prasada-Rao

Born in Ethiopia.

Tom Prasada-Rao plays his guitar like it's a band, writes catchy songs, sings like he means it, and always grooves. Born to Indian parents living in Africa and educated in the United States, England, and India, Prasada-Rao blends musical influences of pop, R&B, and world music with his political, spiritual, and personal songs. He usually performs solo, often asking friends or members of the audience to join him—making for very interactive and dynamic shows. His warm, personable, interactive audience style is characterized by his down-to-earth personality, and is heightened by the power of his conviction, and his obvious enjoyment of live performance. Prasada-Rao has chosen a path away from mainstream pop music and is committed to raising the social consciousness of his audiences in hopes of inspiring positive action towards others. At times he is joined on stage by master percussionist Broto Roy (Calcutta) and Baltimore guitar legend Billy Kemp. He is also one-third of the group known as Sherpas, along with Nashville's Tom Kimmel and Michael Lille, and with the Sherpas doubles on violin and piano. With no group album and limited national touring they have nonetheless garnered rave reviews as well.

what to buy: On his latest release, *Hear You Laughing* ♪♪♪½ (Ahimsa, 1997, prod. Tom Prasada-Rao) Prasada-Rao goes from serious to playful, working from solo and band arrangements, adding sitar and wah wah guitars along with the tabla and djembe, and adding love and political songs to the mix. Critical reviews abound and the buzz is deafening. Christine Lavin says, "Brilliant writer, amazing performer, sensational singer—I'm so jealous I could vomit," while Steve Netsky observes, "I hope the Devil is enjoying his half of the bargain as much as we're enjoying Tom's right now."

what to buy next: *Incoming* ♪♪♪ (Crossroads, 1991, prod. Mark Heard) has sold over 12,000 copies to date. According to Martin Fullington in *The Leak, Out 'n' About,* "This is genius at work."

primitive characters

worth searching for: In addition to producing his own recent albums, Prasada-Rao produced an album for Ranjith in 1996 titled *Falling Ashes*. His efforts in the publishing world have produced a cut on a late 1990s Randy Travis album; co-written with Tom Kimmel, the song is called "See Myself in You." He also appears on the Christine Lavin compilation *Follow That Road* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994), which features live recordings from the second annual Martha's Vineyard Singer-Songwriter Retreat.

influences:

◀◀ Bruce Cockburn, Richard Thompson, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Michael Johnson, Tom Kimmel, Michael Lille

Neal Walters

Primitive Characters

Formed 1995, in Boston, MA.

Sandy Stark, fiddle, vocals; Mike Donoghue, banjo; Chip Smith, guitar, vocals; Jim Reidy, banjo-ukulele, lead vocals; Paul Strother, bass, low vocals.

The Primitive Characters are a rhythmic juggernaut of a string band, steeped in the traditional country music of the Golden Age recordings from the 1920s. After being part of several influential 1970s string bands, including the seminal, upstate New York–based Swamp Root Stringband, fiddler Sandy Stark landed in Boston, Massachusetts and began to pursue her other muse, photography, in earnest (she is currently professor of photographic studies at the Boston Art Institute). In 1980 Stark joined the popular Boston string band the Chicken Chokers, playing double fiddles with Chad Crumm. The Chokers disbanded during the early 1990s, when Crumm formed his own band, the Hix. Of the Primitive Characters' beginnings, Stark says, "Mike Donoghue (our banjo player) returned to town in 1995 and one day we all just looked at each other and thought, 'hmmm, here we go again.' We thought of a lot of different band names and ended up as Primitive Characters, hoping it would convey a sense of raw intensity that the music seems to be about when it's working. "

what's available: *The Leavin's* ♪♪♪♪ (Chubby Dragon, 1996, prod. Taylor "Chip" Smith, Primitive Characters) is hopefully just the first of many albums from this very fine group. The Characters play their old-time music with a straightforward respect, depth, and humor, and groove like crazy to boot. What more could one ask for? Stark's chugging fiddle, replete with broad bow sweeps and swoops, is placed squarely in front. She is ably backed by Chip Smith's straightforward rhythm guitar (which makes effective and subtle use of bass runs), while Mike Donoghue's banjo blends whimsically with the redoubtable Jim Reidy's banjo-uke. This rhythmic steamroller is firmly grounded by Paul Strother's acoustic bass. *The Leavin's* is chock-full of instrumentals from the likes of Byron Berline and Benton Flippen (and many traditional tunes) interspersed with lovingly played songs from the Poplin Family, Uncle Dave Macon, and the Louvin and Delmore Brothers. The instrumentals are, without exception, bursting with energy; even the slow tunes pulse with intensity while remaining deliberate in tempo. Stark's bowing is the most striking aspect of her fiddling; on *The Leavin's* her intonation (not the "in tune" that Nashville session players strive for) reveals how deeply she has assimilated southern old-time fiddle sounds, although her playing never sounds studied or contrived. The songs are silly and sentimental, ditties culled from impeccable old-time sources. Lead singer Riedy brings an affectionate yet firmly tongue-in-cheek attitude to Uncle Dave Macon's "She's Got the Money Too," a gleeful tale of a female gold-digger. The ensemble singing on "It Won't Happen Again for Months" is delightfully wacky and makes excellent use of Paul Strother's big ole bullfrog croak of a voice.

influences:

◀◀ Benton Flippen, Stripling Brothers, Uncle Dave Macon, Highwoods Stringband, Tommy Jarrell, Lymon Enloe

▶▶ Horseflies, Heartbeats, Any Old Time Stringband

see also: *Chicken Chokers*

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

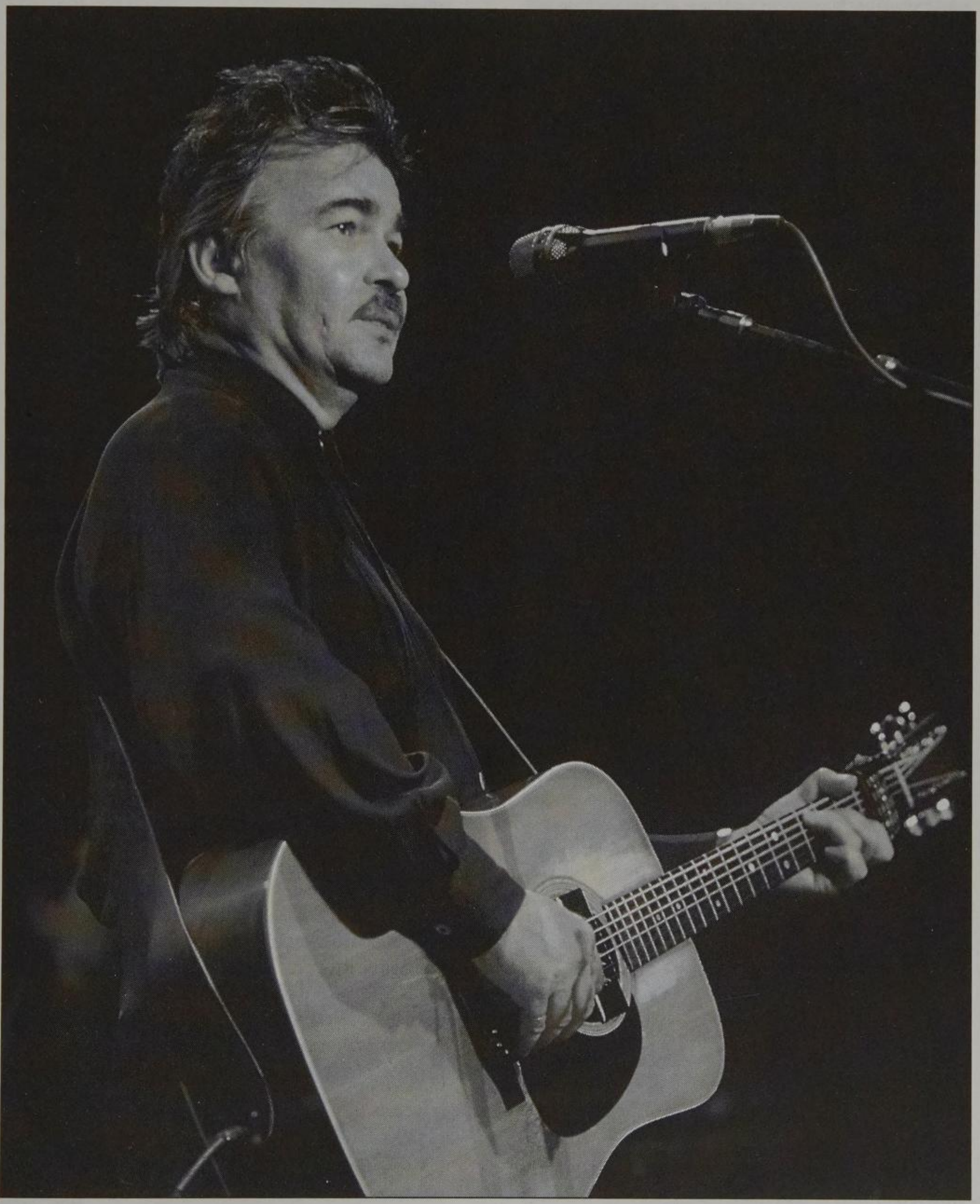
John Prine

Born October 10, 1946, in Maywood, IL.

One of the first to be strapped as "the new Dylan," John Prine is one of the few to actually outgrow the tag and become a distinct, trenchant songwriting voice. Mostly because of his admittedly limited guitar skills, he often gets lumped in the folkie/singer/songwriter genre, but as anyone who has ever listened carefully or heard him play with a band knows, he has the heart and soul of a rock 'n' roller. His 1971 self-titled debut alone includes astonishing songs like "Sam Stone," the first Vietnam protest song to examine the war's effect on soldiers' lives; an homage to the elderly wryly titled "Hello in There"; "Donald and Lydia," a touching ode to masturbation; the wicked social

John Prine **(© Ken Settle)**

john prine



maddy prior

satire "Spanish Pipedream" with the oft-repeated chorus, "Blow up your TV/Throw away your paper"; and "Angel from Montgomery," a longtime Bonnie Raitt staple. Major labels gave up on Prine, which led to him to start his own Oh Boy Records during the early '80s. These days his edge, sharp eye for detail, and feel for simple melodies, common language, and popular culture seems, if anything, more intact—and he's even more effective in concert. His songs have been recorded by such diverse artists as Joan Baez, Bette Midler, the Everly Brothers, and Cowboy Junkies, but more importantly, Prine's influence can be heard whenever guitars are played on streets and living rooms around the world.

what to buy: *John Prine* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1971, prod. Arif Mardin) is a must, with its raw, harrowing, sometimes goofy tales of life. *The Missing Years* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Oh Boy, 1991, prod. Howie Epstein) offers the same kind of world-view, undaunted by middle age. *Bruised Orange* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum/Oh Boy, 1978, prod. Steve Goodman) offers Goodman's inspired arrangements. *John Prine Live* ♪♪♪♪½ (Oh Boy, 1988, prod. John Prine, Dan Einstein, Jim Rooney) includes the stories and onstage charisma that's missing on his studio albums.

what to buy next: *Storm Windows* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1980, prod. Barry Beckett) is Prine's best-sounding record, courtesy of producer Beckett, while *Aimless Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Oh Boy, 1984, prod. John Prine, Jim Rooney) is a pleasant, country-flavored outing. The best collection to span his career is *Great Days* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1993, prod. various), with music from all albums up to that time.

what to avoid: *Common Sense* ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1975, prod. Steve Cropper) is a classic example of mismatching producer and artist. The songs—and there are some good ones—often sound incomplete, and Prine sounds out of breath at the end of every one.

the rest:
Sweet Revenge ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1973)
Prime Prine ♪♪ (Atlantic, 1976)
German Afternoons ♪♪♪½ (Oh Boy, 1988)
Diamonds in the Rough ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1990)
A John Prine Christmas ♪♪♪♪ (Oh Boy, 1993)
Lost Dogs and Mixed Blessings ♪♪♪½ (Oh Boy, 1995)
Live on Tour ♪♪♪♪ (Oh Boy, 1997)

worth searching for: On *Pink Cadillac* ♪♪♪♪½ (Asylum/Oh Boy, 1979, prod. Knox Phillips, Jerry Phillips), a primal Prine draws from the unique energy and vibe of Memphis's famous Sun Studios with Sam Phillips's kids at the knobs.

influences:
◀◀ Carter Family, Hank Williams, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Bob Dylan
▶▶ Nanci Griffith, Iris DeMent, Cowboy Junkies

Leland Rucker

Maddy Prior

See: Steeleye Span

Willis Prudhomme

Born September 22, 1931, in Kinder, LA.

Willis Prudhomme typifies many of the zydeco performers who work the circuit and rarely become known outside the Cajun triangle of South Louisiana. Prudhomme is a rice farmer who started performing in public only in 1975. A solid but not flashy accordionist, he was recruited by drummer and singer Leo Thomas to play with his group. His apprenticeship with Thomas lasted 10 years before he was ready to strike out on his own. Prudhomme's band Zydeco Express is a lot like its leader: unassuming, but steady. They play an honest rural zydeco sound, nothing fancy and no frills. That means there is a bounce in the beat that distinguishes it from the crunch of the doubling, clutching sound popularized by Beau Jocque. Dancers always know that they will get their money's worth when Prudhomme is on the marquee.

what to buy: Prudhomme and Zydeco Express share *Zydeco Live! Volume II* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Scott Billington) with John Delafose and the Eunice Playboys. Prudhomme works exclusively with the one-row button accordion with an internal pickup, which produces a gritty sound similar to the sound of a good Chicago blues harpist. The band shines on the waltzes in particular, something of a dying art among zydeco groups.

what to buy next: Live, with a dance floor, these guys pack a lot of excitement. Their style of zydeco is about playing evenly, not about the kind of climaxes that are such a part of rock music. As exhibited on *Willis Prudhomme and Zydeco Express* ♪♪♪½ (Maison De Soul, 1990, prod. Floyd Soileau), this doesn't translate well into the studio, where the band fails to catch fire or a great groove without an audience. Prudhomme is an average singer, so you're not able to get much from focusing in on his voice.

influences:
◀◀ John Delafose, Roy Carrier
▶▶ Geno Delafose, Keith Frank, Chubby Carrier

Jared Snyder

Psychograss

Formed 1993, in the San Francisco Bay area.

Darol Anger, fiddle; Mike Marshall, mandolin; Todd Phillips, string bass; Tony Trischka, banjo (1996–present); David Grier, guitar (1996–present); Joe Craven, percussion (1993).

A showcase for cutting-edge acoustic instrumental improvisation, Psychograss came together after most of the group's members backed banjoist Tony Trischka at a local gig. As the group is composed of five extremely busy musicians, most bandleaders in their own right, they have played less than a dozen gigs in their years together, but have developed notoriety through their high-profile appearances at places like Telluride and Strawberry, as well as through their two recordings. For their second recording, guitarist David Grier joined, Joe Craven bowed out, and Trischka became a full member.

what to buy: An adventurous debut, *Psychograss* ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill, 1993, prod. Mike Marshall, Darol Anger) gave the group members (Marshall, Anger, Craven, and Phillips at the time) ample room for stretching out on nine contemporary-sounding instrumentals, along with an unlikely, but effective, cover of "Whiter Shade of Pale" with Tim O'Brien guesting on vocals.

what to buy next: . The addition of Grier and Trischka on *Like Minds* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Mike Marshall, Darol Anger) made for a denser instrumental mix, and the second recording cuts a broader stylistic swath, from bluegrass-influenced pieces like "Garlic and Sapphires" to Phillips's jazz piece "Big Monk," Marshall's new age–inflected "Hot Nickels," and Trischka's Celtic-tinged "Stuart Symington's Summer Song." This disc's ringer is a fiery acoustic rendition of Jimi Hendrix's "Third Stone from the Sun."

solo outings:

Darol Anger:

Heritage ♪♪♪ (Six Degrees, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ David Grisman, Bill Monroe, Frank Zappa

see also: *David Grier, Mike Marshall, Todd Phillips, Tony Trischka*

Michael Parrish

Riley Puckett

Born George Riley Puckett, May 7, 1894 (or possibly 1890), in Alpharetta, GA. Died July 13, 1946, in College Park, GA.

The first prominent guitarist in country music and probably the first country singer to yodel on a recording, Riley Puckett (who was blinded as an infant) made his radio debut in 1922. He first recorded in 1924 as a duo with Georgia fiddler Gid Tanner, and was a charter member of Tanner's immensely popular and freewheeling stringband, the Skillet Lickers. As lead singer and guitarist for that pioneering group until it disbanded in the mid-1930s, Puckett was enormously influential on young musicians in the South. As a solo artist, he recorded for Columbia, Bluebird, and Decca and worked on radio stations in Georgia, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee.

what's available: While the sound of the Skillet Lickers was raucous and wonderfully chaotic, Puckett's solo recordings are more restrained, featuring his mellow singing and distinctive guitar playing. Unfortunately, none of these are available on CD (1970s-era LP reissues on County, Old Homestead, and Bear Family are worth the search). The only Skillet Lickers CD available, *Old-Time Fiddle Tunes and Songs from North Georgia* ♪♪♪ (County, 1996), reissues 16 songs and tunes recorded between 1927 and 1931. Puckett is present on every cut, driving the fiddle tunes with his propulsive, bass-heavy guitar playing and singing on about half of the selections. Puckett's playing is most impressive on "Dixie" and "Molly Put the Kettle On"; of the vocals, "Dixie," "Devilish Mary," and "Pretty Little Widow" are the most enjoyable to modern ears.

influences:

◀◀ Roy Harvey, Maybelle Carter

▶▶ Every other guitar player in bluegrass and old-time country music

Jon Hartley Fox

Elaine Purkey

Listening to a CD by West Virginia's Elaine Purkey is probably similar to something you'd experience if you sat down with her in her home and thumbed through one of her scrapbooks. You'll experience the happy times and the sad. There's the union meetings and the strikes at the coal mine, and then there's the times where she sat home and joined with her family and friends in singing the old songs that she heard on the Grand Ol' Opry. In other words, there isn't a song that Purkey sings that isn't about her own life in some form or fashion. The best part is that she has recorded some of these memories and is inviting you to join in. It would almost be rude to turn away, now wouldn't it?

what's available: *Mountain Music, Mountain Struggle* ♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1996, prod. Larry MacBride, Fred Campeau) proudly

queen ida

shows off Purkey's roots. A glimpse at the song choices says a lot about her life. On it you have old country songs such as "Keep on the Sunny Side," "Knoxville Girl," and "Banks of the Ohio"; original labor songs such as "Destiny of a Coal Miner," "If the Rich Paid Taxes," "America! Our Union!," and a sacred standard transformed into a union song "Wayfarin' Worker." All in all, this CD showcases a strong woman writing and singing some powerful songs.

influences:

- Hazel Dickens, Woody Guthrie, Aunt Molly Jackson, Reba McEntire
- Sheila Barnhill

Steve Gardner

Q

Queen Ida /Ida Guillory

Born January 15, 1929, in Lake Charles, LA.

Born in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Ida Guillory's family followed the exodus of many Creole families to the San Francisco Bay region. She brought the music of her childhood with her to the West Coast but performed exclusively at social functions. While raising her children and driving a bus part time, she borrowed brother Al Rapone's accordion and started practicing. With the encouragement of brothers Al and Wilbert Lewis, she began to perform in the Bay area. The uniqueness of her stature as a female accordion player has overshadowed her talent on the three-row accordion, but increased her demand. Her music has a less intense beat than the bands working Southwest Louisiana and the English lyrics are easier to make out than those of most zydeco bands, but when the band breaks down to the drums, frattoir, and Ida's accordion there is no denying the roots of her music. Ida, who is known to fans as Queen Ida, should be proud of the number of female zydeco performers following in her footsteps, including Rosie Ledet and Anne Goodley.

what to buy: *Cookin' with Queen Ida* ♪♪♪♪ (GNP, 1989, prod. Neil Norman) demonstrates the Queen Ida sound: zydeco mixed with rock and blues, with a lot more backing and harmony vocals than you'll probably ever hear in a Louisiana zydeco band except maybe Double Clutchin'. Her son, Myrick "Freeze" Guillory, contributes accordion, frattoir, and vocals.

what to buy next: *Band on Tour* ♪♪♪½ (GNP, 1982, prod. Neil Norman), winner of the 1982 Grammy Award for best ethnic/traditional folk album, finds Ida's sound geared towards an audience that is mostly English speaking and from the lands outside of southwest Louisiana. The mix is lighter and more rock oriented.

the rest:

Zydeco ♪♪ (GNP, 1976)
In New Orleans ♪♪♪½ (GNP, 1980)
Caught in the Act ♪♪♪½ (GNP, 1985)
Zydeco a la Mode (GNP, 1987)
Play the Zydeco (GNP, 1987)
On a Saturday Night ♪♪♪ (GNP, 1987)
In San Francisco ♪♪♪ (GNP, 1988)
Mardi Gras ♪♪♪½ (GNP, 1994)

worth searching for: The cookbook *Cookin' with Queen Ida: "Bon Temps" Creole Recipes (and Stories) from the Queen of Zydeco Music* (Prima Publishing, 1990), by Queen Ida Guillory and Naomi Wise, is full of stories about Queen Ida and Creole music. The food is great, as are the stories.

influences:

- Amédée Ardoin, Boozoo Chavis, Canray Fontenot, Clifton Chenier
- Beau Jocque, Zachary Richard

Jared Snyder

R

Ann Rabson

See: Saffire

Gerry Rafferty

See: Stealer's Wheel

Raffi

Born Raffi Cavoukian, July 8, 1948, in Cairo, Egypt.

Raffi didn't set out to become the world's preeminent children's recording artist; he just saw a need, filled it, and became the idol of millions of small children and their parents in the

process. Raffi was an aspiring folk singer during the mid-'70s, when his mother-in-law suggested he write and record some songs for the kids in the preschool she ran. The resulting music was such a hit that other preschools began requesting copies of the tape, and a phenomenon was born. Besides updating classic children's material, Raffi writes inventive, instructive songs for children concerning the environment, personal hygiene, and just plain nonsense. His abilities on guitar, piano, and accordion allow him to fashion catchy, simple arrangements that stay fresh after repeated listenings, and encourages group sing-a-longs. Once Raffi's tapes found distribution through the Shoreline and A&M labels during the '80s, his popularity sky-rocketed, and his LPs sold in the millions. Wanting to prove that he was more than a children's entertainer, Raffi switched gears in 1990 and covered more serious material as an "eco-troubador." Eventually he combined this approach with his established kid's repertoire, and further expanded his musical horizons by adding elements of calypso, jazz, and live theater to his ever-growing production style. During the '90s, his deal with Rounder Records gave Raffi an aura of arrival and legitimacy, unprecedented for someone deemed a "children's performer." In this cynical age, entertainers who are popular with kids provoke a lot of critical abuse from the media; Raffi is no exception. Everyone from David Letterman to the animated *Tiny Toons Adventures* have unmercifully parodied his style, but it has not affected his popularity and a new crop of preschoolers are growing up learning from and singing along with Raffi.

what to buy: Your small-fry will love you for buying *Singable Songs Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Raffi, Ken Whiteley), a two-CD, 33-track set of Raffi's best songs for kids and their grateful, exhausted parents.

what to buy next: Charm exudes from Raffi's seasonal offering *Raffi's Christmas Album* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1983/1997, prod. Raffi, Ken Whiteley) as well as his best start-to-finish LP *Baby Beluga* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980/1997, prod. Raffi, Ken Whiteley), which features Bruce Cockburn on guitar.

what to avoid: It's by no means a bad LP, but your youngsters probably won't enjoy Raffi's work as an "eco-troubador" on *Evergreen Everblue* ♪♪½ (Rounder 1990/1996, prod. Billy Bryans, Raffi) until they're a little older.

the rest:

Singable Songs for the Very Young ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1976/1996)
More Singable Songs ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977/1996)
Corner Grocery Store and Other Singable Songs ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1979/1996)
Rise and Shine ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982/1996)
One Light, One Sun ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985/1997)
Bananaphone ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Raffi Radio ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995)
Everything Grows ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996)

worth searching for: Now out of print, *Raffi on Broadway: A Family Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1993, prod. Phil Ramone, John Love) is an especially fine live program and his best concert recording to date.

influences:

◀◀ Tom Chapin, James Taylor, Tom Paxton

▶▶ Sharon, Lois & Bram, Fred Penner, Jack Grunsky

Ken Burke

Raise the Rafters

See: Kevin Crawford

Bonnie Raitt

Born November 8, 1949, in Los Angeles, CA.

There are two Bonnie Raitt stories—one in the bottle and one out. From the late '60s to the early '80s, the Quaker-raised, Radcliffe-educated daughter of Broadway star John Raitt was a blues mama who learned her craft at the feet of John Lee Hooker, Mississippi Fred McDowell, and Sippie Wallace. They taught her to play hard and true—and to party hard, too. Raitt made good on their lessons, turning out songs that mined blues, pop, and folk while developing a distinctive, stinging slide guitar style and an aching, honest vocal delivery. An exceptional cover of Del Shannon's "Runaway" unjustly defined the first phase of her career, though Raitt also proved herself a performer of rare conscience, joining kindred spirits such as Jackson Browne and James Taylor at various benefits and rallies. It was after being dropped by Warner Bros. in 1983 that Raitt decided to clean up, dry out, and, essentially, start over again. Her 1989 release *Nick of Time* revealed a smoother pop style that showcased her trademark slide guitar and retained just enough blues touches to make it work; it sold more than four million copies and started a string of Grammy victories that made Raitt—who married actor Michael O'Keefe in 1991—the darling of her peers as well as of the mainstream audience. She's explored other styles on subsequent releases, though never straying too far from the proven sound. And in 1995 Fender made her the first female guitarist to have an instrument named after her, with royalties funding a program to provide guitars and music lessons to inner-city youths.

bonnie raitt

what to buy: Smooth, assured, and forthright, *Nick of Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1989, prod. Don Was) is a mature and celebratory effort in which Raitt unveils her new sound, shows off her peerless blues-inspired guitar, and sings with depth and feeling about the tribulations of the past; she even makes Jerry Williams's "I Will Not Be Denied" sound like one of her own songs. *The Bonnie Raitt Collection* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1990, prod. various) is her old label's cash-in on *Nick of Time*'s success, but it's a terrific overview anyway, featuring previously unreleased live duets with Wallace ("Women Be Wise") and John Prine ("Angel from Montgomery").

what to buy next: *Give It Up* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972, prod. Michael Cuscuna) is the best of Raitt's Warner albums, a corker that blasts open with her own "Give It Up or Let Me Go" and continues through an inspired collection of originals and covers. *Luck of the Draw* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1991, prod. Don Was, Bonnie Raitt) finds the Raitt of *Nick of Time* exuberantly in love and ready to tell the world about it on "Something to Talk About" and her burning duet with Delbert McClinton, "Good Man, Good Woman."

what to avoid: *Home Plate* ♪ (Warner Bros., 1975, prod. Paul D. Rothchild) is a weak and ill-conceived attempt to take Raitt in a country direction—and it strikes out.

the rest:
Bonnie Raitt ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1971)
Takin' My Time ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1973)
Streetlights ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1974)
Sweet Forgiveness ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1977)
The Glow ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979)
Green Light ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1982)
Nine Lives ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986)
Longing in Their Hearts ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1994)
Road Tested ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995)
Fundamental ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1998)

worth searching for: Raitt's ubiquitous guest shots on her friends' albums have resulted in some fine music. Her Grammy-winning duet with John Lee Hooker on "In the Mood" from his album *The Healer* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chameleon, 1989, prod. Roy Rogers) is definitive, while her contributions to her father's *Broadway Legend* ♪♪♪ (Angel, 1995) are sweet.

influences:
◀◀ Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Sippie Wallace, Mississippi Fred McDowell, John Lee Hooker, Odetta, Joan Baez

▶▶ Pat Benatar, Melissa Etheridge, Melissa Ferrick, Sheryl Crow, Joan Osborne

Gary Graff

Bonnie Raitt **(© Ken Settle)**

Willis Alan Ramsey

Born March 5, 1951, in Birmingham, AL.

Wielding more influence than the meager sales of his lone album would indicate, Willis Alan Ramsey is seen today as a genuine forebear of the progressive country scene that has grown up around Austin, Texas, during the past two decades. Only 21 when he recorded his debut album, an effort that teemed with promise and a crack session team (Leon Russell, Ernie Watts, Leland Sklar, Russ Kunkel, Jim Keltner, Carl Radle), Ramsey inexplicably failed to follow it up. For a time he lived in England and Ireland, but he has since relocated to Nashville. Rumors of a second album abound, but thus far none has appeared.

what's available: *Willis Alan Ramsey* ♪♪♪♪ (Shelter, 1972/DCC Compact Classics, 1990, prod. Denny Cordell, Willis Alan Ramsey) is an acoustic-based collection of literate and laid-back country/folk tunes, some of which have been covered by Leon Russell, Jimmy Buffett, America, Waylon Jennings, and, most recently, Shawn Colvin. Ramsey's best-known song, "Muskrat Love," which is included here, was a hit for America and for the Captain & Tennille.

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Gram Parsons

▶▶ Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, Butch Hancock

Daniel Durchholz

Ranch Romance

Formed 1989, in Seattle, WA. Disbanded 1994.

Jo Miller, guitar, vocals; Lisa Theo, vocals, mandolin (1989–91); Barbara Lamb, vocals, fiddle; Nancy Katz, vocals, bass; Nova Karina Devonie, accordion, vocals (1991–94); Michael Buono, drums (1991–93); David Keenan, vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo (1992–94).

This hot, mostly female band (David Keenan, the man with longest tenure in the band, was usually referred to onstage as the band's Ranch Ro-man), opened a series of shows for k.d. lang early in its existence, giving the group a nice push. They were a hot band, featuring the scintillating fiddle of Barbara Lamb, who went on to become a member of Asleep at the Wheel; the passionate lead vocals of Jo Miller and, for a time,

Lisa Theo; plus the plucky Clevinger bass playing of Nancy Katz. Nova Devonie added her accordion beginning with the group's second album, and the versatile, hot picking of Keenan was stirred into the mix. The band's repertoire featured a mixture of country boogie, Western swing, some cowboy yodeling, torchy country ballads, a little bluegrass, a lot of originals by the band, and a strong spirit of good fun.

what's available: *Western Dream* ♪♪♪½ (Ranch Hands, 1989/Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. Ranch Romance, Michael Lord), the band's first album, represents their spirit of good fun very well. On *Blue Blazes* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. Michael Lord, Jo Miller), the band really hits its stride—a collection of scorching honky-tonkers, swing, cowperson yodeling, and smoldering ballads, it includes the band's perverse take on roadhouse sin, "Buckaroo." *Flip City* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Tim O'Brien) offers more honky-tonk, Western swing, and country boogie.

solo outings:

Barbara Lamb:

Fiddle Fatale ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993)

Tonight I Feel like Texas ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

Jo Miller:

(With Laura Love) *Jo Miller and Laura Love Sing Bluegrass and Old Time Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Rockin' Octoroon, 1995)

influences:

◀◀ Sons of the Pioneers, Patsy Cline

▶▶ k.d. lang, Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Randy Pitts

The Rankin Family

Formed c. 1989, in Cape Breton, Canada.

Carol Jean "Cookie" Rankin, vocals; Heather Rankin, vocals; Jimmy Rankin, vocals, guitar, drums; John Morris Rankin, piano, fiddle, guitar, bass, vocals; Raylene Rankin, vocals.

Growing up in an area that was remote and isolated, the members of the Rankin Family pulled on the traditional roots of their Scottish and Irish ancestors as the source material for their music. Emphasizing soaring melody lines in solos by Cookie, Heather, and Raylene, and the exciting blend of the three voices in tight harmonies, this group's vocal strengths helped it soar to popularity in very little time. The strong songwriting of Jimmy Rankin was also evident from the start, and his work has now become the bulk of the group's material. As the group has evolved, it has incorporated a more contemporary/country sound into its music. Beginning their musical training by performing at family parties, the group truly became a reality once they started touring the folk festival circuit in 1989. Showing farsighted confidence in themselves, they produced their own first album, which eventually went platinum. Following this success, their second album, *Fare Thee Well Love*, went triple-platinum. They have won four Juno awards: Group of the Year, People's Choice Award for Canadian Entertainer of the Year, Single of the Year for "Fare Thee Well Love," and Country Group of the Year.

what to buy: A good place to get an introduction to the group would be *The Rankin Family Collection* ♪♪♪ (EMI, 1996, prod. various), which collects some of the favorite tracks from their albums, including the ever-popular "Fare Thee Well Love" and the uplifting "Rise Again." *The Rankin Family* ♪♪♪½ (Rankins, 1989, prod. Chad Irschick) takes a good look at the group's roots, made up of mostly traditional music, some sung a cappella. Highlights include a lovely, upbeat arrangement of "Mairi's Wedding" and a haunting vocal solo, "Lament of the Irish Immigrant."

what to buy next: Although *North Country* ♪♪♪ (EMI, 1993, prod. Chad Irschick) shows the group reaching towards a more modern sound, it contains some true gems. Especially lovely is "Ho Ro My Nut Brown Maiden," sung in Gaelic.

what to avoid: Although *Endless Seasons* ♪♪ (EMI, 1996, prod. John Jennings, Rankin Family) is a bit of a return to an acoustic sound, the group clearly stretched for a new, more contemporary sound, going farther towards the country end of the music spectrum. Featuring several wonderful tracks, including the lively opening "As I Rove Out," the album as a whole feels unremarkable.

the rest:

Fare Thee Well Love ♪♪♪ (EMI, 1993)

solo outings:

Heather, Cookie & Raylene Rankin:

Do You Hear . . . Christmas with Heather, Cookie, & Raylene Rankin ♪♪♪½ (EMI, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Clannad, Patrick Doyle, Mary Chapin Carpenter

▶▶ Barra MacNeils

Jo Hughey Morrison

David Rea

Born 1945, in OH.

A master session musician on acoustic guitar who has worked

with the likes of famous '60s icons Judy Collins, Tom Rush, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Jesse Winchester, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, and Doug Kershaw, David Rea has also made a name for himself as a top-notch performer and songwriter over the last three decades. At age 17, he moved to Toronto from Ohio and, because of his extraordinary guitar skills, soon found himself backing such Canadian folk artists as Gordon Lightfoot and Ian and Sylvia. Rea started writing songs too, and his "Pilgrimage to Paradise" and "The Minstrel," were included as part of Ian and Sylvia's live performances at the time. Rea then embarked on a solo career and, with the help of producer Felix Pappalardi in 1969, made his debut album *Maverick Child*. He soon found himself writing songs with Pappalardi, and together they penned classic rock songs for Pappalardi's rock group, Mountain: "Mississippi Queen," "For Yasgur's Farm," and "Flowers of Evil." A second solo album, *By the Grace of God*, followed in 1971. Both albums, long out of print, typify Rea's folksy, laid-back songwriting style that was popularized by artist like James Taylor, Arlo Guthrie, and Jonathan Edwards. By 1972 Rea was anxious to try some new musical directions, and he was asked by his old touring mate, Dave Swarbrick, if he'd like to join the English folk-rock band Fairport Convention as a replacement for lead guitarist Richard Thompson. Arrangements with the band didn't work out to everyone's satisfaction, and Rea left the band after two months. He eagerly returned to Canada, and after working as a solo performer, began work in 1975 with Mike Seeger on *The Second Annual Farewell Reunion*, an album with various prominent folk performers, including Elizabeth Cotton, Ry Cooder, Ewan MacColl, and Pete Seeger. Encouraged by the success of the album and feeling inspired by musician friends, Rea produced an opera in 1976 with the help of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Titled *Emperor Norton*, it is based on the legendary "emperor of San Francisco," Joshua Abraham Norton. Raising a family took top priority with Rea, so for a while he checked out of extensive touring and devoted more time to his kids. But in 1988 he felt his creativity in music needed expression once again, so assisted by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) he wrote and produced a three-part series of the life of Robert Johnson, the Mississippi bluesman, in 1988. Looking for another new direction, Rea developed and wrote "Music Don't Mind," a radio project that explored the mix of European and black musical styles that eventually produced American music. In 1988 he was honored with the Gabriel Award for Excellence in Broadcasting. Rea has continued to be a vital force in the folk world. His fingerstyle guitar work is still in demand in the studio, notably with David Maloney *Listen to the Pipes*. Still touring and doing folk festivals (most recently with Native American flutist Sky Walkinstik "man-alone"), Rea continues to be a commanding folk performer, whose songs about the Old West, Canadian and American heroes, and his own thoughts about liberty and the pursuit of happiness make his appeal universal to all audiences of every age.

what's available: *Brass Ring* ♪♪♪ (Beacon Music, 1993, prod. Neil J. Young, David Rea) is the only Rea album still stocked in major folk record stores. This compact disc features 15 songs written by Rea and includes the legendary "Mississippi Queen" (written by Rea) and backup by Felix Pappalardi, Corky Laing, and Leslie West. Other notable tunes, more in Rea's folk style, are "Juanita," "Twilight Bay," and "A Lover's Ghost."

editor's choice

14 hammered dulcimer albums

Steve Schneider, *Momentum* (Salient Music Works)

Bill Spence, *The Hammered Dulcimer* (Front Hall)

Madeline MacNeil, *A Place Apart* (Turquoise)

Sam Rizzetta, *Bucks & Does* (Rizzetta Music)

Cathy Barton, *Johnny Whistletrigger* (Big Canoe)

Malcolm Dalglish, *Hymnody of Earth* (Ooolithic)

Dan Duggan, *Between the Seasons* (Esperance)

Walt Michael, *Music for the Hammered Dulcimer/Bermudaful* (MCE)

No Strings Attached, *Bellinzona* (Ennessay)

Scott Jackson, *Shanty Tunes* (SJ)

Linda Thomas & Dan Delancy, *Among Old Friends* (DL)

Bob Shank, *Hammer Dulcimer Solos* (Otter Slide)

Maggie Sansone, *Traditions* (Maggie's Music)

Karen Ashbrook, *Knock on the Door* (Maggie's Music)

worth searching for: *Maverick Child* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1969, prod. Felix Pappalardi) is Rea's first effort and a real collector's album if you can find it; *By the Grace of God* ♪ (Capitol, 1971, prod. Bob D'Orleans, David Rea) is also quite rare and features members of the Rascals and Mountain, as well as Nashville session hands Vassar Clements, Norbert Putnam, and Buddy Spicer. *Slewfoot* ♪♪ (Columbia/Windfall, 1973, prod. David Rea, Bob Weir) uses members of the Grateful Dead and New Riders of the Purple Sage as back-up musicians on many of the cuts. Another release on cassette, *Feelin' Good* ♪ (1986), sadly is not available anymore.

influences:

◀◀ Ian Tyson, Tom Rush, Oscar Brand, Dave Van Ronk, Robert Johnson, Pete Seeger, Joni Mitchell

▶▶ Richard Shindell, Ellis Paul, David Mallett

TJ McGrath

"Cheese" Read

Born Wallace Read, August 12, 1914, in Eunice, LA. Died November 15, 1981, in Eunice, LA.

"Cheese" Read was a fiddler who condensed decades of Cajun fiddle styles in his playing. He could produce the "crying" sound of early Cajun fiddlers like Dennis McGee, but he was also capable of playing in a more string-band style that showed the sound of Leo Soileau, Luderin Darbone, and Harry Choates. There's more than a bit of Western swing influence, particularly of the fiddle music of Bob Wills. You can hear that kind of synthesis of Cajun styles at work in such younger fiddlers as Michael Doucet and David Greely. Read also loved early Cajun recording artists like the Breaux Freres and Moise Robin and Mayuse LaFleur. He was recorded playing very traditional pieces during the early 1960s by Dr. Harry Oster, but his chance to shine came on an album recorded for Arhoolie.

what to buy: *Cajun House Party: C'ez Cheese* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz) takes all the cuts that Strachwitz recorded in 1979, which include one featuring Read and master Cajun accordionist Marc Savoy backed only by guitar. There is also a session recorded in Savoy's music shop that highlights Read's fiddling where he is backed by guitar, bass, and drums. The remainder of the CD is filled with songs that were recorded by Dr. Harry Oster but not issued in *Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians*.

what to buy next: *Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz) combines the original two LPs recorded by Oster. Although Read is only one of a number of artists featured on these recordings, his performances are excellent, and he accompanies many of the other fine performers on this record.

worth searching for: Read is one of the musicians visited by Yasha Aginsky in his movie *Cajun Visits* (Flower Films, 1983). You not only get to see him play; you get to see the finest Cajun vegetable garden of all time in the bargain.

influences:

◀◀ Dennis McGee, Harry Choates, Leo Soileau, Hackberry Ramblers

▶▶ Michael Doucet, Steve Riley, Magnolia Sisters, Dewey Balfa

Jared Snyder

Bernice Johnson Reagon

Born in 1942, in Albany, GA.

Music has been a medium of political expression for Bernice Johnson Reagon, the founder and leader of Sweet Honey in the Rock, as well as an essential force in the preservation and perpetuation of African American cultural idioms, including oral, musical, and protest traditions. The daughter of a Baptist minister, she has used her deep, soulful voice as a tool against racism, economic struggle, and political injustice. Reagon has been outspoken from earliest memory. A member of the first Youth Chapter of the NAACP in 1959, she was suspended from Albany State College for participating in protest demonstrations two years later. Raised on the songs that she learned at Mt. Early Baptist Church and the spirituals that she sang in high school and college choirs, Reagon made her professional singing debut as a member of the topical group the Freedom Singers in the early 1960s. Organized by Cordell Reagon, whom she married in 1963 (and later divorced), the group became the singing conscience of the civil rights movement. Traveling in a six-cylinder Buick station wagon, the Freedom Singers spread their message across the United States, performing in people's homes, schools, and theaters, including Carnegie Hall and Town Hall in New York, and the Ash Grove in Los Angeles. Their most memorable performance came at the Newport Folk Festival in 1963. In addition to their own set, the group joined with Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, and Peter, Paul and Mary in a powerful version of "We Shall Overcome." Reagon left the Freedom Singers in 1964, after the birth of her daughter, Toshi; her son, Kwan Tauna, was born the following year. Her commitment

to social change, however, remained as strong as ever. From 1964 to 1966 she worked with Guy Carawan to organize conferences of civil rights movement song leaders. Together with Mary Ethel Jones and Mattie Casey, she formed the Harambee Singers and performed at conferences and rallies on the East Coast. Financed by an anonymous grant, Reagon returned to Spellman College in 1968 to finish her undergraduate studies in history. She moved to Washington, D.C., in 1971, there to attend Howard University, where she earned her doctorate, and to form the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee Freedom Singers. Although she temporarily stopped singing in the summer of 1970 due to throat problems, Reagon has continued to be drawn to music. Becoming the vocal director of the Black Repertory Company, she began the steps that led to the formation of the a cappella group Sweet Honey in the Rock, of which she is artistic director. Reagon has recorded two solo albums: *The Sound of Thunder* in 1965 and *River of Life* in 1986. Her influence can be directly felt through the music of her daughter, Toshi. She sang supportive vocals on a memorable version of Sting's "Walking in Your Footsteps" on her daughter's debut album, *Justice*, and served as co-producer for her daughter's second release, *Still on the Journey*. She maintains a busy schedule outside of music as well. A professor of history at American University in Washington, D.C., and curator emeritus at the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of American History, Reagon has explored the social roots of her songs. She recently edited the book *We'll Understand It Better By and By: Pioneering African American Gospel Composers*, which inspired a radio series on National Public Radio in 1994. In 1995 Reagon received the Charles Frankel Prize, a Presidential medal for outstanding contribution to public understanding of the humanities.

what to buy: Reagon's most intriguing and diverse performances are captured in the recordings of Sweet Honey in the Rock, but she has also performed—and more importantly, produced—vital work under her own name. *The Songs Are Free* ♪♪♪♪ (Mystic Fire Audio, 1994, prod. Gail Pellet) is an hour-long documentary produced by Public Affairs Television, Inc., and hosted by Bill Moyers. The release principally is an interview with Reagon, interspersed with musical excerpts, that defines her perception of the role and importance of oral and musical traditions in black culture. It's also available on video. For the uninitiated, it provides a valuable framework and context to her other recordings. *Wade in the Water: African American Sacred Music Traditions* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1994) was conceived, compiled, and annotated by Reagon. She, Toshi, and Sweet Honey in the Rock are among the dozens of performers on this 67-song, four-CD set that documents nineteenth- and twentieth-century African American sacred music. *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs 1960–1966* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1997, prod. Bernice Johnson Reagon) features 43 on-location recordings made during the heat of the civil rights struggle at mass meeting sites including Atlanta, Chicago, and Los Angeles, to name a few. It's a devastating two-CD time capsule.

what to buy next: On *River of Life/Harmony: One* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1972, prod. Bernice Johnson Reagon, Toshi Reagon), she recreates the rich harmonies of Sweet Honey in the Rock on her own, overdubbing up to 16 different vocal parts. Reagon's self-produced 1965 album *The Sound of Thunder* has been out of print for more than three decades.

influences:

◀◀ Freedom Singers, Harambee Singer, Betty Mae Fikes, Bessie Jones, Carla Thomas, Paul Robeson, Ray Charles, Pete Seeger, Odetta, Ike & Tina Turner

▶▶ Joan Baez, Toshi Reagon, Tracy Chapman

see also: *Sweet Honey in the Rock, Toshi Reagon*

Craig Harris and Bryan Powell

Toshi Reagon

Born January 1964.

Like Jakob Dylan, Eliza Carthy, and Ziggy Marley, Toshi Reagon has a formidable lineage to live up to. Her mother is Bernice Johnson Reagon of Sweet Honey in the Rock. She grew up with the sounds of the civil rights movement mixed with the usual teenage pop music, and she's melded her influences into her own roots-based style. Reagon isn't quite the blues belter one might expect; there's a delicate frailty to her voice that suggests youth, and it's very appealing. When at times her lyrics meander into didacticism, her energetic delivery and colorful backing arrangements keep listeners' attention. Reagon says, "People always come up to me after shows and say, 'Man, I felt like you were talking to me.' And I'm like, 'I was.'"

what's available: Who would ever have envisioned Sting as a folk composer? Reagon takes "Walking in Your Footsteps" and embroiders it with gospel ornamentation; it's a great kick-start to *Justice* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Toshi Reagon). Reagon shows off her instrumental virtuosity on "How Long" (one of her mom's songs) with guitars, tambourine, harmonica, and her own voice. Smithsonian Folkways' press release calls the

style of *Kindness* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1997, prod. Toshi Reagon) "urban acoustic." It's heavily vocal based, infused with rap and blues. The album was done to raise money for hip surgery; the young Reagon has now had six operations on her hip. *Kindness* succeeds because of its simplicity; it's the flip side of the equally successful but far more strident *Justice*.

influences:

◀◀ Led Zeppelin, Bob Marley, Big Mama Thornton, Joni Mitchell, Sweet Honey in the Rock

▶▶ Laura Love, Ani DiFranco

Pamela Murray Winters

The ReBirth Brass Band

Formed 1983, in New Orleans, LA.

Philip Frazier, tuba, leader, sousaphone (1983–present); Kermit Ruffins, trumpet, lead vocals (1983–93); Gardner Ray Green, trumpet (1983–86); Keith "Wolf" Anderson, trombone, background vocal, percussion (1983–1990); Kenneth Austin, snare drum, background vocal, percussion (1983–89); Keith "Bass Drum Shorty" Frazier, bass drum, cymbal, background vocal, percussion (1983–present); Derrick "Khabuky" Shezbie, trumpet, percussion (1986–91); Derek Wiley, trumpet, background vocal, percussion (1987–91); Stafford "Lil D" Agee, trombone, background vocals (1989–93); Ajay "Grabby-Grab" Mallery, snare drum (1989–present); John "Prince" Gilbert, tenor saxophone, vocals (1989–93); Solomon "Nine" Shabazz, cowbell (1989–90); the Morris Brothers, tambourine (1989–90); "Lil" Glenn Andrews, snare drum, tuba (1990–present); Reginald Steward, trombone, background vocals (1991–present); Louis "Shuaka Shuaka" Jordan, maracas (1991–92); Michael Brooks, percussion (1991–92); Roderick "Claude" Paulin, tenor saxophone (1991–93); Kenneth Terry, trumpet (1991–present); Tyrus Chapman, trombone (1991–present); "Jammin'" Al Richardson, cowbell (1991–present).

It was the Dirty Dozen Brass Band that revitalized the New Orleans parade band tradition in the '80s by incorporating elements of funk, R&B, and bebop into the second-line, carnival-music format. The Dozen's success, which took them to jazz festivals all over the world, inspired a younger generation of New Orleans musicians to follow in the same footsteps. The best and most prominent of those younger acts is the ReBirth Brass Band. Of the seven musicians listed on the ReBirth Brass Band's 1984 debut album, *Here to Stay*, only two were still in the band in 1994; of the 10 musicians on ReBirth's 1992 album *Take It to the Street*, only five remained. And yet all six of the ReBirth Brass Band albums sound remarkably alike. That's because this group is not about individual stars, but about an ensemble sound rooted in an aggressive approach to New Orleans' brass-band tradition. As long as that city produces young drummers and horn players who have both an affection and irreverence for second-line parade music, ReBirth will have no trouble filling its ranks.

The two musicians who have been with ReBirth from the start are the Frazier brothers, Philip on tuba and Keith on bass drum. It's no coincidence that these low-pitched rhythm instruments been the unchanging factor in the band, for the ReBirth sound is built from the bottom up. The Fraziers get the syncopated groove "rollin'," as the title has it, and the snare drummer and the four to eight other horn players climb on board. This allows a rare combination of freedom and discipline, for the horns can play almost anything as long as they stay in the groove.

what to buy: The ReBirth Brass Band had a surprise hit single with "Do Whatcha Wanna" from their second album, *Feel like Funkin' It Up* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Ron Levy). The catchy, sing-along melody fit so snugly into the syncopated carnival beat, and Kermit Ruffins's Louis Armstrong–like vocal was so infectious that the song broke out of the folklorist ghetto and onto commercial radio throughout the South. In 1993–94, just as key members Ruffins and Agee were leaving the band, the group made *Rollin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Keith Keller), its most sophisticated project. Ten years of playing had finally given the musicians the skills to handle the progressive-jazz flavors that the Dirty Dozen had pioneered.

what to buy next: *Do Whatcha Wanna* ♪♪♪♪ (Mardi Gras, 1991, prod. Milton Batiste) contains some of the band's most popular tunes—"Do Whatcha Wanna" and "I Feel Like Funkin' It Up"—in alternate recordings by brass-band veteran Batiste. It would be the best introduction to the band if it weren't for the total lack of information on the packaging. *Take It to the Street* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Ron Levy) finds the band growing into its reputation with improved chops and undiminished energy. The title tune is the group's catchiest song since its fluke 1989 hit.

what to avoid: *ReBirth Kickin' It Live* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Ron Levy) captures the group in performance at the legendary Glass House, the original home of the Dirty Dozen. The album has tons of energy but little precision. Chris Strachwitz, the great roots-music documentarian, captured ReBirth on tape on *Here to Stay* ♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1984, prod. Chris Strachwitz, Jerry Brock, Rebirth Jazz Band) when the musicians were very young and inexperienced. It shows.

influences:

Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Young Olympia Brass Band, Tuba Fats & the Chosen Few

New Birth Brass Band, Treme Brass Band, Young Soul Rebels

Geoffrey Himes

Red Clay Ramblers

Formed 1972, in Chapel Hill, NC.

Tommy Thompson, banjo, guitar, vocals (1972–94); Jim Watson, mandolin, guitar, vocals (1972–86); Bill Hicks, fiddle, vocals (1972–81); Clay Buckner, fiddle, vocals (1980–present); Mike Craver, piano, vocals (1973–86); Bland Simpson, piano, vocals (1986–present); Jack Herrick, bass, horns, vocals (1976–present); Chris Frank, piano, guitar, accordion, horns, vocals (1987–present).

To call the Red Clay Ramblers a bluegrass band is simply to acknowledge that there's nothing else *to* call them. Original fiddler Bill Hicks describes the Ramblers as "a band that might have existed in 1930, but didn't." They started out as an old-time string band, self-consciously trying to recreate the musty 78 rpm ambiance of Appalachian folk. Even in their early days, however, the Ramblers were never exactly purists about it. They're one of the most versatile bands in the business, drawing from Tin Pan Alley, Cajun, blues, Irish folk, and even Broadway standards. Some of the Ramblers' best work has been in conjunction with theatrical productions, beginning with their stint in the acclaimed 1975 off-Broadway musical *Diamond Studs: The Story of Jesse James.* Through 25 years and myriad lineup changes (Shawn Colvin was a part-time member during the mid-'80s, although she does not appear on any of their recordings), the Ramblers have maintained a consistently high standard of quality.

what to buy: The Ramblers have enjoyed a long and fruitful association with writer/director Sam Shepard, starting with *A Lie of the Mind* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc/Sugar Hill, 1986, prod. Jack Herrick, Gary Bristol). The Ramblers served as pit band for this play about familial clashes, providing musical emphasis points. The score mixes originals with traditional covers like "In the Pines" and Stephen Foster's "Hard Times," and more than stands on its own apart from the play. It's the perfect Ramblers sampler, hitting just the right balance between old and new. The next best thing to seeing 'em live. (The Ramblers also play a medicine show band in Shepard's 1993 movie *Silent Tongue*.)

what to buy next: While it's true that the Ramblers can get a shade too cutesy at times, only the congenitally churlish won't be won over by the CD package that combines *Twisted Laurel* (Flying Fish, 1976, prod. Red Clay Ramblers, Alice Gerrard, Bruce Kaplan, Bill McElroy) and *Merchants Lunch* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977, prod. Red Clay Ramblers, Bill McElroy). The material ranges far and wide, from Jimmie Rodgers to W.C. Handy to originals that fit in seamlessly. If you have a hard time telling the difference between the Ramblers' originals and their covers, well, that's the point. *Rambler* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. Jack Herrick) is well-executed but not quite as loose—although its Irish-jig take on "Cotton-Eyed Joe" is pretty amazing.

the rest:

The Red Clay Ramblers with Fiddlin' Al McCanless ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1974)
Stolen Love ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1975)
Chuckin' the Frizz ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978)
Meeting in the Air ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1980)
Hard Times ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1982)
It Ain't Right ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Texas ♪♪♪ (Snappy, 1988)
Music from Sam Shepard's A Lie of the Mind ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1989)

worth searching for: Of the Ramblers' many extracurricular projects, one of the most intriguing is Michelle Shocked's roots-music travelogue *Arkansas Traveler* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1992, prod. Michelle Shocked), on which they back her up on the track "Contest Coming." Singer Marti Jones's lost classic *Unsophisticated Time* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1985, prod. Don Dixon) has a wonderful version of Bland Simpson's wistful "Follow You All over the World." Simpson moonlights with Don Dixon and Jim Wann as the Coastal Cohorts, a trio that performs the musical *King Mackerel and the Blues Are Running* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Don Dixon); the production has been known to tour and is well worth seeing.

influences:

Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers, Fats Waller, Louvin Brothers, Band, Carter Family

Hot Rize, Ry Cooder, Béla Fleck, Squirrel Nut Zippers

David Menconi

Red Mountain White Trash

Formed 1986, in Birmingham, AL.

Ed Baggott, fiddle; Jim Cauthen, fiddle, vocals; Joyce Cauthen, guitar, vocals; Phil Foster, mandolin; Jamie Finley, harmonica, banjo uke; Bill Martin, autoharp, vocals; Nancy Jackson, bass.

The Red Mountain White Trash became a band in 1986 when liv-

leon redbone

ing on Red Mountain in Birmingham, Alabama. Professionals were moving into the area and turning it into an average American suburb while this group of friends were working by day and playing music, clogging, and country dancing by night. They figured the neighbors thought they were white trash so they embraced the term and thus came the name for the band. The Red Mountain White Trash is a southern old-time string band that plays for contradances. Many of their tunes are set into medley like you often see in Celtic music so that during long contras they do not bore the dancers with a single tune. The tunes they choose to play mostly come from Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

what's available: *Fire in the Dumpster* ♪♪♪ (Whoop It Up!, 1996, prod. Red Mountain White Trash) is a fun CD to have around, whether you are a dancer or not. There are a lot of good tunes here for the fan of old-time music, including some by John Salyer, Emmett Lundy, Clyde Davenport, and James Bryan. Also included are some tunes the bluegrass fan would know, such as "Dixie Hoedown" from Jim and Jesse, and "Devil on the Stump" by Art Stamper. Besides fiddles, this band adds mandolin, guitar, harmonica, banjo uke, autoharp, bass, and vocals. All the cuts are enjoyable and the liner notes will send you off in a million different directions to hunt down some of the sources for these tunes.

influences:

◀◀ John Salyer, Brad Leftwich, James Bryan, Clyde Davenport, Emmett Lundy

▶▶ Freighthoppers, Red Hots

Steve Gardner

Leon Redbone

The deep, froggy voice and soft, ragtime guitar sounds as if it should come out of an old Victrola; the music of Leon Redbone comes from another time, another era, equal parts Jelly Roll Morton, Mark Twain, Tiny Tim, and Jiminy Cricket. His past is shrouded in mystery—he politely dismisses any biographical question from prying interviewers—but we do know he is a long-time resident of New Hope, Pennsylvania, and that his shtick, a quiet amalgam of jazz, country blues, Tin Pan Alley show tunes, and vaudeville performed in a quiet, ragtime style, has never varied since he first appeared on record beginning in 1975. His voice is probably better known these days on ubiquitous television commercials for beer and laundry detergents and themes for TV programs and films, but he remains a popular, compelling live attraction at concerts and festivals.

what to buy: Redbone's records are pretty much the same style, with only slight background changes from one to the other. You still can't beat his debut, *On the Track* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1975, prod. Joel Drone), with impeccable sidemen, careful production, and a passel of catchy songs like "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Lulu's Back in Town," "Polly Wolly Doodle," and the lovely "Marie," with a Warner Bros. cartoon bullfrog on the cover. *Double Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1977/1988, prod. Joel Dorn) is nearly as good, a bit more melancholic and edgy than *On the Track*, with "Diddy Wa Diddy," "Mr. Jelly Roll Baker," "Crazy Blues," and "Winin' Boy Blues" among the highlights.

what to buy next: *From Branch to Branch* ♪♪♪♪ (Emerald City/Atco, 1981, prod. Beryl Handler, Leon Redbone) is a high-quality set of tunes—"Step It up and Go," "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," even "When You Wish upon a Star." *Red to Blue* ♪♪♪♪ (August, 1985, Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. Beryl Handler, Leon Redbone) has a bigger band sound, with Dr. John on piano most of the way through. For a taste of this live show—which isn't *that* much different from the studio version—try *Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Special Music, 1995, prod. Beryl Handler, Leon Redbone).

the rest:

Champagne Charlie ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1978/1988)
Christmas Island ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988/Private, 1996)
Sugar ♪♪♪♪ (Private, 1990)
Up a Lazy River ♪♪♪½ (Private, 1992)
Whistling in the Wind ♪♪♪½ (Private, 1994)

worth searching for: For something a bit different, try *No Regrets* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988, prod. Beryl Handler, Leon Redbone), with guests from the newgrass world—Béla Fleck, Jerry Douglas, and Mark O'Connor.

influences:

◀◀ Jelly Roll Morton, Emmitt Miller, Blind Blake, Bing Crosby, Jimmie Rodgers, Louis Armstrong, Mississippi Sheiks

Leland Rucker

Otis Redding

Born September 9, 1941, in Dawson, GA. Died December 10, 1967, in Madison, WI.

Because of his more organic approach to '60s soul, Otis Redding's music has endured—and even deepened—in the years since his death in an airplane crash at age 26. The prince of Memphis soul has blossomed into something only hinted at in his final recording, "(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay," made only three days before he died. He might not have bothered to learn all the lyrics to a song before recording—the most glaring

example is his version of the Rolling Stones' "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction"—but close scrutiny of his live recordings or the available outtakes indicate it was exactly this spirit of improvisation, this enthusiasm for creativity, that illuminated his work. From his earliest Little Richard–inspired efforts to the enormous body of work he compiled in four short years at Memphis' Stax/Volt, Redding dominated whatever he recorded with a vivid vision of himself: warm and whimsical, cornpone and secretly wise.

what to buy: With ace Atlantic engineer Tom Dowd at the board, *Otis Blue* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1965, prod. Jim Stewart) featured a slightly richer sound that, coupled with the single finest selection of songs of any Redding album, made this one of the greatest soul albums of its era. *The Very Best of Otis Redding* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1992, prod. various) is a terrific compilation of the essential material.

what to buy next: The evergreen *Live in Europe* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1967, prod. Jim Stewart), with Dowd at the controls again, commemorates Redding's power as a galvanizing live performer on one of the most historic live albums ever.

what to avoid: Although compelling in its unvarnished honesty, *Good to Me* ♪♪ (Stax, 1993, prod. Al Jackson Jr.) is not a very good album. Composed of scraps left over from *Live at the Whiskey* and featuring Redding's unskilled—and undoubtedly underpaid—road band stumbling through his command, this is the least interesting of his many live recordings.

the rest:
Pain in My Heart ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1965)
The Great Otis Redding Sings Soul Ballads ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1965)
The Soul Album ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1966)
The Otis Redding Dictionary of Soul ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1966)
(With Carla Thomas) *King and Queen* ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1967)
The Dock of the Bay ♪♪♪♪ (Stax, 1968)
In Person at the Whiskey a Go Go ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1968)
The Immortal Otis Redding ♪♪♪½ (Stax, 1968)
Love Man ♪♪♪♪ (Atco, 1970)
Tell the Truth ♪♪♪ (Atco, 1970)
Ultimate Otis Redding (Warner Bros., 1987)
Sings Soul Ballads (Atlantic, 1991)
Remember Me ♪♪♪ (Stax, 1992)
The Very Best of Otis Redding, Volume II ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1995)
White Christmas (Rhino, 1996)

worth searching for: The three-disc box, *The Otis Redding Story* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1987, prod. various), also released in a six-LP edition, was replaced—but not improved upon—by a pricey, four-disc box, *Otis! The Definitive Otis Redding* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1993, prod. various).

influences:
◀◀ Little Richard, Sam Cooke, Solomon Burke
▶▶ Al Green, Janis Joplin, Mick Jagger

Joel Selvin

Jean Redpath

Born April 28, 1937, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Jean Redpath's unaffected, crystalline mezzo-soprano is an excellent instrument for Scottish songs. A university lecturer, she is as much a scholar as she is a performer, and she scoffs at show business trappings, concentrating instead on the purity of the music. Nevertheless, her delivery is never dry; her heart is in every syllable. The daughter of a musician and a folklore scholar, Redpath spent time in Greenwich Village in the 1960s, impressing her audiences with the size of her repertoire. She has recorded many albums, but her best-known project is the songs of Robert Burns; seven volumes of this series were recorded before the death of her researcher, Serge Hovey.

what to buy: *Lowlands* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1994, prod. Jean Redpath) is an excellent mix of songs. Two of the best are "Faraway Tom" (with cello accompaniment by Abby Newton) and the a cappella "Gallowa' Hills." Equally strong is *Jean Redpath* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1975/1989), which includes "I Live Not Where I Love," one of Redpath's most requested songs.

what to buy next: *The Songs of Robert Burns, Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1976, 1980/1996, prod. Serge Hovey) contains the best of Redpath's versions of Burns's songs, including "Auld Lang Syne," "A Red, Red Rose," and "Nine Inch Will Please a Lady."

best of the rest:
First Flight ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1989)
The Songs of Robert Burns, Volumes III and IV ♪♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1982, 1983/1996)
The Songs of Robert Burns, Volumes V and VI ♪♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1985, 1987/1996)
The Songs of Robert Burns, Volume VII ♪♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1990)
Song of the Seals ♪♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Robert Burns, Jeannie Robertson

Pamela Murray Winters

6
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8 *blind alfred reed*

Blind Alfred Reed

Born June 15, 1880, in Floyd, VA. Died January 17, 1956, in Cool Ridge, WV.

A street musician, protest singer, and ordained Methodist minister, Alfred Reed was blind from birth but learned to play violin, guitar, banjo, and mandolin. He recorded for the Victor label during 1927 and 1929, but made most of his living playing dances, giving lessons, or selling small broadsides with his lyrics printed on them. His recordings have been difficult to find since the '40s—Rounder issued a collection in 1972, but even that's only on cassette. Still, a few of his songs have carried his reputation through the years, most notably "How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live?," a timeless diatribe that can be championed by both the political left and right and has been recorded by the New Lost City Ramblers, Ry Cooder, the Del Lords, and others.

what's available: Reed made his first recordings at the same 1927 Bristol, Tennessee, field sessions that introduced Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family to the world at large. *How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live?* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1972/1991) contains three of those recordings plus 11 more. The songs, which include the title track, "Why Do You Bob Your Hair, Girls," and several religious songs, typically feature Reed singing and playing fiddle while accompanied by his son, Arville Reed, on guitar. Many of the songs take a conservative political bent, and modern listeners may not be sure whether to laugh at or take offense to Reed's songs about women, like "Woman's Been after Man Ever Since" and "We've Just Got to Have 'Em, That's All."

worth searching for: Though the sole collection of Reed's music is available only on cassette, several of his recordings appear on compilation CDs. Most notably there's *The Bristol Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1991, prod. Country Music Foundation), a two-disc set featuring "The Wreck of the Virginian," Reed's first recording, and "Walking in the Way with Jesus," along with tunes by the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, Ernest V. Stoneman, and others. Two gospel songs, "Always Lift Him up and Never Knock Him Down" (from 1927) and "There'll Be No Distinction There" (from 1929) appear on *Something Got a Hold of Me: A Treasury of Sacred Music* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1990, comp. prod. Billy Altman). "The Old Fashioned Cottage" and the self-pitying "You'll Miss Me," two 1929 recordings not included on the Rounder collection, appear on the compilations *The Rose Grew 'round the Briar: Early American Rural Love Songs—Volumes I and II* ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo, 1997, prod. Richard Nevins), respectively.

influences:

◀◀ Vernon Dalhart, Carson Robison

▶▶ Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, Woody Guthrie

Brian Mansfield

Harvey Reid

Born 1951, somewhere in the Mojave Desert.

Technology came to acoustic music through New Hampshire–based multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Harvey Reid. The first artist to record a folk CD, Reid was the inspiration and the first to use the Fishman transducer and amplification system for acoustic stringed instruments. Alternating between six-string, 12-string, and slide guitars, autoharp, and six-string banjo, Reid casts a deeply personal musical spell. Performing and recording mostly as a soloist, he has crafted traditional folk, classical, Celtic, nautical, bluegrass, and gospel influences into his own intimate style. Music played a small role in Reid's childhood, as none of his relatives played an instrument. He didn't pick up his first guitar until he was in high school. But, after stumbling onto a guitar at a party and strumming it for a few minutes, he was hooked. Teaching himself to play on a $19 guitar that his mom had bought and put in the attic a few years back, he developed a passion for acoustic music and became a traveling musician. Reid has released seven albums. His 1986 debut, *The Coming of Winter*, shows his command of traditional folk music, while 1987's *The Heart of the Minstrel on Christmas Day* has become a classic of the Yuletide season.

what to buy: A sampling of tunes from Reid's first six albums is collected on *Overview* ♪♪♪♪ (Woodpecker, 1990). In addition to impressive renditions of Woody Guthrie's "Vigilante Man" and Jimmie Rodgers's "California Blues," as well as inventive reworking of three traditional tunes, the anthology is a memorable showcase of Reid's virtuoso playing and tradition-rooted composing.

what to buy next: Reid's all instrumental album, *Chestnuts* ♪♪♪♪ (Woodpecker, 1995), is a tribute to the music of the past. Performing on a lengthy list of stringed instruments and joined by David Surette (guitar, mandolin, and bouzouki), Moondi Klein (guitar), Brian Silber (viola), and Dan Crary (guitar), Reid brings century-old tunes, including "My Grandfather's Clock," "Old Black Joe," and "Listen to the Mockingbird," up to date.

the rest:

The Coming of Winter ♪♪♪½ (Woodpecker, 1986)

The Heart of the Minstrel on Christmas Day ♪♪♪½ (Woodpecker, 1987)
Of Wind and Water ♪♪♪ (Woodpecker, 1988)
Solo Guitar Sketchbook ♪♪♪ (Woodpecker, 1989)
Steel Drivin' Man ♪♪♪½ (Woodpecker, 1992)
Circles ♪♪♪½ (Woodpecker, 1993)

influences:

Leo Kottke, John Fahey, Gordon Lightfoot, Carter Family

Michael Hedges

Craig Harris

John Reischman

See: Good Ol' Persons

Relativity

See: Nightnoise

John Renbourn

Born 1944, in Torquay, England.

John Renbourn is considered one of the finest fingerpicking guitarists in the world. His work during the 1960s with his own groups, with Pentangle, and together with Bert Jansch had a profound effect on anybody who played acoustic guitar during the 1960s and 1970s. He began to play guitar as a teen and, like almost every other British youth, became obsessed with the skiffle craze of the 1950s. He formally studied classical guitar, but soon moved to London where he met Jansch, whose first album, *Bert Jansch,* had a profound impact on Renbourn as it had on many other guitarists. The two collaborated together on one album, *Bert and John*, and shortly thereafter founded the folk-rock group Pentangle. Both guitarists had been influenced by country blues, jazz, and traditional music of the British Isles. Renbourn brought a knowledge of medieval music and classical guitar also. Pentangle allowed the Renbourn and Jansch to interact over the solid rhythm section of Danny Thompson and Terry Cox. The group lasted until about 1973. Renbourn's work after that with the John Renbourn Group showed a growing interest in East Indian music both in rhythm and scales. His more recent ensemble, Ship of Fools, has a pronounced Celtic influence. Renbourn continues to tour and record and challenge both himself and the adventurous listener.

what to buy: During the late '60s, *Sir John Alot of Merry England* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Nathan Joseph) was in heavy rotation on many a turntable on both sides of the Atlantic. During the Summer of Love, with all its feedback and psychedelic sounds, this record stood out by conjuring up castles and knights with its clear acoustical sound. This sound was accomplished by Renbourn with help from Pentangle drummer Terry Cox and flutist Ray Warleigh. What they created was a unique marriage of Renbourn's love of medieval music with the improvisations and openness of jazz.

what to buy next: *John Renbourn and Bert Jansch* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Cambra, 1985, prod. Bill Leader) combines the *Bert and John* LP with cuts from Jansch's first two records. You really can't go wrong with any of it. You can hear the amazing guitar interplay between these two musicians just as they were beginning to collaborate together. It is an audio documentation of the creative process of discovery that was going on between the two of them. Here is the first version of Charles Mingus's "Goodbye Porkpie Hat" that wasn't recorded by a jazz band. Like a pair of good cooks, each adds a tinge of blues or a slight Celtic accent to the other's themes.

the rest:

John Renbourn ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1965)
Bert and John ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1966)
Another Monday ♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1967)
John Renbourn Sampler ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1971)
Lady and the Unicorn ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1971)
Faro Annie ♪♪ (Reprise, 1972)
So Clear ♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1973)
Heads and Tails ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1973)
Hermit ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1977)
(With the John Renbourn Group) *Maid in Bedlam* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1977)
(With Stefan Grossman) *John Renbourn & Stefan Grossman Live in . . .* ♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1978)
Black Balloon ♪♪ (Shanachie, 1979)
Under the Volcano ♪♪♪ (Sonet, 1980)
Enchanted Garden ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1980)
Live in America ♪♪½ (Flying Fish)
Live in Concert ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985)
(With Stefan Grossman) *The Three Kingdoms* ♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1986)
Essential Collection, Volume I ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1987)
Essential Collection, Volume II ♪♪♪½ (Transatlantic, 1987)
Folk Blues of John Renbourn ♪♪♪♪½ (Demon, 1988)
Nine Maidens ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Ship of Fools ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Medieval Almanack ♪♪½ (Demon, 1994)
Wheel of Fortune ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1994)
Essential: The Best of John Renbourn ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1994)
Collection ♪♪♪♪½ (Castle, 1995)
Rare Performances 1965–95 ♪♪♪ (Vestapol, 1996)
John Renbourn/Another Monday ♪♪♪♪ (Castle, 1996)
In Concert 1982 ♪♪♪♪ (Vestapol, 1996)
(With the John Renbourn Group) *John Barleycorn* ♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1996)

660 *renegades*

the 1970s

The seventies began with a number of acoustic performers being huge stars on the rock circuit—James Taylor, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, and Joni Mitchell made the jump to arenas very easily. As the decade continued, many new voices made a commercial splash nationally—John Prine and Steve Goodman in Chicago, Dan Fogelberg in Colorado, David Bromberg in New York, and Kris Kristofferson in Nashville. Country, folk, and rock continued to merge through the work of folks like Gram Parsons, Emmylou Harris, the Eagles, Jerry Jeff Walker, and even the Grateful Dead (and their spin-off, the New Riders of the Purple Sage). Bluegrass continued to diversify, with groups like the Newgrass Revival and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band melding bluegrass and rock (and, in the Dirt Band's case, making an important connection with their country roots in the *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* project), and artists like David Grisman and Tony Rice making connections between bluegrass instrumentation, progressive jazz, and acoustic swing. Folk rock continued to be a significant force in the British Isles, with groups like Steeleye Span, the Albion Band, and the resilient Fairport Convention drawing larger and larger audiences, and Fairport alumni Richard Thompson (working with his wife Linda) and Sandy Denny (who died in 1978) making some of their most enduring contributions during the decade.

Michael Parrish

Lost Sessions ♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1996)
(With Stefan Grossman) *Snap a Little Owl* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

worth searching for: *John Renbourn: Rare Performances 1965–95* ♪♪♪♪ (Vestapol, 1996) is a 90-minute video tape of performances by Renbourn that cover more than 30 years of his career. You get some of almost all the periods of his work and if you are interested in his guitar playing there is no better way to get some idea how he's able to do some of the things he does.

influences:
◀◀ Davey Graham, Big Bill Broonzy, Bert Jansch

▶▶ Richard Thompson, Martin Carthy, Ralph McTell

see also: *Bert Jansch, Pentangle, Stefan Grossman*

Jared Snyder

Renegades

See: Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Don Reno & Red Smiley

Formed 1951. Disbanded 1964.

Don Reno (born February 21, 1926, in Spartanburg, SC; died October 16, 1984), banjo, guitar, vocals; Red Smiley (born May 17, 1925, in Asheville, NC; died January 2, 1972), guitar, vocals.

Singer-songwriter and bandleader Don Reno was a longtime, influential musician from the first generation of artists to consciously play a music called bluegrass. With guitarist and singer Red Smiley and their band the Tennessee Cut-ups (a crack outfit that included fiddler Mack Magaha, bassist John Palmer, and, from the age of nine, Reno's son, mandolin player Ronnie Reno), Reno made some of the most successful and enduring bluegrass albums of the early days of the music. He was recognized as among the most innovative banjo players around, was an outstanding bluegrass guitarist, and wrote "Feudin' Banjos" with sometime performing partner Arthur "Guitar" Smith. He replaced Earl Scruggs in Bill Monroe's band before forming a duo, and eventually a band, with Smiley. Together, they cut many classic bluegrass sides for King Records and others; the partnership dissolved in 1964 due to Smiley's ill health. Reno then formed a group with guitarist and vocalist Bill Harrell that lasted for a decade. From 1976 Reno performed mostly with his younger sons, Dale and Don Wayne, although oldest son Ronnie sometimes took time out from his job with Merle Haggard to appear with the family band.

what to buy: *Reno & Smiley & the Tennessee Cut-ups, 1951–1959* ♪♪♪♪♪ (King, 1993, reissue prod. Gary B. Reid) is a beautifully compiled and annotated collection of the duo's first eight years on King, featuring many classics, including "I'm Using My Bible for a Roadmap," "Drifting with the Tide," "I'm the Talk of the Town," "Country Boy Rock 'n' Roll," "I Know You're Married," and more, 115 in all. *Good Old Country Ballads* ♪♪♪½ (King, 1959) and *A Variety of Country Songs* ♪♪♪½ (King, 1959) are budget reissues of albums from the late 1950s; like most reissues from King and its subsidiaries, they offer no liner notes or other information, fidelity is iffy, and the track count is

low—but the price is right and the music is classic and has been hard to find for years.

what to buy next: *Don Reno and Red Smiley on Stage* ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1996) and *Don Reno and Red Smiley on the Air* ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1996) present Don and Red during the late 1950s in a pair of live recordings, the first from concerts, the second from a variety of radio shows.

the rest:
Instrumentals ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1958)
New and Original Folk Songs Written in Commemoration of the Centennial of the American Civil War ♪♪½ (King, 1961)
World's Best Five-String Banjo ♪♪♪ (King, 1963)
On the Road: Songs Truck Drivers Love ♪♪ (King, 1964)
The Glory Years (Collectors Classic, 1971)
Country Songs ♪♪♪ (Starday, 1975)
The World's 15 Greatest Hymns ♪♪♪½ (King, 1975)
Last Time Together ♪♪½ (Gusto, 1976)
The True Meaning of Christmas ♪♪♪ (King, 1976)
Songs from Yesterday ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1988)
I Know You're Married, But I Love You Still ♪♪ (King, n.d.)
Country Singing and Instrumentals ♪♪ (King, n.d.)
Bluegrass Hits ♪♪ (Dot, n.d.)
The Best of Reno & Smiley ♪♪ (King, n.d.)
Hymns and Sacred Gospel Songs ♪♪♪ (King, n.d.)
16 Greatest Gospel Hits ♪♪♪ (Gusto, 1996)

worth searching for: *Family & Friends* ♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1988, prod. Tom Stern), one of Reno's last sessions, finds him joined by top-notch pickers like Byron Berline, Tony Rice, and his sons Ronnie, Don Wayne, and Dale on a program of mostly familiar Reno & Smiley material. Red Smiley also cut several albums on the Rural Rhythm label, apparently all with the same name, i.e. *Red Smiley and the Bluegrass Cut-ups*, but with differing catalog numbers: (Rural Rhythm RRRS 160) ♪♪, (Rural Rhythm RRRS 182) ♪♪, and (Rural Rhythm RRRS 211) ♪♪. None of them have release dates but they date from the 1960s or 1970s. Although all of them are way out of print and none are particularly noteworthy, for those who enjoy pawing through cutout bins, you might run across them and they won't be all that expensive either.

solo outings:
Don Reno:
(With Eddie Adcock) *Sensational Twin Banjos* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1968/1992)
(With Bill Harrell) *Bluegrass on My Mind* ♪♪½ (Starday, 1972)
Wango Presents Reno ♪♪½ (Wango, 1975)
Magnificent Bluegrass Band ♪♪½ (CMH, 1976)
The Don Reno Story ♪♪♪ (CMH 1976)
Fastest Five Strings Alive ♪♪♪ (Hollywood, 1969/Starday, 1976)
(With Arthur Smith) *The Original Dueling Banjos* ♪♪ (CMH, 1979)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs
▶▶ Reno Brothers, Bluegrass Cut-ups

Randy Pitts and Neal Walters

Kimmie Rhodes

Born March 6, 1954, in Wichita Falls, TX.

In an unassuming way, Kimmie Rhodes has managed to keep a silent hold on Nashville while creating music in her Lone Star home state. Two of Rhodes's compositions—sobering tales of love lost titled "Hard Promises to Keep" and "I Just Drove By"—were recorded by Trisha Yearwood and Wynonna, respectively. Undoubtedly these accomplished vocalists appreciate the caliber of Rhodes's talent. As a songwriter she crafts poignant vignettes with a soulful core and a lyrical power that convey melancholy without resorting to melodramatics. "West Texas Heaven," the title cut of her excellent stateside debut album, communicates longing with a sense of resiliency. The equally beautiful "The Corner of the Bar" is both picturesque and transcendent. It's no wonder Rhodes has attracted a slew of respected and outspoken admirers, including Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Joe Ely, and Billy Joe Shaver. Nelson, Jennings, and the late Texas songwriter Townes Van Zandt make guest appearances on *West Texas Heaven*, released in 1996 on the Houston-based independent Justice Records label.

what's available: *West Texas Heaven* ♪♪♪♪½ (Justice, 1996, prod. Joe Gracey, Kimmie Rhodes, John Leventhal) showcases Rhodes's seamless control of her artistry. The singer/songwriter runs the gamut from folk to country to blues. Her angelic voice, an instrument of stark beauty, turns sassy on "Git You a Job" and "Home John," then contemplative on "I'm Not an Angel" and the title cut. A quiet masterpiece.

worth searching for: Pal Willie Nelson invited Rhodes to sing with him on two songs from Nelson's *Just One Love* ♪♪♪½ (Justice, 1995, prod. Grady Martin). The title cut and "I Just Drove By"—both written by Rhodes—are just two of the solid country tunes on Nelson's splendid album, an indie-label side project that captured the rich country history inherent in Nelson's native Texas.

influences:
◀◀ Emmylou Harris, Bobbie Gentry
▶▶ Kelly Willis, Libbi Bosworth

Mario Tarradell

Rhythm Rats

Formed in Cincinnati, OH.

Kenny Jackson, fiddle, banjo, guitar, vocals; Paula Bradley, guitar, banjo-ukulele, vocals; Whitt Mead, fretted and fretless banjos, fiddle.

The Rhythm Rats are a trio from Ohio that play old-time music. They are one of many groups today known as "Young Fogies" for taking up the banner of old-time music and not only furthering it, but having a heck of a lot of fun with it in the process. The band is led by multi-instrumentalist Kenny Jackson. Jackson plays all instruments well, but on the fiddle he really shines. He and guitarist Paula Bradley also sing some very pretty Carter Family and old-country duet material. The Rhythm Rats are definitely a band that shows us that old-time music is safe for yet another generation.

what's available: *I Believe I'll Go Back Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1997, prod. Rhythm Rats) is their first CD release. It is a fabulous primer into the music of the Rhythm Rats, providing a good rundown of their favorite tunes and songs as well as the musicians who influenced them. One of the tunes that is especially striking is Jackson's solo fiddle version of "Jenny Lynn," a song he learned from a visit with Birch Monroe. Birch had learned it from his own uncle, Pendleton Vandiver, who was immortalized in Bill Monroe's bluegrass standard "Uncle Pen." Bluegrass fans need to hear Jackson run through this song loaded with the "ancient tones" that Bill Monroe used to speak about.

worth searching for: *Pretty Crowing Chicken* ♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1994, prod. Rhythm Rats, Fred Campeau) is their first release on Marimac records and came out only on cassette. Once again this wonderful tape is loaded with old-time duets and fiddle tunes. An old-timey version of "In the Pines" would once again set well with the bluegrass crowd.

influences:

- Carter Family, Tommy Jarrell, Melvin Wine, New Lost City Ramblers
- Red Mules

Steve Gardner

Rice Brothers

See: Tony Rice

Tony Rice

Born June 8, 1951, in Danville, VA.

Virginia-born, California-bred Tony Rice is a brilliant, innovative flatpicking guitarist who was introduced to bluegrass by his father. While knocking around the more popular West Coast bluegrass hangouts in the early- to mid-'60s, Rice learned a lot from such superpickers as Clarence White, Merle Watson, Norman Blake, and Ry Cooder. Between 1970 and 1981 the guitarist allied himself with a number of cutting-edge "newgrass" bands, including the Bluegrass Alliance, J.D. Crowe's New South, the David Grisman Quintet, and the Bluegrass Album Band. As part of the David Grisman Quintet, Rice expanded his horizons beyond three-chord bluegrass, studying chord theory, learning to read charts, and expanding the range of his playing. In 1979 he left the group to pursue his own music and recorded *Acoustics*, a guitar-oriented record. That was followed by *Manzanita*, which leaned more toward folk music and highlighted Rice's soulful vocal style. He subsequently formed a band called the Tony Rice Unit, which showcased his forays into jazz and experimental "spacegrass." In 1996 Rice was named Best Acoustic Pickstyle Guitarist by *Guitar Player* magazine readers. The same year he also recorded *Out of the Woodwork*, a marvelously crafted album with brother Larry Rice and Desert Rose Band alumni Herb Pedersen and Chris Hillman.

what to buy: *Tony Rice Sings and Plays Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Tony Rice) shows Rice dipping into the bluegrass canon with Bill Monroe's "On and On" and Flatt and Scruggs's "I'll Stay Around." Also included is a tasteful rendition of Bob Dylan's "Girl from the North Country."

what to buy next: *Manzanita* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979) and *Church Street Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1983) are two hugely influential bluegrass albums. *Manzanita* features the accompaniment of Sam Bush, Jerry Douglas, and Ricky Skaggs on tunes with a largely old-time feel. *Church Street Blues* is more of a solo affair, with phenomenal picking by Rice. *Tony Rice Sings Gordon Lightfoot* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996) shows Rice transplanting the intimacy and subtlety of the folk coffeehouse into the bluegrass tradition by offering poignant versions of his favorite songwriter's tunes, including "Ten Degrees" and "Early Morning Rain." The album's 17 selections are culled from other Rice recordings released from 1977 to 1994.

the rest:

(With the Tony Rice Unit) *Acoustics* ♪♪♪½ (Kaleidoscope, 1979/Rounder, 1994)
Backwaters ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
Cold on the Shoulder ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1984)
Me and My Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986)
(With Norman Blake) *Blake and Rice* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Native American ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)

Devlin ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
(As the Rice Brothers) *Tony, Larry, Ron, and Wyatt Rice* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989)
California Autumn ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1990)
(With Norman Blake) *Norman Blake and Tony Rice 2* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1991)
(As the Rice Brothers) *Rice Brothers II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994)
(With John Carlini) *River Suite for Two Guitars* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995)
(With Larry Rice, Chris Hillman, and Herb Pedersen) *Out of the Woodwork* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996)

worth searching for: The Tony Rice Unit's *Mar West* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980, prod. Tony Rice) is a splendid collection of the guitarist's spacegrass originals. Especially noteworthy is "Nardis," a Miles Davis tune that showcases Rice's uncanny ability to segue from jazz to bluegrass in a heartbeat.

influences:
Doc Watson, Clarence White, Merle Watson
Béla Fleck

Rick Petreycik

Zachary Richard

Born September 8, 1950, in Lafayette, LA.

Zachary Richard started out as a folk singer after graduating from Tulane University. Looking for something to make him stand out from all the other guitar-playing singers, he took up the Cajun accordion and was mentored by the great Felix Richard (who also mentored Horace Trahan) and by playing along to Aldus Roger records. Richard's style of music is now not often based on traditional Cajun music or the accordion, but on a blend that weighs more towards zydeco and New Orleans music, with a strong rock sensibility. There is a continuing thread of social activism in his music about Cajun culture and the struggle to maintain the French language in Louisiana that is juxtaposed against the dancing, good-times sound of his music.

what to buy: *Snake Bite Love* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1992, prod. Jim Wray) represents the mature Richard sound: a zydeco beat with elements of rock, country, swamp pop, and R&B built on top, all filtered through a Cajun sensibility. Richard's songwriting owes more to the singer-songwriter genre than to Lawrence Walker or Dewey Balfa, but the passion found in his singing is clearly inspired those Cajun legends.

what to buy next: On *Women in the Room* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1990, prod. Zachary Richard, Jim Scott), Richard's songwriting began to get the major-label quality of his live performances. He hit the perfect synthesis of his social comment and folk-rock style with "No French, No More" and mixed a south Louisiana dance groove and nonsense lyrics with "Who Stole My Monkey."

the rest:
Mardi Gras Mambo ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980)
Zack's Bon Ton ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
Zack Attack ♪♪♪½ (Arzed, 1989)
Bayou des Mystées ♪♪♪ (Arzed, 1991)
Vent d'Eté ♪♪♪ (Arzed, 1996)

worth searching for: *Looking Back* ♪♪♪♪ (Arzed, 1985, prod. Zachary Richard) is a retrospective of Richard's early work.

influences:
Aldus Roger, Jimmy C. Newman,
Tasso, Steve Riley

see also: *Michael Doucet*

Jared Snyder

Sue Richards

Born December 4, 1943, in Muscle Shoals, AL.

Four-time U.S. National Scottish Harp Champion Sue Richards did not grow up dreaming of becoming a harpist. Quite the contrary, she only learned to play the pedal harp because her father wanted her to. She never really liked the instrument until, years later, she discovered the joys of folk music and the distinctly different voice of the Celtic harp. By this time she had developed another career, but the harp gradually took over; she soon became an outstanding harper, particularly on the toe-tapping dance tunes that so many other harpers tend to avoid. Richards's ability to capture the lilt and lift of a song quickly distinguished her as an exceptional Celtic musician. She currently spends much of her time spreading her love of folk music and the folk harp by teaching at workshops across the country, judging at harp competitions, and touring both as a soloist and with others. She specializes in Scottish, Irish, and Welsh music, and this concentrated focus makes her an expert at what she does. An excellent ensemble musician, Richards currently works with two groups, Ceoltoiri and Ensemble Galilei, where her skills as an accompanist and a soloist shine. She has performed with a wide variety of musicians, including Bonnie Rideout, Jean Redpath, Billy McComiskey, Kim Robertson, and Maggie Sansone. The choice of music on all her recordings reflects her exquisite taste in tunes. Her more re-

jonathan richman

cent recordings also reflect her flair for composition, showcasing a few of her original works.

what to buy: *Hazel Grove* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1995, prod. Charlie Pilzer) combines a delightful selection of tunes, from the stately "Brian Boru March" to the exciting "Banjo Breakdown." The choice of instrumentation on this album is particularly well thought out. The title track, a Richards original, ends the recording with a journey to enchantment.

what to buy next: *Grey-Eyed Morn* ♪♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1991, prod. Maggie Sansone) is a softer, more mellow collection of tunes that demonstrates Richards's flair for arranging traditional tunes for harp. *Morning Aire* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1993, prod. Charlie Pilzer), winner of the Washington Area Music Association's *Album of the Year* award, contains some uplifting dance tunes along with a few gentle airs.

influences:

◀◀ Sileas, Kim Robertson, Wendy Stewart, Maire Ni Chatasaigh, Jean Harriman, Richard Gary

▶▶ Carol Thompson, Sunita Staneslow

see also: *Ceoltoiri, Ensemble Galilei*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Jonathan Richman

Born 1951, in Boston, MA.

If you thought Ronald Reagan's leap from the movie screen to the White House was a stunner, consider Jonathan Richman's left-turn from underappreciated father of punk rock to heel-clicking, soul-baring hopeful romantic. As the leader of an early-'70s Boston bar band called the Modern Lovers—which also featured future Talking Heads keyboardist Jerry Harrison and future Cars drummer David Robinson—Richman created a brooding, Velvet Underground–derived sound that yielded such influential three-chord classics as "Roadrunner" and "Pablo Picasso." But even back then he wasn't afraid to express his deepest feelings and darkest fears, an unflinching honesty that pervades his work to this day—even though he's now funneling those emotions through stripped-down '50s- and '60s-inspired ditties that range from offbeat covers (Bette Midler's "The Rose," the theme from "Moulin Rouge") to disarming paeans to awkward slow dancing ("They're Not Tryin' on the Dance Floor") and dressing down for a date ("Everyday Clothes"). Cynics dismiss him as childish and self-consciously cute, but they haven't been paying attention since the days of "I'm a Little Dinosaur." Even though his breakup with his longtime wife darkened his attitude, Richman came to terms with his pain and himself on 1996's inspiring *Surrender to Jonathan*. His world remains full of treasured moments and small pleasures, where growth is measured in wrinkles, not milestones, and where true love is still a quest, not an anachronism.

what to buy: Mopey and minimalist, *Modern Lovers* ♪♪♪♪ (Beserkley/Rhino, 1975, prod. John Cale) is the album that launched a thousand garage bands with "Roadrunner," "Pablo Picasso," and "She Cracked." The mostly acoustic *Back in Your Life* ♪♪♪½ (Beserkley, 1979, prod. Matthew King Kaufman, Glen Kolotkin, Kenny Laguna) contains both his silliest ("I'm Nature's Mosquito," "Party in the Woods Tonight") and most sublime ("Affection," "Back in Your Life") material. The title track contains what may be the single best line about the passage of time ever written: "What once was a puppy is now a dog/and what once was a piglet is now a hog." *Jonathan Sings!* ♪♪♪♪ (Sire, 1983, prod. Peter Bernstein) marks an important transition as Richman learns how to celebrate life and love from an adult's perspective and a child's heart. "This Kind of Music," which champions rock 'n' roll as something to be felt and not merely heard, and "The Neighbors," about not letting other people control your life, are as empowering as they are entertaining. *Having a Party with Jonathan Richman* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Brennan Totten) is an utterly charming, solo, electric, live recording sporting such giddy anthems as "The Girl Stands up to Me Now," "When She Kisses Me," and the lovely "They're Not Tryin' on the Dance Floor."

what to buy next: *Jonathan Goes Country* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Lou Whitney, D. Clinton Thompson) unites Richman with the Missouri bar band the Skeletons. "Since She Started to Ride," "Reno," and an instrumental version of Skeeter Davis's "I Can't Stay Mad at You" lock into a tight, twangy bar-band groove. But the highlight is Richman's tender cover of "Man Walks among Us," Marty Robbins's cautionary tale about urban sprawl.

what to avoid: The self-indulgent, sonically anemic *Jonathan Richman* ♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Brennan Totten) contains some great tunes—Ronnie Dawson's "Action Packed" and Richman's "Everyday Clothes"—but they're drowned out by droning instrumentals, foreign-language ditties, and a painful spoken-word number called "I Eat with Gusto, Damn! You Bet."

the rest:

Jonathan, Te Vas a Emocionar ♪♪ (Rounder, 1984)
Rockin' and Romance ♪♪♪ (Twin Tone, 1985)

It's Time for Jonathan Richman ♪♪♪ (Upside, 1986)
I, Jonathan ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
You Must Ask the Heart ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
Surrender to Jonathan ♪♪♪ (Vapor, 1996)

worth searching for: *Chartbusters: The Best of Beserkley 1975–1978* (Rhino, 1986, prod. Matthew King Kaufman, Glen Kolotkin), a reissue of the 1975 compilation of rare tracks by labelmates the Rubinoos, Greg Kihn, and Earth Quake, contains four Richman rarities: "The New Teller," a joyful rocker about his crush on a bank teller; a heartfelt cover of the Showmen's "It Will Stand"; "Government Center"; and a bouncier, post–John Cale rendition of "Roadrunner."

solo outings:
Modern Lovers:
Modern Lovers Live ♪♪♪½ (Beserkley/Rhino, 1977)
Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers ♪♪♪½ (Beserkley, 1977)
Rock 'n' Roll with the Modern Lovers ♪♪ (Beserkley/Rhino, 1977)
The Beserkley Years ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1987)
Modern Lovers 88 ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1988)
Precise Modern Lovers Order ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Velvet Underground, Chuck Berry, Ventures
▶▶ Poi Dog Pondering, Ben Lee, Beck

David Okamoto

Leslie Riddle

Born June 13, 1905, in Burnville, NC. Died July 13, 1980, in Rochester, NY.

Leslie Riddle was born and raised in the segregated South. He had little education and was a common laborer most of his life, working as a clothes presser and delivery man, and shoeshine boy. He began playing the guitar after an accident at a cement plant caused him to lose his right leg at the knee. A small disability payment allowed him to attend North Carolina A&T for a year and he began playing music while recovering from his injury. He played in small string bands throughout the '20s and achieved some renown as a guitar player. During the late '20s, he met A.P. Carter in Kingsport, Tennessee, and became a valued source for many of the Carter Family songs and tunes. He moved to Rochester, New York, in 1942 and basically gave up music in 1945. Mike Seeger, learning of his role from Maybelle Carter, sought Riddle out in 1963 and encouraged him to begin playing again; he was able to play a few festivals and to make one recording before his death. A 70-page essay on Riddle, including lyrics and full annotations for all the songs he recorded, is available from Barry O'Connell/Riddle, Box 2234, Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts 01002.

what's available: *Step by Step* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Mike Seeger) was recorded between 1965 and 1978 and clearly shows the influence that Riddle had upon the Carter Family and, particularly, on Maybelle Carter's famous guitar style. It includes such Carter favorites as "Titanic," "The Cannon Ball," and "I'm Working on a Building."

influences:
◀◀ Blind Willie McTell, Charlie Poole
▶▶ Carter Family, Maybelle Carter, Mike Seeger

Neal Walters

Bonnie Rideout

Born December 18, 1962, in Saline, MI.

Bonnie Rideout started violin at age eight and went on to graduate from the University of Michigan in music and fine arts in 1985. As she was growing up, her family often played music together. Her mother was a concert pianist and was also her accompanist on her first recording, *Soft May Morn*. Rideout served as musician-in-residence at Armadale Castle on the Isle of Skye, where she had access to an unpublished eighteenth-century music manuscript of traditional tunes collected by Patrick McDonald. These rare tunes appear throughout her recordings. She is best known for her trademark "piobrachs," highly ornamented Highland bagpipe tunes, and a style that borrows from Highland bagpipe ornamentation. She has been the National Scottish Fiddle champ three times. In 1996 Rideout became the first American ever invited to the prestigious Edinburgh International Festival in Scotland to demonstrate Highland style fiddling. She took them by storm and is influencing the next generation of young Scottish fiddlers. On both violin and viola, this tiny woman produces one of the biggest, fiery sounds in Scottish music today!

what to buy: Rideout's recordings are all well researched, beautifully arranged, and masterfully performed. *Celtic Circles* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1994, prod. Charlie Pilzer) has the theme of a day's cycle from sunset to nighttime. Starting with a distant drum that leads into a driving march, the music makes a memorable statement. Braveheart piper Eric Reigler adds drive. Chris Caswell on nylon- and wire-strung harps and Carolyn Surrick on viola da gamba add delicacy and a haunting bass. The *Washington Post* describes Rideout best on this album: "She transforms a lonely melody into utter desolation . . . then effortlessly switches gears from languorous ballad to virtuoso exercise."

Kindred Spirits ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1996, prod. Bonnie Rideout, Bill McElroy) is devoted to music for, by, and about women. Highlights include the heartbreaking eulogy written by Robert Burns at the death of his first wife, and the soaring, uplifting "Aldavaloch" and "Roy's Wife" (who was reputed to be a fickle lass). Rideout is joined with her usual brilliant crew of Eric Rigler, Al Pettaway, Chris Caswell, Abby Newton, and Maggie Sansone.

the rest:

Soft May Morn ♪♪♪½ (Atholl Brose Recordings, 1990/Maggie's Music, 1994)
A Scottish Christmas ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1996)
Gi'me Elbow Room N/A (Maggie's Music, 1998)

influences:

Rideout's musical family, Dr. John Turner, and an old northeast Scottish farmer named Jim Falconer

Karen Ashbrook

Riders in the Sky

Formed mid-1970s, in Nashville, TN.

Ranger Doug (Douglas B. Green), lead and baritone vocals, yodels, guitar; Woody Paul (Paul Chrisma), lead and tenor vocals, fiddle, guitar, accordion, harmonica, mandolin; Too Slim (Fred LaBour), melody vocals, stand-up bass, guitar, accordion.

Riders in the Sky are throwbacks to the silver-screen era of singing range riders, a day when cowboys were the idolized heroes of the Western world. Brimming with original music and a repertoire of classics, the trio are known equally for their music and their numerous radio and television endeavors, especially those geared toward children. No-hat act Doug Green is a country music historian, while Paul Chrisma holds a Ph.D. in theoretical plasma. This makes for great conversation out on the prairie. The group's albums typically have some combination of music and Western skit comedy. The members of Riders in the Sky have been Grand Ole Opry members since 1982 and appeared in the 1985 Patsy Cline biopic *Sweet Dreams*.

what to buy: If you're new to the Riders, *Best of the West* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987) is a collection of their early recordings that makes an excellent introduction to the band.

what to buy next: *Best of the West Rides Again* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987) is the second volume of the group's best-known material.

what to avoid: The Riders comedy shtick goes over best live or on radio. You've got to be a real fan to want *The Riders Go Commercial* ♪♪ (MCA, 1989), a spoken-word album packed with fake advertisements.

the rest:

Three on the Trail ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980)
Cowboy Jubilee ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1981/1991)
Weeds and Water ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983/1991)
Live ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1984)
New Trails ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986)
Saddle Pals ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
The Cowboy Way ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1987)
Prairie Serenade ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991)
Harmony Ranch ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1991)
Merry Christmas from Harmony Ranch ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1992)
Always Drink upstream from the Herd ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)
Public Cowboy Number One: The Music of Gene Autry ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996)

influences:

Gene Autry, Sons of the Pioneers
Don Edwards, Wylie & the Wild West Show

Craig Shelburne and Brian Mansfield

Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Formed 1989, in Mamou, LA.

Steve Riley, fiddle, accordion, vocals; Peter Schwarz, fiddle, bass, vocal; David Greely, fiddle, saxophone, vocals; Jimmy Domengeaux, guitar, vocals; Kevin Dugas, drums. Past members include Kevin Berzas, guitar.

In Philip Gould's collection of photographs *Cajun and Zydeco Music*, he juxtaposes a photo of a very young Steve Riley wedged against the stage at a Music Festival in Mamou, Louisiana, with his eyes locked in on the musicians with a picture of a 20-year-old Riley playing on the same stage. The look of determination in the young boy's eyes sums up the intensity of Riley's development as a player and performer. Riley taught himself to play the accordion by modeling himself after his cousin, master accordion maker and player Marc Savoy. His prodigious skills brought him to the attention of Dewey Balfa, who took Riley out on the road with him. Under Balfa's eye he learned to fiddle and was introduced to Peter Schwarz, the son of Tracy Schwarz and fellow fiddle student of Balfa. One of Balfa's final tours featured a band that included Riley, Schwarz, Christine Balfa (now of Balfa Toujours), and Kevin Barzas, a young guitarist from Mamou whose grandfather had for years led one of the best Cajun bands around, the Mamou Playboys.

With the addition of Baton Rouge–area fiddler David Greeley, the new Mamou Playboys were formed. Riley is a monster on both accordion and fiddle. He has expanded his talents to include three-row and piano accordion. The band uses complicated modulating arrangements, three-part harmony, and the occasional presence of Greeley's saxophone to vary the sound. Riley can play the toughest, fastest two-steps, solid zydeco, and the oldest fiddle tunes from the Balfa Brothers repertoire.

what to buy: Titled after the French version of All Souls Day, where people go tend to the graves of their ancestors, *La Toussaint* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder 1995, prod. Scott Billington) highlights the strengths of the Mamou Playboys and keeps their excesses in check. The three-part harmonies are here, but they're used for accenting ("T'es Parents Veulent Plus Me Voir" and "La Valse D'Amitié); the same can said for the modulations that the band sometimes can't resist ("Between Euncie and Opelousas"). "La Toussaint" maybe the best Cajun composition of the '90s, a moving piece written by Schwarz with lyrics by Greeley. Placing it as the centerpiece of the CD gives the recording a kind of thematic quality that isn't all that common in Cajun recordings. Around it, there are dance hall originals like "Katherine," with guest Isaac Miller on steel, and archaic fiddle pieces based on Alan Lomax's fiddle recordings. The album also contains two zydeco numbers with Riley showing his chops on three-row button accordion and C.J. Chenier contributing alto sax. Overall the record captures the essence of this group and makes for great listening–even for those who aren't Cajun music fans.

what to buy next: The enthusiastic playing and singing on *Trace of Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Al Tharp) is marred only by murky and bottomless production. All the traits of the band are there, the modulations and the three-part harmonies that are their signature and the Balfa Brothers tune, "Parlez-Nous a Boire," played with respect for tradition.

the rest:
Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1990)
Tit' Galop pour Mamou ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)
Live! ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)
Friday Night at Last ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Balfa Brothers, Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, Tracy Schwarz, D.L. Menard, Dewey Balfa
▶▶ Horace Trahan, Balfa Toujours

see also: *Tracy Schwarz*

Jared Snyder

Jim Ringer /Jim Ringer & Mary McCaslin

Jim Ringer, born February 29, 1936 in Yell County, AR. Died March 17, 1992 in Northern CA. Mary McCaslin, Born December 22, 1946 in Indianapolis, IN.

Jim Ringer's earthy baritone was tailor made for Nashville-style country music, but his love of acoustic music and his sparsely produced arrangements brought a folkiness to his performances and recordings. As comfortable with Lefty Frizzell–penned country ballads as he was with Woody Guthrie–like folk songs, Ringer projected a warmth and rustic intimacy in his musical approach. A native of Arkansas's Ozark Mountain region, he was as much a product of California's San Joaquin Valley, where he moved—after a temporary stop in Oklahoma—with his family in the mid-1940s. The son of a farmer-turned-construction worker, Ringer earned extra money for the family by picking farm crops alongside his five brothers and sisters. Inheriting a mixture of folk ballads learned from his mother and the Jimmie Rodgers–style country music and blues favored by his father, Ringer began playing guitar at the age of 10. His early years, however, were mostly spent in trouble with the law and he served a prison term in the late 1950s. Throughout the 1960s, he performed solo and with Sweet's Mill String Band in northern California bars and honky tonks while working a variety of day jobs ranging from construction to logging. Shortly after the breakup of his first marriage in the early '70s, Ringer met singer-songwriter Mary McCaslin at a folk music camp/retreat in the Sierra Mountains above Fresno, California. In addition to a romance that culminated in their marriage in 1978, Ringer and McCaslin fused their musical talents as an influential duo. Their happiness was brief. In 1982 Ringer's health began to decline and his record label, Philo, experienced financial problems and stopped releasing new albums. Although they moved to northern California in 1985, they stopped touring three years later. When their marriage dissolved in 1989, Ringer, whose health and alcoholism continued to worsen, returned to Fresno. He died on St. Patrick's Day, 1992, at the age of 56. McCaslin, who had her own solo career prior to meeting Ringer, has continued to perform and has released several solo albums in print.

what to buy: Ringer's musical legacy is celebrated on *The Best of Jim Ringer: The Band of Jesse James* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1996, prod. Jim Ringer, Mary McCaslin). While memorable re-workings of Lefty Frizzell's "Saginaw, Michigan" and Roy Acuff's "Streamlined Cannonball" reflect his grounding in country music, Ringer's true talents come through his songwriting. Accompa-

jean ritchie

nied by such stellar players as Jay and Lyn Unger, Saul Brody, David Bromberg, Billy Novick, and Peter Ecklund, he shows the strength of his pen with original versions of "Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go," later the title track of an album by the Nashville Bluegrass Band, and "Tramps and Hawkers," later covered by Tom Russell. The sorrow of a broken marriage and being separated from his children is reflected during "Open Door at Home" and "Good to Get Home." The country flavor of Ringer's music is exemplified by three tunes—"Dusty Desert Wind," "Still Got That Look," and "Linda's on Her Own"—featuring instrumental accompaniment by the Dillards, the Hot Band, and the Burrito Brothers. McCaslin's harmonies enhance two songs—"Rank Stranger" and "Strawberry Roan"—from their solo duet album, *The Bramble and the Rose*, and serve as a reminder of how potent their music was together.

the rest:
Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1972)
Jim Ringer ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1975)
Tramps and Hawkers ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1977)
(With Mary McCaslin) *The Bramble and the Rose* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1978)
Endangered Species ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)

influences:
◀◀ Lefty Frizzell, Jimmie Rodgers, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Nashville Bluegrass Band, Mary McCaslin

see also: *Mary McCaslin*

Craig Harris

Jean Ritchie

Born December 8, 1922, in Viper, KY.

Jean Ritchie is one of America's greatest living traditional musicians and part of an American musical family that rivals its British peers, the Coppers and Watersons. The fourteenth of 14 children in a Scots-Irish Appalachian family, Ritchie learned music at her parents' feet. The Ritchies were visited by Cecil Sharp a few years before her birth, and he collected a number of their songs. Jean Ritchie wasn't discovered until 1948, when Mitch Miller heard her in a store demonstration of dulcimers. She was later recorded by another folklorist, Alan Lomax. She has become well known as a lecturer, but her skills as a performer are her greatest gift: she has a simple, gentle voice that shows off her songs like sunlight shows off a hardwood floor.

what to buy: Recorded in 1959, *Carols for All Seasons* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rykodisc/Tradition 1997, reissue prod. Anton Glovsky) is an intensely moving collection of songs that are particularly suited to wintertime but can be played, as the title suggests, year round. Ritchie lets her roots show; these American songs are full of references to bunches of may, wassails, and other trappings of English tradition.

best of the rest:
(With Doc Watson) *Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson at Folk City* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1963/1990)
High Hills and Mountains ♪♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1979)
The Most Dulcimer ♪♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1984)
(Jean Ritchie and Sons) *Mountain Born* ♪♪♪♪½ (Greenhays, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ The Ritchie Family
▶▶ Jean Redpath, Kate MacLeod, Robin Holcomb

Pamela Murray Winters

Tex Ritter

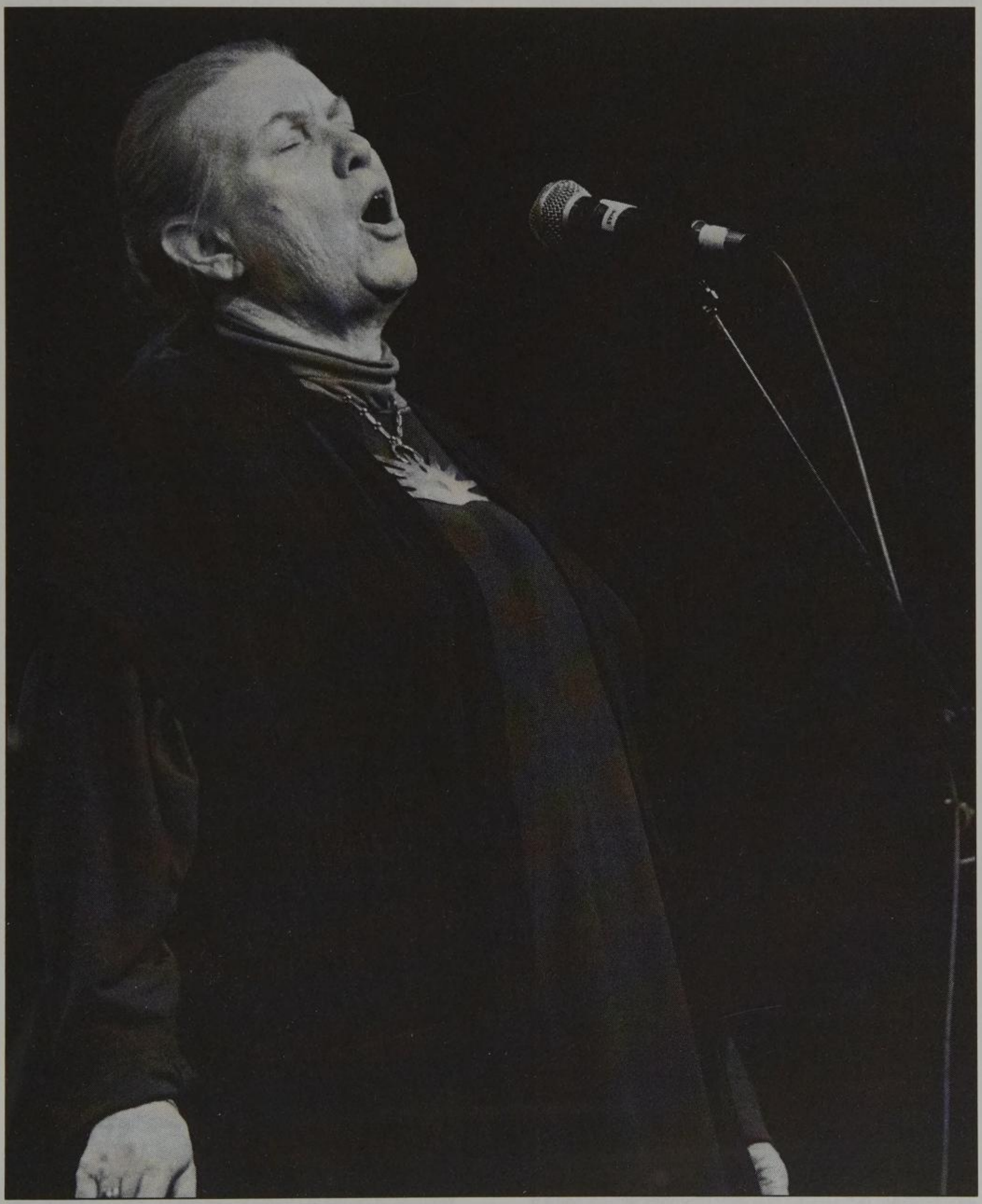
Born Maurice Woodward Ritter, January 12, 1905, in Murvaul, TX. Died January 2, 1974.

Raised on a Texas ranch, "Tex" Ritter enjoyed all the amenities that the lifestyle had to offer: riding, roping, swapping tall tales. The boy could sing pretty well too, and he mesmerized fellow Texans by spinning legends about the wildest days of their beloved Lone Star State. A career in entertainment seemed natural, but Ritter attempted a law degree instead. His storytelling led him all over the country, eventually to Chicago, where a fascination with radio won him over. After helping to write and produce the legendary *Lone Ranger* series, Ritter landed on Broadway in 1931 in Lynn Riggs's *Green Grow the Lilacs* (a predecessor of the musical *Oklahoma*). Hollywood lured Ritter away in 1936, and there he dabbled in movies (he has 85 to his credit), radio, TV (he co-hosted the *Town Hall Party* series from 1953–60), and more music ("You Two-Timed Me Once Too Often" spent 11 weeks at Number One in 1945, and the theme song to *High Noon*, which he sang, won an Oscar). Ritter, who is the father of actor John Ritter, was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1965 and moved to Nashville the following year, where he became a regular on the Grand Ole Opry.

what to buy: The fabulously annotated *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1991) contains more than half the 30 sides Ritter recorded for Decca during 1935–39. Many of these recordings, such as "I'm a Natural Born Cowboy" and "Ride, Ride,

Jean Ritchie **(© Linda Vartoogian)**

tex ritter



Ride," come from his movies. While these recordings weren't as popular as ones he'd later make, this is a fine package.

what to buy next: *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990) contains a pretty good selection of Ritter's best-known recordings for Capitol, including "Deck of Cards," "High Noon," and "Have I Told You Lately that I Love You." The liner notes are skimpy, so if you can find the out-of-print *Capitol Collector's Series*, it's a preferable buy. Until Capitol releases another reissue, this will do.

what to avoid: The recordings on *Conversation with a Gun* ♪♪ (Richmond, 1988), dating from late in Ritter's career, are hardly his best, and there's only eight of them here.

worth searching for: Ritter was Capitol's first country signing, and he spent some 30 years with the label. *Capitol Collector's Series* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1992) collects the best of that period; it's probably the best compilation of Ritter's work and can be found with some diligence. *High Noon* ♪♪♪½ (Bear Family) is a single-disc collection of cowboy songs.

influences:
◀◀ Gene Autry, Roy Rogers
▶▶ Rex Allen, Riders in the Sky

Brian Mansfield and Craig Shelburne

Sam Rizzetta

Born May 23, 1942, in Oak Park, IL.

Since the mid-1960s, Sam Rizzetta has been a performer and builder of a great variety of stringed instruments, most notably hammered dulcimers. He is highly regarded as a master craftsman and musician, beginning a new era of dulcimer playing in the traditional music and folk scene with the founding of the first dulcimer quartet, Trapezoid, in 1975. He has worked primarily as a soloist since 1979. His dulcimers have been exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution and the National Folk Festival and featured in *Fine Woodworking* magazine. Rizzetta writes original music for the hammered dulcimer and his many recordings feature his innovative, handmade, experimental dulcimers. He has an expressive and versatile playing style and his performances have included the Kennedy Center and the National Cathedral, as well as national TV and radio appearances on *A Prairie Home Companion* and *Mountain Stage*. Rizzetta also started the dulcimer program at the Augusta Heritage Center and has taught there for 24 years.

what to buy: *Bucks and Does* ♪♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1982, prod. Sam Rizzetta) is Rizzetta's first solo recording and contains a wonderful collection of mostly hammered and fretted dulcimer solos ranging from "Fanny Poer," a Turlough O'Carolan waltz, to "Paul's New Dulcimer," an original Rizzetta tune written while he was stringing a new dulcimer for Paul Van Arsdale. There is excellent guitar and fiddle accompaniment on several tracks (played by Blackie Cool, Michael Kline, and Gerry Milnes) as well as a dulcimer duet with Rizzetta's wife, Carrie, on "Sweet Hour of Prayer/Angels We Have Heard on High." *In the Garden* ♪♪♪½ (Rizzetta Music, 1992, prod. Carrie Rizzetta, Sam Rizzetta) is a recording of 18 favorite hymns arranged as instrumentals for hammered dulcimer. The stunning range of his versatile "Rizzetta Extended-Range Dulcimer" is apparent throughout, and he is joined by Tabby Finch (accordion, pipe organ) and Seth Austen (guitar) on several cuts, adding some autoharp accompaniment on "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" and "Shall We Gather at the River." All of Rizzetta's recordings are available from Rizzetta Music, P.O. Box 510, Inwood, West Virginia 25428.

the rest:
Seven Valleys ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Christmas in the Air ♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1991)
When You and I Were Young ♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1992)
Ocean's Edge ♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1993)
Flowing Waters ♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1993)

worth searching for: *Trapezoid* ♪♪♪ (Rizzetta Music, 1975) is currently out of print, but keep watch for a re-release in 1998 on CD. *Three Forks of Cheat* (Rounder, 1979/1988), the second Trapezoid recording to which Rizzetta contributed, is available on cassette tape. *Together at Last* ♪♪♪ (Flying Clouds Music, 1981, prod. Drew McDaniel) was a collaboration with Alan Freeman (fretted dulcimer) but is now out of print.

influences:
◀◀ Chet Parker, Russell Fluharty, Worley Gardner, Blackie Cool
▶▶ Bob Shank, Steve Schneider, Walt Michael, Madeline MacNeil

Heidi Cerrigione

John Roberts & Tony Barrand

Formed 1968, in Ithaca, NY.

John Roberts, voice, guitar, banjo, concertina; Tony Barrand, voice, concertina, drums, bones.

These two singing Englishmen are among the primary exponents of traditional English folksong living in the United States. They came to the United States during the 1960s and met as graduate students at Cornell University in 1968. They soon dis-

covered their common interests in folk music and social history and began to perform together in 1969. The folk-music community in the States was glad to have such skilled performers of a predominantly English repertoire on American soil, and they have been in great demand ever since. John Roberts and Tony Barrand are known for beautiful two-part harmony singing, both a capella and accompanied. Both play the concertina, and Roberts is also known for guitar and banjo picking. In their concerts and on recordings, they tend to arrange their material thematically in order to emphasize the stories behind the songs: the history as well as the folklore of the English people. In addition to their work as a duo, Roberts and Barrand have other interests. They have long been part of the quartet Nowell Sing We Clear, presenters of a Christmas pageant featuring song, music, dancing, and dramatic interludes. Barrand is a well-known Morris and clog dancer and the author of an acclaimed book on the subject, *Six Fools and a Dancer,* and teaches folklore and aesthetics at Boston University. Roberts has other musical interests, including continental European music, and also works as a music engraver.

what to buy: *A Present from the Gentlemen* ♪♪♪♪½ (Golden Hind, 1992, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand) is subtitled "A Pandora's Box of English Folk Songs." It is their first collection of songs in quite some time that is not organized around a specific theme. As such, it leaves them complete freedom to choose their favorites. And, since it clocks in at more than an hour in length, it is able to reflect the scope and variety of their extensive repertoire of folk songs. It presents older, traditional ballads like "The Outlandish Knight" and "Robin Hood and the Bishop of Hereford." It also features new additions to the tradition like Rudyard Kipling's "A Smuggler's Song," which comes to the gentlemen by way of the late Peter Bellamy, and Adam MacNaughton's "Our Hamlet" in its Anglicized form, which was thoughtfully prepared for non-Scots by Martin Carthy. In between, there are traditional songs and ballads like "The Painful Plow," "The Three Butchers," and "Jackie Munro," as well as music-hall numbers like "Sam Hall." The accompaniments are tasteful and quite simple; Roberts plays English and Anglo-German concertina and banjo and Barrand adds bones and side-drum. The real power of their duo arrangements, though, is in their use of vocal harmonies. With only two voices, both the melody and the harmony are distinguishable as separate vocal lines, which makes for more interesting listening than would more lush three- or four-part harmonies. Their two quite different voices, one sweet and clear, the other more resonant, complement each other perfectly in harmony.

what to buy next: A classic LP, *Dark Ships in the Forest* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy 1977, prod. Sandy and Caroline Paton) was released on CD in 1997. The theme of this album is "Ballads of the Supernatural," and most of its songs deal with ghosts, spirits, sirens, and other magical characters. Their rendition of A.L. Lloyd's setting of "The Two Magicians" is particularly lovely and has been quite influential. On *Dark Ships*, Roberts and Barrand are joined by Steve Woodruff and Fred Breunig, their partners in Nowell Sing We Clear. The same line-up of Nowell Sing We Clear produced three albums of Christmas material, from which a CD, *The Best of Nowell Sing We Clear* (Front Hall, 1989, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Bill Spence), was compiled. This disc contains a wealth of traditional Christmas carols, many of them quite unusual, all of them beautiful. Notable is the selection of songs based on the apocryphal gospels, including "The Cherry Tree Carol," "The Bitter Withy," and "King Herod and the Cock." Andy Breunig replaced Steve Woodruff in 1988, and the new quartet recorded *Nowell Sing We Clear Volume IV* ♪♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1988, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand), which features both new material and different versions of some of the same carols as their previous CD. The latest CD from Nowell Sing We Clear, *Hail Smiling Morn!* ♪♪♪♪ (Golden Hind, 1995, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand), features still more uncommon Christmas songs; as before, there are some new versions of the most popular carols that they have recorded before ("The Holly and the Ivy," "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks," and "The Cutty Wren") as well as some brand-new material. Their rendition of the Copper Family's "Shepherds Arise" is particularly nice.

worth searching for: Roberts and Barrand have four albums that may be found in used LP bins, several of which are still in print on cassette. All of them are high-quality recordings of thoughtfully arranged and beautifully performed English folk songs. They include two potpourri albums, *Spencer the Rover Is Alive and Well* ♪♪♪ (Swallowtail, 1971) and *Mellow with Ale from the Horn* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1975, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Bill Spence); a sea-shanty album, *Across the Western Ocean* ♪♪♪½ (Swallowtail 1973); and a live album, *Eat Bertha's Mussels* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1982, prod. John Roberts, Tony Barrand). Nowell Sing We Clear also have several cassette albums available.

influences:

◀◀ A.L. Lloyd, Peter Bellamy, Copper Family, Watersons

▶▶ Voice Squad, Robin & Barry Dransfield

Steve Winick

Kathryn Roberts

See: Kate Rusby

Kim Robertson

Born in WI.

To many, the first name of Celtic harp is Kim Robertson. Her sensuous harp arrangements have become a hallmark of the folk harp community, the tunes she plays magically woven into a tapestry of ethereal threads. Her touch on the strings is firm, yet delicate, her expression evocative, and her arrangements perfectly suited for the harp. Robertson plays a wide variety of styles, from Celtic tunes to original works, from American folk favorites to new age sounds. One of her greatest skills is as an improviser, where she soars to the height of her expression. Due to her great love of her instrument, Robertson spends much of her time running harp workshops, both in the United States and abroad. She has written several books of music and published two instructional videos as well.

Robertson began playing the harp her senior year in high school, learning the pedal harp. She enjoyed the instrument, but had no desire to join a symphony, so did not pursue it as a career. Instead, she entered college as a piano major. Her piano background included jazz improvisation, a skill which she translated beautifully to the harp. This has helped her enormously when working with the Celtic harp, which she discovered during the mid-'70s while attending a harp retreat. She soon fell in love with the instrument, exploring its many voices and experimenting with new possibilities in sounds and techniques. The result was her own unique sound, capturing the spirit of the harp itself, and carrying it to the listener in music. Some of her more recent work has also included her unique vocals.

what to buy: Displaying her talent for evocative arrangements of traditional tunes, Robertson plays an array of delightful works on *Wind Shadows II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1987, prod. Liv Khalsa). Her arrangements of "Arise and Get Dressed," "Black Nag," "Star of County Down," and "Bridget Cruise" display her work at its very best. This Celtic recording will please traditional music fans with its selection. *Celtic Christmas II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1990, prod. Liv Khalsa) is among the best Christmas albums around. A broad collection of well-known and lesser-known carols, this recording combines the delicate strains of Robertson's harping with the haunting voice of cello, played by Virginia Kron. Special selections include a delightful Spanish carol, "A la Nanita Nana," the American folk song "As Joseph Was a Walking," and a wonderful 13th-century French "Pastourelle."

what to buy next: On *Treasures of the Celtic Harp* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1995, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser), Robertson returns to arranging traditional material, after a period of largely original work. Such gems as "Glenlivet" and "The Water Is Wide" sparkle on this fresh recording, along with four of her own compositions. Combining haunting flute by Bettine Clemen and an occasional cello or percussion accompaniment, *Love Song to a Planet* ♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1994, prod. Bettine Clemen, Kim Robertson) is an uplifting collection of traditional tunes and new material, all expressing the love and joy the musicians have for this Earth. A moving rendition of the "New World" symphony theme launches this album, followed by several choice Robertson originals. There are also stirring arrangements of "Mist-Covered Mountains," "The Dark Island," and "Amazing Grace." *Joy! Joy! Joy!* ♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1989, prod. Liv Khalsa), another Christmas recording, consists of remarkable arrangements of familiar carols. Sometimes bordering on jazz, as in the stirring rendition of "Joy to the World," sometimes soft and romantic, as in the gentle "Jesus Lullaby," Robertson and flautist Steve Kujala paint a highly evocative Christmas picture.

what to avoid: If you are looking for active-listening music, avoid all of the Crimson Collection series: *Crimson Collection Volumes I and II* ♪ (Invincible, 1991, prod. Liv Khalsa), *Crimson Collection Volumes IV and V* ♪ (Invincible, 1991, prod. Liv Khalsa), and *Crimson Collection Volumes VI and VII* ♪ (Invincible, 1991, prod. Liv Khalsa). These recordings each feature two half-hour-long chants, featuring Liv Khalsa's voice and Robertson's harp. Although the original themes on each recording are strong, they are very repetitive, meant to be used as a background for deep meditation or prayer, and promoted for their healing powers. Although excellent for their intended purpose, they will not excite a listener looking for more than background sound.

the rest:

Wind Shadows ♪♪♪ (Invincible, 1983)
Water Spirit ♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1987)
Moonrise ♪♪ (Invincible, 1987)
Celtic Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Invincible, 1987)
Wild Iris ♪♪ (Invincible, 1989)
Angels in Disguise ♪♪½ (Invincible, 1990)
Gratitude ♪♪♪ (Invincible, 1990)
Tender Shepherd ♪♪♪½ (Gourd Music, 1992)
Wood, Fire, and Gold ♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Virginia Kron, Singh Kaur

▶▶ Knodel & Valencia, Sunita Staneslow

Jo Hughey Morrison

Lonnie Robertson

Born January 8, 1908, in Longrun, MO. Died February 19, 1981, Theodosia, MO.

Lonnie Robertson is one of the great figures in twentieth-century Ozark fiddling. He grew up near the Missouri-Arkansas border absorbing the local musical style from his father and from friends and neighbors. At age 15, he moved to the city of Springfield, Missouri, where he soon after began a career as a radio performer. During the '30s and early '40s, Robertson was the featured fiddler on a number of stations in the Midwest. During the early 1940s he and his wife Thelma started the *Down Home Folks Show,* featuring a mix of songs and fiddle music. The show developed a large and loyal following throughout Missouri and is fondly remembered to this day. Although changing styles in country music signaled the end of Robertson's radio career during the mid-1950s, he continued to perform and recorded several LPs of fiddle music on his own Caney Mountain label. During the 1960s and '70s, he became a favorite at square dances, jam sessions, and fiddle contests, where he was rightly viewed as an elder statesman of Missouri music. Robertson continued performing until his death in 1981.

what's available: *Lonnie's Breakdown!* ♫♫♫♫ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Gordon McCann, Mark Wilson) is the only CD of Robertson's work currently available. Drawn from his albums and from home recordings he made on a reel-to-reel tape deck, this CD focuses on his playing of the distinctive Missouri fiddle repertoire, both traditional tunes and his own compositions. Missouri fiddling is notey, complex, and very fast, and Robertson handles it with aplomb. The sound varies from the acceptable to the very good (these are home recordings we're talking about), and the material is well chosen and supported with detailed liner notes.

worth searching for: Robertson's old recordings on the Caney Mountain label are long out of print and probably impossible to find outside of Missouri (pretty hard to find within Missouri as well). Recordings by many of such Robertson contemporaries as Bob Walters, Casey Jones, Lyman Enloe, and Cyril Stinett—excellent fiddlers all—are available from the Missouri State Old Time Fiddle Association (MSOTFA). Based in Columbia, Missouri, MSOTFA is a wonderful non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the traditional fiddle music of Missouri.

influences:

⏮ Kessinger Brothers, Skillet Lickers

⏭ Charlie Walden, Art Galbraith

Tony Ziselberger

editor's choice
20 old time albums

Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Heart Songs: The Old Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips* (Rounder)

Bruce Molsky & Big Hoedown, *Bruce Molsky & Big Hoedown* (Rounder)

Rhythm Rats, *I Believe I'll Go Back Home* (Marimac)

New Lost City Ramblers, *There Ain't No Way Out* (Smithsonian-Folkways)

Ann & Phil Case, *The Springtime of Life* (Dry Run)

Tommy Jarrell, *Sail Away Ladies* (County)

Camp Creek Boys, *Camp Creek Boys* (County)

Dirk Powell, *If I Go Ten Thousand Miles* (Rounder)

Red Clay Ramblers, *Hard Times* (Flying Fish)

Double Decker String Band, *Chasing Rainbows* (Marimac)

Various Artists, *Young Fogies, Vol. 2* (Rounder)

Dan Gellert, *Forked Deer* (Marimac)

Highwoods String Band, *Feed Your Babies Onions* (Rounder)

Wade & Julia Mainer, *In the Land of Melody* (June Appal)

Hotmud Family, *Meat and Potatoes and Stuff Like That* (Flying Fish)

Freight Hoppers, *Where'd You Come From, Where'd You Go?* (Rounder)

J.P. & Annadeene Fraley, *Maysville* (Rounder)

Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss, *Old Pal* (Telegraph)

Norman & Nancy Blake, *Just Gimme Something I'm Used To* (Shanachie)

Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice, *Come All Ye Tender Hearted* (June Appal)

Paul Robeson

Born April 9, 1898 in Princeton, NJ. Died January 23, 1976 in Philadelphia, PA.

Long before Jackie Robinson and Martin Luther King Jr., Paul Robeson struggled against racism and political injustice. Best remembered for his show-stopping rendition of Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's "Ol' Man River" in the Broadway and film production of *Showboat*, and his portrayal of the title character in the Broadway production of the Shakespeare play *Othello*, Robeson was as effective acting in a play or film, including *Emperor Jones* in 1933 and *King Solomon's Mines* in 1937, as he was on a concert stage singing songs of freedom. The deep-voiced son of a Presbyterian minister and a school teacher, Robeson initially attracted attention as an athlete. At Rutgers University he became the second black All-American football player. He was the third black scholar to attend Columbia Law School and graduated in 1923. Robeson's thespian interests were sparked while he was a law student. When an amateur show in which he had a major role, *Simon the Cyrenian*, moved to New York's Lafayette Theater in 1921, he made his professional debut as an actor. After receiving his law degree three years later, he spent the summer performing at the Provincetown Playhouse on Cape Cod. His acting in a summer production of Eugene O'Neill's play *All God's Chillun Got Wings* in 1924 was so natural that he was chosen to star in a New York production of the show. He continued to make his presence felt in stage productions of *Black Boy* in 1926, *Porgy* and *Othello* in 1928, and in 11 films, including the stellar versions of *Showboat* in 1933 and *Emperor Jones* in 1936. Robeson presented his first vocal recital of Afro-American spirituals and folk songs in 1925. He toured for the next two years with piano player Larry Brown and performed influential concerts in the United States, Europe, and England. In 1926 he recorded the first of more than 300 songs that would range from operatic arias to folk and pop tunes. His most popular album, *Ballads for Americans* was released in 1939. An avowed "anti-fascist," Robeson was profoundly affected by trips to the Soviet Union in 1934, where he was moved by the lack of racism he experienced, and to Spain in 1937, where he performed for the loyalist troops fighting Franco and Hitler. Although his political beliefs created a stir among the conservative forces in his native country, he encountered serious problems after announcing, at the World Peace Conference in Paris, that black Americans would not go to war in support of an oppressive government. The backlash was unparalleled. At a concert in Peekskill, New York in 1949, hundreds were injured by rocks and stones hurled by anti-communist reactionaries. The following year, the State Department revoked his passport and he was unable to travel abroad. The blacklist had a major effect on Robeson's career. One of the top concert artists in the world during the 1940s, his income decreased significantly in the early 1950s after many of his concerts were canceled and his records removed from store shelves. He continued to perform whenever possible. In the late-1950s, when his passport was reinstated, he moved to London after performing a memorable farewell concert at Carnegie Hall in New York. After poor health caused him to retire and return to the United States in 1963, he lived the remainder of his life in seclusion. His autobiography, *Here I Stand*, was published in 1958. A drive to persuade the U.S. Postal Service to issue a stamp in celebration of Robeson's 100th birthday was unsuccessful in 1997.

what to buy: Robeson performed four concerts at Peace Arch Park, near Blaine, Washington, during the peak of the blacklist. Unable to leave the United States, he performed on a flat-bed truck that was driven as close as possible to the U.S.-Canadian border. The long-overdue CD release of the first two concerts, *The Peace Arch Concerts* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997, prod. Ian Shaw), recorded in May 1952 and August 1953, documents the power of his performances. With his thundering, opera-like vocals set to piano accompaniment, Robeson offers a memorable sampling of his vast repertoire that spans Afro-American and Gaelic folk and gospel songs, including "No More Auction Block," "Go Down Moses," and "Jacob's Ladder," classical pieces ("Theme from Beethoven's Ninth"), and Chinese marching songs ("Chin Chin"). The most prized tunes on the album are Robeson's distinctive interpretations of his most influential tunes—"Ol' Man River" and "Joe Hill." A lengthy 12 1/2-minute speech by Robeson concludes the album, which stands as one of the strongest political documents of the twentieth century.

what to buy next: Recorded at Robeson's historic "Farewell" concert at Carnegie Hall on May 9, 1958, *The Essential Paul Robeson* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1987, prod. Maynard Solomon) captures the eclectic nature of Robeson's concerts. Although he shows his folk roots with "My Curly-headed Baby," "Every Time I Feel the Spirit," and "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel," he is equally potent with his interpretation of classical music pieces, including Dvorak's "Going Home," Mussorgsky's "Boris Godonuv" and "The Orphan," Bach's "Christ Lag in Todesbanden," and Franz Schubert's "Lullaby." In addition to emotional versions of "Joe Hill" and "Ol' Man River," the album features a powerful monologue from *Othello*.

the rest:

The Legendary Moscow Concert ♪♪♪ (Fenix Entertainment, 1949)
Songs of My People ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1972)

The Golden Classics, Volume III ♪♪♪ (Collectibles, 1977)
Green Pastures ♪♪♪ (Living Era, 1987/ASV Living Era, 1992)
The Glorious Voice of Paul Robeson ♪♪♪ (EMI/1990)
Ol' Man River ♪♪♪ (Remember, 1990)
Ballad for Americans ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1990)
The Power and the Glory ♪♪♪ (Sony, 1991)
A Lonesome Road ♪♪♪ (ASV Living Era, 1992)
Collectors ♪♪♪ (Monitor, 1993)
Great Voices of the Century–Paul Robeson, Volume II ♪♪♪ (Memoir Classics, 1994)
Ol' Man River ♪♪♪ (Music of the World, 1995)
Paul Robeson, Volume II ♪♪♪ (Memoir Classics, 1995)
21 Songs & Spirituals ♪♪♪ (Memoir Classics, 1996)
Great ♪♪♪ (Goldies, 1996)
The Political Years ♪♪♪ (Collector's Edition, 1996)
Songs for Free Men ♪♪♪ (Pavilion, 1997)
The Man and His Beliefs ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1997)

worth searching for: A Gil Noble–produced documentary film, *The Tallest Tree in the Forest* (Phoenix Films, 1977), includes rare concert footage and comments and recollections about Robeson from friends and family.

influences:

◀◀ Bert Williams, J.P. Christy, James Bland

▶▶ Leadbelly, Marian Anderson, Josh White

Craig Harris

Joseph "Butch" Robins

Born 1949, in Russell County, VA.

Like many of his craft, Butch Robins likes to say that he became a musician because it was better than having to get a job. Make no mistake, though, he takes his chosen profession seriously and has spent the last 30 years as, in his own words, "a consummate student of music." The central figure in his drive to meld his person and his music into one unified whole was the late Bill Monroe, the Father of Bluegrass, in whose band, the Blue Grass Boys, Robins played banjo briefly in 1967 and then for an extended period from 1977 to 1981. In Monroe he found a mentor whose music and persona were literally inseparable—Monroe lived and found expression through his music, and while many have followed his path, none have performed Monroe's music quite like he did. As years went by and Monroe's music picked up the label "bluegrass," there was a tendency by some to standardize it, making it almost formulaic, forgetting the fact that throughout his entire career Monroe was an innovator and experimenter. During his time in Monroe's band during the late '70s and early '80s, Robins took the lessons learned from Monroe and released a number of innovative and distinctive albums on the Rounder label. He also appears on a number of projects released under the name the Blue Grass Band. After several years as a sought-after session musician, he returned to the studio in 1995 for his CD release *Grounded–Centered–Focused*, on which he was able to feature Monroe, who was still a vital and powerful musician at the time, prior to his passing in September 1996. Although well-versed in bluegrass, Robins continues to work hard at exploring new territory and continues to prove that he is, indeed, a consummate musician.

what's available: On *Grounded-Centered-Focused* ♪♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1995, prod. Butch Robins, Kerry Hay), Robins surrounds himself with an all-star lineup of bluegrass vocal and instrumental talent, including Monroe (in one of his final appearances on a record), Mike Compton, Dudley Connell, Sammy Shelor, David Grier, and many others. Playing with drive and intensity in both traditional and eclectic modes, Robins demonstrates why he is one of the most versatile banjo pickers on the scene today. The last half of the album is an affectionate tribute to his mentor, mandolinist Monroe, who shows that even in his 80s, he can still play. Dudley Connell's vocal on "Kentucky Waltz" makes it one of the best versions available of that oft-recorded Monroe classic.

worth searching for: The title of *The Fifth Child* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980, prod. Butch Robins) is drawn from Monroe's description of the five-string banjo (in an interview with the late Ralph Rinzler) as "the Fifth Child that was born in Bluegrass," following the mandolin, guitar, fiddle, and bass. Featuring standards like "Jerusalem Ridge," "Cumberland Gap," and "Cripple Creek," the album is notable as well for the vocals of Alan O'Bryant (currently of Nashville Bluegrass Band) and Bobby Osborne (of the legendary Osborne Brothers), the mandolin of Sam Bush, and the fiddle of Blaine Sprouse. Also worth combing the LP bins for is *Fragments of My Imagination* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1978, prod. Butch Robins), which features a mixture of standards ("Earl's Breakdown") as well as more eclectic and experimental pieces ("Twelve O'Clock, eh Sonny," "On the Edge"). Notable presences here are three later members of New Grass Revival, Sam Bush (again), Béla Fleck, and John Cowan.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Sonny Osborne

▶▶ Alan O'Bryant, New Grass Revival, Alison Brown, Tony Trischka

John Lupton

Tom Robinson /Tom Robinson Band /Sector 27

Tom Robinson born June 1, 1950, in Cambridge, England. Tom Robinson Band formed 1977, in London, England. Disbanded 1979. Sector 27 formed 1979, in London, England. Disbanded 1980.

Tom Robinson Band: Tom Robinson, bass, vocals; Danny Kustow, guitar, vocals; Mark Ambler, keyboards (1977–79); Brian "Dolphin" Taylor, drums (1977–79); Ian Parker, keyboards (1979); Preston Heyman, drums (1979). Sector 27: Tom Robinson, vocals, guitar; Jo Burt, bass; Stevie B., guitar; Derek Quinton, drums.

Tom Robinson is a cult artist who likes it that way. He hosts parties and provides special annual CDs to members of his Castaway Club; he has a detailed Web site and participates in online discussions with listeners. Once known mainly as the guy who was "Glad to Be Gay," he's stubbornly refused to be marginalized or pigeonholed. His work has been described as "anti-folk," but few artists are as immersed in the grassroots.

Robinson's music features a sensitivity to melody that many of his '70s peers couldn't match. His songs hold up over 20 years. He's a strong guitarist and an even stronger singer with a persuasive voice. Like Richard Thompson, he can romanticize the lives of outcasts and underlings without softening the impact of their stories.

The Tom Robinson Band had a couple of hits in the late 1970s: "2-4-6-8 Motorway" and "Glad to Be Gay." The band briefly metamorphosed into Sector 27 (whose album is now out of print) before Robinson went out on his own. Though his early solo work was uneven, he's developed into a masterful musician. To critics of his changes in lifestyle (including his marriage to a woman), he sings the following (at the end of [Having It Both Ways]): "Well if gay liberation means freedom for all/a label is no liberation at all/I'm here and I'm queer and I do what I do/I'm not gonna wear a straitjacket for you."

what to buy: *Having It Both Ways* ♪♪♪♪½ (Cooking Vinyl, 1996, prod. Al Scott) drags the listener through the gutter—but, as Oscar Wilde pointed out, from there one can still look at the stars. "Rum Thunderbird" sounds like a chantey by the Pogues. "Fool to Myself" is a masterpiece, the confession of a man who's hit bottom and vows to change. "Hot Dog" is a homoerotic rave-up with gorgeous rockabilly guitar by Robinson. "Castaway," the final track, is a modern-day folk ballad with a bisexual theme.

what to buy next: The live album *Living in a Boom Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1992) begins with an anti-folk rant delivered in classic arran-sweater style. Highlights are the moving "Blood Brother" and the hilarious, biting "Yuppie Scum."

the rest:

Love over Rage ♪♪♪ (Rhythm Safari, 1994)
(With Tom Robinson Band) *Power in the Darkness* ♪♪♪♪ (Harvest, 1978/Razor & Tie, 1993)
(With Tom Robinson Band) *TRB Two* ♪♪♪ (Harvest, 1979/Razor & Tie, 1993)

influences:

◀◀ Richard Thompson, Shane McGowan, Warren Zevon

▶▶ Pansy Division, Billy Bragg, Angie Aparo

Pamela Murray Winters

Carson Robison

Born August 4, 1890, in Oswego, KS. Died March 24, 1957, in Pleasant Valley, NY.

Carson Robison was a vaudeville performer who came to country music through his job as Vernon Dalhart's whistler. Nicknamed the "Kansas Jaybird" because of that talent, Robison eventually became a popular performer in his own right, particularly overseas. He wrote many popular tunes, including "Blue Ridge Mountain Blues," "Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie," and "Barnacle Bill the Sailor." Robison was the first country singer to tour Great Britain and, next to Jimmie Rodgers, was the most popular early country singer in Great Britain. In the Unites States he had some of his biggest successes during World War II with his recordings of "1942 Turkey in the Straw" and "Hitler's Last Letter to Hirohito." He also had the first version of the popular 1948 novelty "Life Gets Tee-Jus Don't It," later recorded by Tex Williams. His backing groups were known as the Pioneers, the Buckaroos, and the Pleasant Valley Boys.

what's available: *Home, Sweet Home on the Prairie* ♪♪♪ (Living Era, 1996, comp. prod. Peter Dempsey), which contains 25 recordings made between 1930–36, includes three of Robison's recordings with Dalhart and some tracks he cut in London during his first European tour. Modern notions of cowboy music have been shaped so completely by later Hollywood films that these recordings, made with an East Coast mentality, sound quite surprising.

influences:

◀◀ Vernon Dalhart, Wendell Hall

▶▶ Sons of the Pioneers, Gene Autry

Brian Mansfield

The Roches

Formed December 1976, in Greenwich Village, NY.

Maggie Roche, guitar, keyboards, vocals; Terre Roche, guitar, vocals; Suzzy Roche, guitar, vocals.

Graduates of the Greenwich Village folk scene, Maggie, Terre, and Suzzy Roche stood out like crewcuts at a Grateful Dead concert when they released their self-titled debut in 1979: folk was dead, punk was threatening, and the idea of three sisters harmonizing around acoustic guitars was hardly hip. Yet, their songwriting was filled with quirky humor, and their voices purposely didn't weave so much as collide, flirting with atonalism and eschewing traditional rules of harmony singing. Alternately pretty ("The Married Men"), powerful ("The Hallelujah Chorus"), and punishing ("Bobby's Song"), their unison sound was so daring and distinctive that the trio spent the better part of a decade harnessing its force and fighting with record companies over the best direction to follow. Such recent albums as *A Dove* and *Can We Go Home Now?* show they've finally won both battles.

what to buy: *The Roches* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1979, prod. Robert Fripp) is a mesmerizing acoustic showcase framed around such striking compositions as "Hammond Song," "Married Men," and the giddy "Mr. Sellack." The immediacy and intimacy of Fripp's "audio verite" production captures every nuance from breathing sounds to the squeaks of sliding fingers on the frets. The sisters' relentless quest to weave pop elements and band arrangements around their harmonies is finally fulfilled on *A Dove* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Stewart Lerman). *Keep on Doing* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1982, prod. Robert Fripp) includes their stunning a cappella version of "The Hallelujah Chorus" and the strange but endearing "The Largest Elizabeth in the World."

what to buy next: *Nurds* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980, prod. Roy Halee) is a brave attempt to shoehorn them into the new-wave movement with such oddities as "Bobby's Girl," "The Boat Family," and the hysterically self-deprecating "Death of Suzzy Roche."

what to avoid: *No Trespassing* **woof!** (Rhino, 1986, prod. Joe Terry, Andy Bloch, Roches) is a lifeless four-song EP recorded after the trio split from Warner Bros.

the rest:
Another World ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1985)
Speak ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989)
We Three Kings ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1990)
Will You Be My Friend ♪♪♪½ (Baby Boom, 1994)
Can We Go Home Now ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1995)

worth searching for: *Seductive Reasoning* ♪♪ (Columbia, 1975, prod. Paul Simon, Paul Samwell-Smith) is a pre-Suzzy album, co-produced by Simon after Maggie and Terre backed him on *There Goes Rhymin' Simon*.

solo outings:
Suzzy Roche:
Holy Smokes ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997)

influences:
- Madrigal singing, Simon & Garfunkel, Kate & Anna McGarrigle
- Murmurs, Story

David Okamoto

Jerry Rockwell

Born April 9, 1950, in New York, NY.

Jerry Rockwell began playing the lap dulcimer while in college in Plattsburgh, New York in 1971, after cutting his musical teeth on the jazz guitar stylings of Wes Montgomery, Kenny Burrell, Johnny Smith, Barney Kessel, George Van Eps, and Howard Roberts. Finding the cocktail lounge atmosphere of the jazz scene to be stifling, he starting searching for a dulcimer after hearing Richard Fariña in order to "satisfy a developing urge to throw himself into something both primitive and old." At about the same time, he began to develop an equally powerful interest in English and Celtic folk music. He also began building dulcimers. Over the years he has developed a reputation as both a gifted musician and a gifted luthier. During the late '70s, he formed a musical partnership with Mary Ann Samuels, cutting two traditional dulcimer albums for the Traditional label and touring England, the United States, and Ireland. In 1983 he helped to form Kellswater, a dulcimer-oriented Celtic band with regional popularity in the Columbus, Ohio, area. In 1986 he teamed with hammered dulcimer player Bob Bellamy to form a duo that blended Rockwell's Celtic stylings with Bellamy's more bluegrass-oriented material. Rockwell has pursued a solo career during the '90s, combining performing and recording with conducting workshops, teaching, and publishing popular instructional books. His reputation as a luthier has flourished with the introduction of his popular baritone dulcimer design, which is in great demand.

what to buy: *The Blackbird and the Beggarman* ♪♪♪½ (Wizmak Productions, 1994, prod. Pete Sutherland) features Rockwell's

judy roderick

dulcimer on nearly two dozen Celtic instrumentals and features fine backup by fiddler/producer Pete Sutherland and mandolinist Niles Hokkanen. Rockwell's choice of Sutherland as his producer was inspired, and their collaboration serves to elevate this collection well above the ordinary. Hokkanen, R.P. Hale, Ron Ewing, and Ken Lovelett also make substantial contributions. Jointly, they make this a somewhat eclectic, but never boring, recording.

what to buy next: *Favorite American Folktunes* ♪♪♪ (J.C. Rockwell Music, 1991, prod. Jerry Rockwell) (cassette only) is a straightforward treatment of 21 traditional tunes of the American frontier. Rockwell's musical sensibilities make this an outstanding introduction both to the dulcimer and to its rich heritage as a parlor instrument in many a nineteenth-century pioneer home. It's available from J.C. Rockwell Music, P.O. Box 79, Guysville, Ohio 45735-3011.

the rest:

Mountain Dulcimer and Psaltery Instrumentals ♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1979) (cassette only)
Dulcimer Dreams ♪♪½ (Tradition, 1983) (cassette only)
Little Maggie ♪♪½ (J.C. Rockwell Music, 1987) (cassette only)
Into the Fever Rain ♪♪½ (Mandocrucian Productions, 1990) (cassette only)
Improvisations for Dulcimer, Guitar, and Other String Beings ♪♪♪ (J.C. Rockwell Music, 1991) (cassette only)
Perfect Harmony ♪♪½ (Mountain Sounds, 1991) (cassette only)

worth searching for: Rockwell appears on three of Bob Bellamy's albums, *American Architecture* ♪♪½ (Windridge Recordings, 1992, prod. Rob Griffin, Bob Bellamy), *As Silent Stars Go By* ♪♪½ (Windridge Recordings, 1993, prod. Rob Griffin, Bob Bellamy), and *Rise over Run* ♪♪♪ (Windridge Recordings, 1996, prod. Bob Bellamy).

influences:

◀◀ Richard Fariña, Steeleye Span
▶▶ Mark Nelson, Hollis Landrum

Neal Walters

Judy Roderick

Born December, 1942, in Wyandott, MI. Died January, 1992.

Judy Roderick's first musical influence was the black gospel radio station WJLB in Detroit and her sister's Hank Williams records. She started singing professionally while a student at the University of Colorado. In common with many artists who grew up during the folk boom of the '50s and '60s, much of her initial apprenticeship was experienced performing in coffeehouses. In 1962, when white women still didn't sing the blues, she met Janis Joplin at a coffee house in San Francisco. After Joplin returned to Texas, Roderick left for the Philadelphia Folk Festival; her performance there led her to her first recording contract. Roderick sang in the classical blues idiom and possessed a distinctly individual sound that reflected the influence of singers such as Ma Rainey or Bessie Smith, but she also exhibited the sensitivity of a Billie Holiday. Her 1965 Vanguard album *Woman Blue*, along with her appearance at the Newport Folk Festival that same year gave promise of a brilliant career. Alas, it was not to be. *Woman Blue* was a one-shot deal and Roderick died in 1992 without having come close to duplicating its success.

what's available: The re-release of *Woman Blue* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1965/1993) will allow a new generation to enjoy a classic folk album of the 1960s. It contains all the tunes on that original release, plus four previously unreleased songs. With great accompaniment by studio stalwarts Dick Weisman, Artie Traum, and Russ Savakus, Roderick does tunes by Bessie Smith and Memphis Minnie, as well as some very original treatments of traditional material. The title tune later became a counter-culture anthem with the now familiar title of "I Know You Rider." Her distinctive version of the Ian and Sylvia tune, "You Were on My Mind," is particularly noteworthy.

influences:

◀◀ Bessie Smith, Memphis Minnie, Ma Rainey
▶▶ Maria Muldaur, Sylvia Tyson

Neal Walters

Jimmie Rodgers

Born James Charles Rodgers, September 8, 1897, in Meridian, MS. Died May 26, 1933.

A childhood spent shuffling back and forth between relatives (and consequently sampling the life of music halls and vaudeville acts) aided Jimmie Rodgers in absorbing the rich music of Mississippi during the early 1900s. After winning a local talent contest at age 12, he was persuaded to pursue a more stable life and worked for more than a decade for the railroad. When diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1924 he ditched the railroad and plunged into his true calling—music. He broke records by selling more than a million copies of a recording that included his legionary "T for Texas." The following years were dotted with such hits as "Blue Yodel," "Way out on the Mountain," and "A Drunkard's Child." His vocal style, a distinct yodel, became the one to imitate, but Rodgers also experimented with

eclectic back-up arrangements, tossing in jazz or Hawaiian bands to add a twist. In 1933 he finally lost his battle with TB. Often referred to as the "Father of Country Music" or "America's Blue Yodeler," Rodgers certainly earned his charter induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1961 and into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986.

what to buy: The recordings on *First Sessions, 1927–1928* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990, prod. Ralph Peer), along with the Carter Family's first recordings, set the course for recorded country music. Rodgers accompanies himself on guitar for these songs (another musician occasionally adds banjo or ukulele), and the second his keening voice sets to wailing "Blue Yodel" (a.k.a. "T for Texas"), it's obvious something special is going on. This collection contains Rodgers's first three "blue yodels," plus the classic "In the Jailhouse Now."

what to buy next: Rounder has released all of Rodgers's Victor recordings on CD, and *America's Blue Yodeler, 1930–1931* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Ralph Peer) is probably the place to go after Rodgers's historic first recordings. If the pop influence on modern country music strikes you as a betrayal of tradition, just listen to these fully arranged "Jimmie's Mean Mama Blues"—piano, clarinet, tuba, banjo, and cornet, courtesy of Bob Sawyer's Jazz Band. And future jazz legend Louis Armstrong even plays trumpet on "Blue Yodel No. 9." But when the songs are this good—"T.B. Blues" is on this collection, as is "Blue Yodel No. 8" (a.k.a. "Muleskinner Blues")—it doesn't much matter how you play them.

what to avoid: On *Jimmie Rodgers* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1991, prod. Ralph Peer) the songs are classic—"Blue Yodel No. 1 (T for Texas)," "Muleskinner Blues"—but, geez, there's only eight of them. Many better collections exist.

the rest:

Country Legacy ♪♪ (Pair, 1989)
Early Years, 1928–1929 ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)
On the Way Up, 1929 ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Riding High, 1929 ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Down the Old Road, 1931–1932 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
No Hard Times, 1932 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Last Sessions ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991)
Train Whistle Blues ♪♪ (ASV Living Era, 1992)
American Legends ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Riley Puckett, Tenneva Ramblers

▶▶ Ernest Tubb, Carson Robison, Gene Autry

Randall T. Cook

Aldus Roger

Born February 10, 1916, in Carencro, LA.

Aldus Roger is an accordionist and band leader whose groups set the standard for performance of Cajun music from the late 1950s to the 1970s. His emulated his hero, Lawrence Walker, until his own success finally eclipsed Walker's popularity. Roger was a full-time carpenter, but he was so popular that he played every night. His band, the Lafayette Playboys, served as a proving ground for many important young musicians, including swamp pop singer and historian Johnnie Allan, steel players Phillippe Alleman and Rodney Miller, fiddler Doc Guidry, and Cajun singer Belton Richard. Roger developed a syncopated, energetic style on the accordion, which he played standing and using a shoulder strap (some attribute its creation to him). His bands swung hard through two-steps, with the bass percolating and the steel player coming in on the off-beats. A number of his records feature twin fiddle in a style influenced by Western swing, but at their heart there's always pure Cajun singing and the accordion of Aldus Roger. This quality caused Zachary Richard to spend two hours a day playing along with Roger's recordings.

what to buy: Roger said that his band would often walk into the studio in the afternoon after appearing on a morning TV or radio show and record. Listen to *A Cajun Legend* ♪♪♪♪♪ (La Louisiana, 1995, prod. Carol Rachou Sr.) and see if you can hear any mistakes. This band is so tight and so on the music that they make it sound easy. Cajun culture is built around a love of dancing and you can tell from the effect of this music why the Lafayette Playboys packed the clubs. This CD compilation brings together two albums of Roger's music *The French Music of South Louisiana* and *King of the French Accordion Plays His Old Hits*.

what to buy next: *Plays the French Music of South Louisiana* ♪♪♪♪♪ (La Louisiana, 1995, prod. Carol Rachou Sr.) was Roger's biggest seller, and although it's folded into the previously mentioned disc, it stands on its own as a classic of the time. On the two-steps the instruments seem to be chasing each other, with Roger's accordion being followed by Phillip Alleman's steel and then Doc Guidry's fiddle.

worth searching for: *Marie/Be Careful, You're Breaking My Heart* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, c. 1966, prod. Floyd Soileau) is the only 45 rpm record that Roger cut for Swallow, but it has stayed in print on the power of the song "Marie," which continues to be played by both Cajun and zydeco bands.

aldus roger

influences:

- Lawrence Walker, Sundown Playboys
- Zachary Richard, Mark and Ann Savoy, Paul Daigle, Bruce Daigrepont

Jared Snyder

Gamble Rogers

Born James Gamble Rogers IV in 1937, in Winter Park, FL. Died October 10, 1991, in Flagler Beach, FL.

If you can imagine a performer with the folksy humor and storytelling knack of Will Rogers, the vivid imagination and articulation of William Faulkner, and the ability to sing and play the guitar like Merle Travis, you'll get an idea of what it was like to see the late Gamble Rogers on stage. Son and grandson of world-renowned architects, James Gamble Rogers IV was trained to follow in the family profession, but an early stint with the Serendipity Singers during the folk revival of the 1960s revealed to him that he was uniquely talented in the art of building a story crafted and calculated to reduce his audience to a shambles of laughter. Much as Faulkner concocted an imaginary Mississippi county, populated by the decaying elements of the Old South, Gamble Rogers brought us the absurdities of day-to-day life in fictional Oklawaha County, Florida, and the characters who somehow seemed to make sense of it all—Still Bill, Eulalah Singleterry, Flat Tire (the three-legged Chihuahua), and the Philosopher Laureate of the loading dock at Erindale's Feed & Seed, Agamemnon Jones. While delivering these tales in an oratorical style that was part Southern Baptist preacher brimstone, and part William F. Buckley verbosity, Rogers always seemed to manage to impart obscure bits of knowledge and wisdom, such as the difference between the innocuous king snake and the deadly coral snake. Or the advice he once received from Agamemnon, while working as a door-to-door Bible salesman, after fending off an attacking dog by whacking it on the head with a sample of his "product" (suffering pangs of guilt about it afterwards): "Son, when your work speaks for itself, don't interrupt." Rogers' fame as a humorist and storyteller sometimes overshadowed the fact that he was among the best Travis-style pickers to come along in a long while, and his playing is as worthy of attention as his monologues. He died tragically in 1991, drowned while attempting to rescue a swimmer caught in an undertow.

Aldus Roger **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

what to buy: *Sorry Is as Sorry Does* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. Robin McBride) was recorded live in Woodstock, Illinois, and features several of his best stories, including "The Bible Salesman" and "Flat Tire and the Great Dane," although it's a little lighter on the pickin' than his other recordings.

what to buy next: *The Lord Gives Me Grace, the Devil Gives Me Style* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1977, prod. Stephen Powers) features more stories, a rendition of John Stewart's "July, You're a Woman," and an tip of the hat (or pick) to Doc Watson, "Deep Gap Salute."

worth searching for: If you can find *Gamble Rogers Live: The Warm Way Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Mountain Railroad, 1980, prod. Robin McBride) in a second-hand LP bin, snap it up and treat yourself to "The Honeydipper" and "The Passion of Miss Eulalah Singleterry," among others.

influences:

- Merle Travis, Doc Watson, Serendipity Singers
- Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, Loudon Wainwright III, Arlo Guthrie

John Lupton

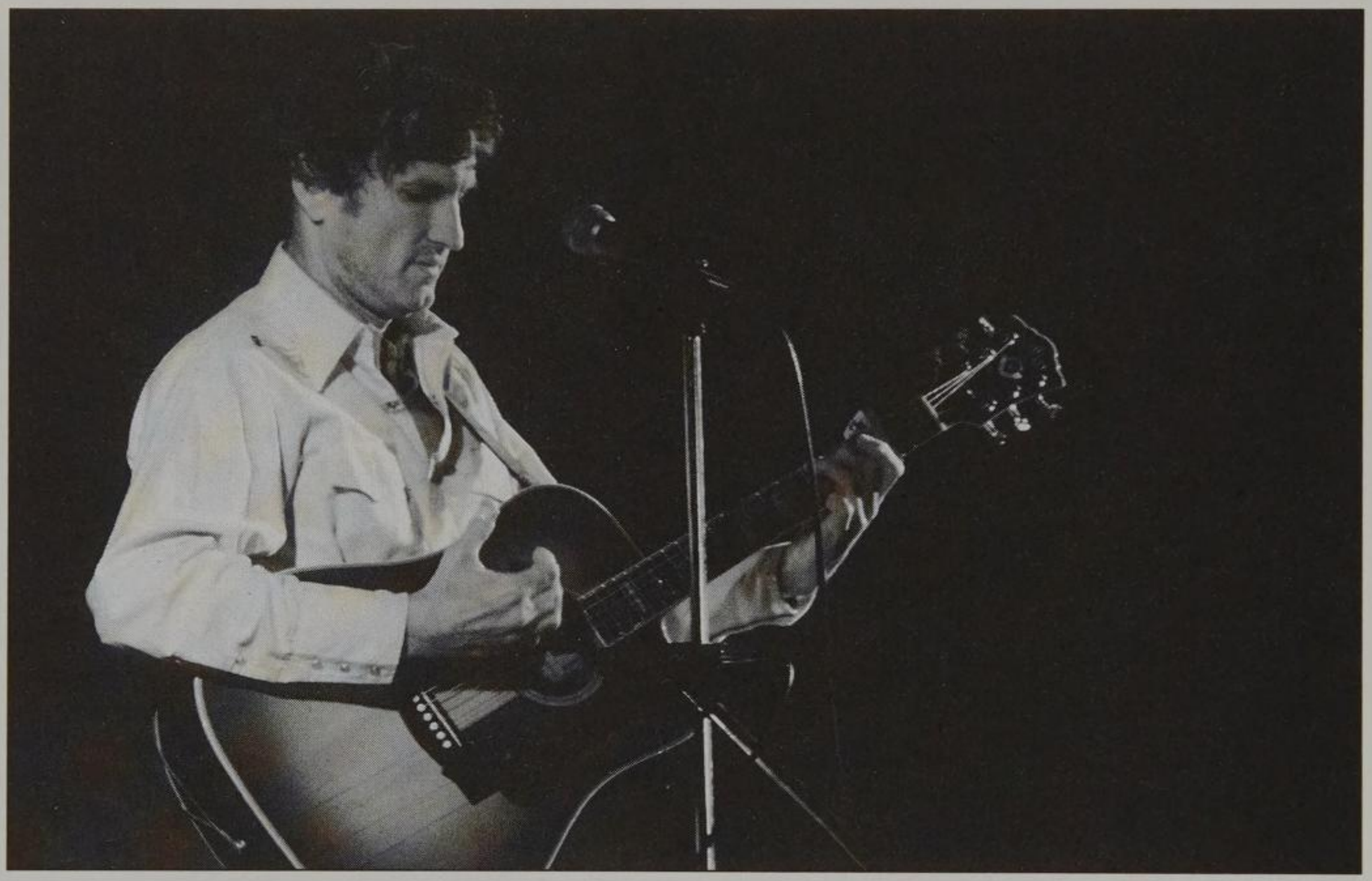
Garnet Rogers

Born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

A most significant event in the life of Garnet Rogers was the loss of his older brother—legendary Canadian singer-songwriter Stan Rogers—in a 1984 plane crash. Stealing victory from the jaws of defeat, Garnet responded by immediately upgrading his musical career as Stan's accompanist to the level of successful solo artist. With his smooth, dark baritone, Rogers is widely regarded as one of the finer vocalists in the folk venue. And his seven successful albums chronicle his evolution from a first-rate instrumentalist (guitar, fiddle, flute) to a blooming songwriter—with ballads depicting the small victories of everyday heroes. Rogers has been featured on numerous television and radio programs, and has shared the stage with such greats as Mary Chapin Carpenter, Bill Monroe, and Guy Clark. Concert-goers love Rogers for his over-the-top humor and lightning-quick wit.

what to buy: *Small Victories* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1990, prod. Garnet Rogers) blends ancient Celtic beauty with a free-spirited sense of the new world. Although a studio project, it rings with the intensity and authenticity of live performance. The collection also marks Rogers's coming of age as a com-

garnet rogers



Gamble Rogers **(© Robert J. Huffman/Field Mark Publications)**

poser: nine of the 10 pieces are original. Notably, "One Bullet" is a powerful and riveting ballad, while "Stars in Their Crown," "For Herself," and "Small Victory" are significant for their poetic lyrics. Rogers's ability to capture what is real and lasting will likely give this collection a long shelf life next to his brother's many classics: Stan's shadow cannot diminish Garnet's artistic success here. *Summer Lightning—Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1994, prod. Garnet Rogers) showcases numerous definitive performances, including "What's Wrong with This Picture," "A Row of Small Trees," and the electrifying original "Frankie and Johnny." A gifted and experienced fiddler, Rogers shows an instinctive ability to sing to the lyrical accompaniment of violinist Doug Long. *The Outside Track* ♪♪♪½ (Snow Goose Songs, 1986, prod. Garnet Rogers) is worth the purchase, if for nothing else than the title track, an acoustic gem. James Keelaghan's "Jenny Brice" appears here, well-dressed in Rogers's instrumental excellence, while Bill Caddick's "John o'Dreams" features the artist's resonant baritone very nicely.

what to buy next: *Night Drive* ♪♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1996, prod. Garnet Rogers) shows an energized Rogers breaking new ground with electric guitar while generally maintaining the integrity of his traditional folk roots. And for icing on the cake, he is backed by outstanding instrumentalists Dan Achen (Junkhouse), David Sereda, and Duke Levine (Mary Chapin Carpenter). Rogers's two songs about his late brother Stan are strong and sensitive: "These Golden Fields" and "Night Drive." The notably irreverent: the Greg Brown tune "Jesus and Elvis" is a clever contrast to Rogers's more sensitive gems, "Phone Booth" and "Golden Fields." The later is ripe with deja vu images of crossing vast prairies: "We are young forever, in these golden fields." More than a vocal collection, this album is about guitars—acoustic guitars, slide guitars, and electric guitars. But don't be surprised if Rogers's next outing is minus the amplification: Life is too short for playing your weaker suit. Rogers's first solo album, *Garnet Rogers* ♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1984, prod. Garnet Rogers), features some imaginative covers, including the works of London (Ontario) folkies Willie P.

Bennett and Doug McArthur, as well as Bob Franke and others. Rogers also tips his hat to the great Scottish singer-guitarist John Martyn with the arrangement "Carrick Fergus." This album shows more than just an occasional streak of brilliance, whetting the appetite for Rogers's later original works. *Speaking Softly in the Dark* ♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1988, prod. Garnet Rogers) showcases Bob Franke's "Hallelujah! (The Great Storm Is Over)" with a voice that only Rogers can provide. Notable covers include "Crucifixion" (Phil Ochs) and "Lament for Henry Chapin" (Sarah Baughan): Rogers has developed a special talent for mourning the lost brethren. Although *At a High Window* ♪♪♪ (Snow Goose Songs, 1992, prod. Garnet Rogers) is not Rogers's best work, a man of his creativity and fastidious nature will likely never strike out.

influences:

◀◀ Stan Rogers, John Martyn, Willie P. Bennett, Archie Fisher, Bob Franke, Greg Brown

▶▶ Stan Rogers, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Billy Bragg, Ferron, Guy Clark, Margaret Christl, Lee Murdoch

see also: *Stan Rogers*

Art Wojtowicz

Roy Rogers

Born July 28, 1950, in Redding, CA.

Although originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Roy Rogers derives his slide guitar sound from Mississippi Delta blues roots, in the tradition of Earl Hooker and Robert Nighthawk. In addition to pursuing a solo career since the 1970s, Rogers also did some road and studio time with John Lee Hooker in the 1980s and produced four highly successful Hooker albums—*The Healer*, *Mr. Lucky*, *Boom Boom*, and *Chill Out*. Rogers's music has assumed increasing dimensions of rhythm and blues, country, and rock with each successive album, but the frequent covers of Delta and early-Chicago slide masters—Robert Johnson and Elmore James, especially—always serve to reaffirm his deep blues roots.

what to buy: Rogers's ambitious solo debut, *Chops Not Chaps* ♪♪♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1986, prod. Roy Rogers), mixes four original tunes with covers of classics by Robert Johnson, Elmore James, and Skip James. *Travellin' Tracks* ♪♪♪½ (Blind Pig, 1992, prod. Norton Buffalo, Roy Rogers), recorded with harpist Norton Buffalo, is a country-blues mix of live duet recordings with more orchestrated studio tracks.

what to buy next: *Slide Zone* ♪♪♪½ (Liberty, 1994, prod. Roy Rogers) is a highly textured recording that includes appearances by harpist Charlie Musselwhite, Windham Hill pianist Philip Aaburg, and Euro-folk banjoist Béla Fleck. *Rhythm and Groove* ♪♪♪½ (Pointblank, 1996, prod. Roy Rogers) re-employs Musselwhite and Aaburg and incorporates shades of Latin music.

the rest:

Slidewinder ♪♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1988)
Blues on the Range ♪♪♪ (Blind Pig, 1989)
R&B ♪♪♪ (Blind Pig , 1991)
Slide of Hand ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1993)

worth searching for: *A Foot in the Door* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterhouse, 1976), recorded with harpist Dave Brugin prior to the launch of Rogers's solo career, gives a clear, early indication of his versatility and virtuosity on guitar.

influences:

◀◀ Earl Hooker, Robert Nighthawk

▶▶ Keb' Mo'

John C. Bruening

Roy Rogers

Born Leonard Franklin Slye, November 5, 1911, in Cincinnati, OH.

Raised on Tom Mix movies, cowboy singer Roy Rogers picked up acting naturally and starred in more than 100 films, usually as a genial singing cowboy. He started doing radio sketches with the Sons of the Pioneers, then branched out into movies, getting his big break when Republic Pictures used him to replace Gene Autry after a contract dispute. Along with Autry and Tex Ritter, he became a childhood idol to millions of young boys. Hollywood couldn't get enough of the handsome hero, so Rogers and his screen partner/wife Dale Evans earned a green light for an NBC Saturday-morning TV series, which lasted from 1951–57. Dale and Roy, married since 1946, eventually retired to Apple Valley, California, in the Mojave Desert, where they maintain the Roy Rogers Museum. Rogers's other sidekick, Trigger the horse, is stuffed and on display there. Rogers is the only person to be elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame twice: the Sons of the Pioneers, the group in which he rose to fame, was inducted in 1980, and Rogers followed as a solo performer eight years later.

what's available: The recordings on *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992, prod. Country Music Foundation), made for Decca during the 1930s and 1940s, show Rogers as a smooth-

6/8/4 *sally rogers*

the 1980s

As the eighties dawned, folk music was in a relatively dormant period. Although many stars of the previous two decades continued to tour, most of the action (and economic activity) in the music business centered in rock and dance music. Nashville made a handful of folkies and bluegrassers like Ricky Skaggs, Vince Gill, and Mary Chapin Carpenter stars, and gave steady work (and hefty paychecks) to instrumental virtuosos like Jerry Douglas and Mark O'Connor. Acoustic music was given an unexpected lift when William Ackerman's relatively obscure Windham Hill Label became a heavy hitter in music business economics, and seemingly every solo instrumentalist rushed to put out a "new age" recording. Although often considered a bit of a dark period for folk music, the decade saw a steady stream of releases on labels like Rounder and Flying Fish. A few talented new singer-songwriters like Greg Brown, John Gorka, and Shawn Colvin emerged, and a regular, if somewhat limited, touring circuit persisted for such artists, largely on the East Coast. The eighties were a vital time for Celtic music as well, with artists like Clannad and Enya cracking the pop charts but, more significantly, a plethora of new groups like Altan and Capercaillie breathing new life into these musical traditions, and a steady stream of new virtuoso instrumentalists like Seamus Egan and John McCusker continuing to raise the standards for speed and expression.

Michael Parrish

voiced balladeer. After he left the Sons of the Pioneers in 1937, his music began to steer away from strictly cowboy and Western themes—which could be one reason it had such wide appeal. Still, you'd want a Rogers collection to have mostly cowboy music, which makes *Best of Roy Rogers* ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990) an odd lot at best—it has Rogers's versions of such country standards as "Candy Kisses," "Tennessee Waltz," and "Send Me the Pillow You Dream On." *Peace in the Valley* ♪♪♪ (Pair, 1996, comp. prod. Allan Steckler), recorded with Evans, features 20 gospel tunes recorded for RCA during the '40s and '50s.

worth searching for: *Tribute* ♪♪ (RCA, 1991, prod. Richard Landis), one of the first major-label country tribute albums, features contemporary artists—most notably Clint Black, Randy Travis, Emmylou Harris, and the Kentucky Headhunters—singing songs with Rogers.

influences:

◀◀ Carson Robison, Gene Autry

▶▶ Tex Ritter, Rex Allen

Brian Mansfield

Sally Rogers

Born September 19, 1954, in New York, NY.

Multi-talented singer-songwriter Sally Rogers plays guitar, banjo, and mountain dulcimer and specializes in traditional folk, old-timey, and (most recently) children's music. Even though she was born in New York City, she left at six months old (knowing she was not a city girl) and was raised on the family farm in Michigan. Rogers then lived in Brazil, Wisconsin, Switzerland, and Michigan again before settling in Connecticut for the last 15 years. Rogers has been a full-time touring folk musician as well as songwriter since 1979. Her incredible songwriting talent is found on each of her recordings as her crystal clear vocals draw us in, making us listen for more. She also plays traditional pieces and has been recognized with numerous awards, including Best Folk Album of 1982 for *Circle of the Sun*, and Best Children's Recording of 1992 for *What Can One Little Person Do?* and of 1993 for *At Quiet O'Clock*. She has made frequent radio appearances on *A Prairie Home Companion* and the nationally syndicated *Mountain Stage*. In 1997 Rogers was appointed to the official position of Connecticut State Troubadour, a one-year post. She is a master teaching artist for the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. Her discography includes five solo recordings, two albums with Howie Bursen, two albums with Claudia Schmidt, and four award-winning children's albums. She also is featured on a chamber music recording with Michael Newman and Laura Oltman (her cousin), as well as a recording of songs from the civil rights era, *I'm Gonna Let It Shine*, which includes many of the original Freedom Singers from the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee: Guy and Candie Carawan, Kim and Reggie Harris, Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer, and many more. Rogers has composed songs that are in the Unitarian and Quaker hymnals and has created the music for a Mennonite folk opera, *Pieced Together.* She is currently working on an oral history/songwriting project for the Quinebaug-Shetucket National Heritage Corri-

dor in Connecticut. All of her recordings include extensive liner notes as well as lyrics to all the songs.

what to buy: The latest of Rogers's solo recordings, *We'll Pass Them On* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1995, prod. Sally Rogers) is an excellent example of her original pieces intermingled with some all-time favorite traditional songs and ballads. Her powerful vocals reign throughout as we listen to "Across the Blue Mountains" and "Black Jack Davey," which are accompanied by a harmonium. There are several outstanding originals and Rogers explains that her goal is to write songs that are appropriate for gatherings of people, songs that build community. She says, "we are all born singers and by using our voices in community, we begin to realize the power of one and of the group." This recording includes "We'll Pass Them On," a song written at the 1993 gathering of the Children's Music Network in a workshop led by Pete Seeger, and "In the Name of All of Our Children," a zipper song written for Nona Beamer, guest of honor at the 1994 gathering. Some of the talented musicians who contributed to this recording are Stephen Snyder (piano, bass, harmonium), Donna Hebert (fiddle), and Allan Bradbury (bass, button accordion). Most of Rogers recordings should be easy to find, but can also be ordered from the artist at P.O. Box 98, Abington, Connecticut 06230 or via e-mail at salrog@neca.com.

what to buy next: *The Unclaimed Pint* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. Gary Reid, Sally Rogers) contains selections from both *The Unclaimed Pint* (DGA Productions, 1979, prod. Jim Sigler, Gary Reid) and *Circle of the Sun* (DGA Productions, 1982, prod. Gary Reid, Sally Rogers), originally released on vinyl. Two outstanding originals are "Lovely Agnes," a song Rogers wrote for her grandmother as a present on her 92nd birthday, and "The Touch of the Master's Hand," a poignant poem written by Myra Brook Welch that Rogers set to music. *Generations* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989, prod. Paul Reisler, Bob Read) is a collection of songs by, about, and for women. Without being overtly political or feminist in nature, they all speak to the strength of womanhood, its struggles and delights. Rogers is joined by several musicians, including members of Trapezoid (Bob Read, Tim Valdes, Anne Louise White, Cheryl Hurwitz, and Paul Reisler). *What Can One Little Person Do?* ♪♪♪½ (Round River, 1992, prod. Sally Rogers) is an excellent children's recording, earning awards from *Parents' Choice Magazine* among others. Rogers gets delightful help from Molly Mason (acoustic bass), Marcy Marxer (mandolin, guitar, accordion, tin whistle, and various percussion instruments), Donna Wilson (fiddle), Steven Snyder (piano), and the Swamptown Chorus, a group of eight youthful voices.

the rest:
(With Howie Bursen) *Satisfied Customers* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Love Will Guide Us ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1985)
In the Circle of the Sun ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1986)
(With Claudia Schmidt) *Closing the Distance* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)
Piggyback Planet ♪♪♪ (Round River, 1990)
(With Howie Bursen) *When Howie Met Sally* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990)
(With Claudia Schmidt) *While We Live* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1991)
At Quiet O'Clock ♪♪♪ (Round River, 1993)

worth searching for: Rogers contributes vocals and dulcimer to *Laments & Dances* ♪♪♪ (MusicMasters, 1994, prod. Gregory Squires), a recording of the Newman and Oltman Guitar Duo along with the Turtle Island String Quartet and Jay Unger. *I'm Gonna Let It Shine* (Round River, 1990, prod. Bill Harley) features a group of people who came together to sing songs of freedom and the human spirit. This amazing collection of people are not just singers, but activists working to make a better world, and there are no instruments heard other than human voices and hands. Rogers also has a video titled *Sally Rogers Sings for Children*, which was recorded at a live children's concert in 1994.

influences:
◀◀ Art Thieme, Sandy & Caroline Paton, Jean Ritchie, Stan Rogers, Peggy Seeger

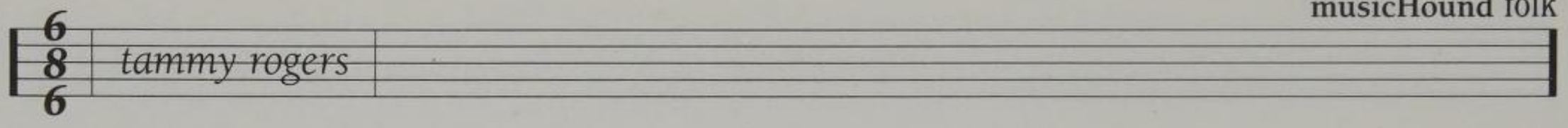
▶▶ Anne Hills, Christina Muir, Cindy Kallet

Heidi Cerrigione

Stan Rogers

Born November 29, 1949, in Hamilton, Ontario. Died, June 2, 1983, in Cincinnati, OH.

A child of Maritime stock, Stan Rogers—with his deep, bellowing voice and brilliant song writing—has provided timeless "snapshots" of the ordinary folks who worked the fisheries, mines, and farms of his native Canada. His dream—to establish a national identity for Canadian songwriting—reached fulfillment with a half-dozen successful albums, and Rogers earned world-wide respect as one of folk music's brightest young talents. But the dream ended on June 2, 1983, when Rogers died in a fire on Air Canada flight 797 at the Cincinnati airport. And while his memory lingers, his music lives on—with a growing list of artists paying tribute by covering his repertoire. Rogers was posthumously awarded the Diplôme d'Honneur by the Canadian Conference of the Arts. His songs have appeared in poetry anthologies, films, plays, and musicals. With his chronicles of ordinary life, Rogers is remembered as one of the touchstones of modern Canadian history.



what to buy: Rogers possibly matched, but never exceeded the song craftsmanship of his first release: *Fogarty's Cove* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1977, prod. Paul Mills). This collection—a dozen pieces of and about Nova Scotia—is filled to the brim with classics, including "45 Years," "Fogarty's Cove," and "Barrett's Privateers." Rogers's traditional acoustic band (guitar, bass, banjo, fiddle, etc.) supports his robust baritone voice with authentic style. Most notable is Rogers's ballad of a dying fishing trade, "Make or Break Harbor": "the boats are so few, too many are pulled up and rotten. Most houses stand empty, old nets hung to dry are blown away, lost and forgotten." This fine set closes with "Finche's Complaint," a recitation in the old maritime tradition that Rogers learned—appropriately—by ear. After extensive travel in Canada's northwest, Rogers composed his gem *Northwest Passage* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1981, prod. Paul Mills). The songs run the gamut of traditional styling, comprising a fairly eclectic brew of working-man ballads. "The Field behind the Plow" tells of Saskatchewan grain farmers: "Watch the field behind the plow turn to straight dark rows. Put another season's promise in the ground." Rogers dedicates "Working Joe" to dear old Dad, whose upstanding character helped inspire "You Can't Stay Here," the story of an "old-fashioned guy" with shining moral fortitude in the face of temptation. "The Idiot" presents Eastern Canadians who followed the lure of oil money to the West. And most notably, Rogers dedicates "Lies" to the farmer's wife, and her loving husband who looks past the ravages of age to see inner beauty. *Between the Breaks . . . Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1979, prod. Paul Mills), the definitive of Rogers's two live albums, offers a good opportunity to sample his repertoire and live-concert charisma. The most charismatic number is the classic "The Mary Ellen Carter," of which Rogers writes: "I really like the guy in this song. He's every person who ever had experts tell him that what he wanted to do was impossible, then did it anyway." And what he did was raise his sunken ship, proclaiming: "Rise again, rise again! . . . No matter what you've lost, be it a home, a love, a friend, like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again!" And finally, the version of the classic "Barrett's Privateers" is considered to be definitive.

what to buy next: Rogers's second live album, *Home in Halifax* ♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1982, prod. Mark Andrew Cardiff), preserves the essence of his stage manner, including ongoing banter with his brother and constant sideman Garnet Rogers. It also includes a previously unrecorded Stan Rogers song "Sailor's Rest." And not to go unnoticed is the warm rapport between Rogers and the Halifax community, with which he shares family ties. *Turnaround* ♪♪♪½ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1978, prod. Paul Mills) shows a developing songwriter in some patchy efforts. But nonetheless there are diamonds in the rough. "Bluenose" showcases Rogers's exceptional knack for maritime rhyme: "Feel her bow rise free of Mother Sea, in a sunburst cloud of spray, that stings the cheek while the rigging will speak, of sea-miles gone away." And "The Jeannie C.," dedicated to the fishermen of Little Dover, Nova Scotia, features Garnet's characteristically solid fiddle. With *From Fresh Water* ♪♪♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1984, prod. Paul Mills), Rogers's songwriting came full circle around Canada, ending in the Great Lakes Region where he was raised. Released posthumously, this is Rogers's last major writing project—a keepsake for those who love him like family. In addition to the classics "Lock-Keeper," "White Squall," "The Last Watch," and "The Nancy," two protest songs are included: "Tiny Fish for Japan" and "The House of Orange."

what to avoid: *Poetic Justice* ♪♪ (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1996, prod. Bill Howell) consists of two old radio plays in which our dearly beloved participated. Rogers is gone . . . we all miss him. But this is digging a bit far.

worth searching for: Released just before Rogers's death, *For the Family* (Folk Tradition, 1983, prod. Stan Rogers) contains songs written by friends and family members. Happy hunting!

influences:

◀◀ Garnet Rogers, Jim Paine, Kelly Russell, Pete Seeger

▶▶ Garnet Rogers, Schooner Fare, Priscilla Herdman, Alan Reid & Brian MacNeil, Eric Bogle, John Gorka, Jerry Rau, Mary Travers

see also: *Garnet Rogers*

Art Wojtowicz

Tammy Rogers

Born January 18, 1965, Rogersville, TN.

Tammy Rogers's distinctive fiddle style has been heard on records by folks from Neil Diamond to the Jayhawks (she's even on the soundtrack to the film, *So I Married an Axe Murderer*!). But with two albums to her credit, she has established herself as one of the most versatile performers to emerge from Nashville during the 1990s. As business partner in the independent Dead Reckoning record label with Kevin Welch, Kieran Kane, Mike Henderson, and Harry Stinson, Rogers is one of the few women in Nashville to assume such a role.

what's available: *In the Red* ♪♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1995, prod. Tammy Rogers, Don Heffington, Kieran Kane, David Vaught) is a predominately instrumental duet album with ex–Lone Justice drummer Don Heffington. *Tammy Rogers* ♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1996, prod. Harry Stinson, Tammy Rogers) is a pleasant, well-produced follow-up that leans more heavily on Rogers's vocals and songwriting. It's marred only by her somewhat dispassionate vocal performance.

influences:

◀◀ Mark O'Connor, Alison Krauss

Stephen L. Betts

Linda Ronstadt

Born July 15, 1946, in Tucson, AZ.

Any assessment of Linda Ronstadt stands or falls upon how strongly you feel about songwriting as an artistic credential. If you believe that not writing your material is creative treason, Ronstadt will give you ulcers. But the profound influence of Ronstadt's singing mandates a place for her, along with such artists as Emmylou Harris, as a major voice in the 1970s fusion of folk, rock, and country. Where Harris leaned toward the mountain and bluegrass traditions, Ronstadt mined the throbbing, emotional territory once owned by Patsy Cline. In doing so, she established a model for any number of subsequent country-rock belters and future country divas. She arrived in Los Angeles at the end of the 1960s as singer for the Stone Poneys (Bobby Kimmel on guitar, Kenny Edwards on bass). With them, she scored her first chart success, 1967's "Different Drum," but the group broke up the following year. Ronstadt eventually emerged as princess of the California rock Mafia that included the Eagles, John David Souther, and Jackson Browne—a prominence that grew as she worked with producer Peter Asher. Their collaboration on 1974's *Heart like a Wheel* produced the Number One hit "You're No Good" and established Asher's trademark formula: torchy, country-tinged pop seasoned with oldies (Hank Williams, Buddy Holly) and untried material (Karla Bonoff, Kate & Anna McGarrigle). This approach made Ronstadt a force on both the pop and country charts for most of the 1970s. Nevertheless, her boredom with the game plan grew as the decade ended. Although she would release one more pure pop album (1982's *Get Closer*), she was beginning a period of experimentation that included a Broadway fling with Gilbert & Sullivan (*The Pirates of Penzance*), three big-band collections with conductor Nelson Riddle, and two albums of mariachi music.

what to buy: *Heart like a Wheel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1974, prod. Peter Asher) and *Prisoner in Disguise* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1975, prod. Peter Asher) exemplify Asher's influential production style and Ronstadt's emotional country rock. In the poignant title tunes, memorable duets with Harris, and carefully chosen remakes (such as Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' "Tracks of My Tears"), Ronstadt successfully walks the line dividing sadness from sappiness. Some of her best singing of the 1980s is on the spare, mountain-acoustic arrangements of *Trio* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1987, prod. George Massenburg), her collaboration with Harris and Dolly Parton.

what to buy next: *Hasten down the Wind* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1976, prod. Peter Asher) completes the 1970s trio of Ronstadt/Asher mega-successes and spotlights excellent songwriting by Bonoff and Warren Zevon. Those interested in pre-Asher Ronstadt should seek out *A Retrospective* ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1977), which collects the best of her early output.

what to avoid: *Mad Love* ♪♪ (Asylum, 1980, prod. Peter Asher) is an ill-advised foray into tough-posturing punk that kind of reminds one of the time the Girls' Citizenship president tried to smoke her first cigarette and swallowed instead of inhaling. Except for the rueful "Hurts So Bad," it's a yowl.

the rest:

(With the Stone Poneys) *Stone Poneys* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1967/1995)
(With the Stone Poneys) *Evergreen Volume 2* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1967)
Hand Sown, Home Grown ♪♪½ (Capitol/EMI, 1969)
Silk Purse ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1970)
Linda Ronstadt ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1972)
Don't Cry Now ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1973)
Greatest Hits Volume 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1975)
Simple Dreams ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1977)
Living in the USA ♪♪½ (Asylum, 1978)
Greatest Hits Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1980)
Get Closer ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1982)
What's New ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1983)
Lush Life ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1984)
For Sentimental Reason ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1986)
'Round Midnight: The Nelson Riddle Sessions ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1986)
Canciones De Mi Padre (Songs of My Father) ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1987)
(With Aaron Neville) *Cry like a Rainstorm, Howl like the Wind* ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1989)
Mas Canciones ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1991)
Frenesi ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1992)
Winter Light ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1993)
Feels like Home ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1995)
(With the Stone Poneys) *Stone Poneys and Friends, Volume 2* ♪♪½ (Capitol, 1995)
Dedicated to the One I Love ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1996)

worth searching for: Ronstadt has made myriad guest appearances on an assortment of albums. Two of the most interesting (and varied): Philip Glass's *1000 Airplanes* (Virgin Classics, 1989), on which her singing humanizes Glass's ethereal minimalism; and *Kermit Unplugged* (Jim Henson, 1994), on which she and the frog duet on "All I Have to Do Is Dream."

influences:

◀◀ Patsy Cline, Elvis Presley, Lola Beltran

▶▶ Trisha Yearwood, Kathy Mattea, Rosanne Cash

Elizabeth Lynch

Rooftop Singers

Formed 1962, in New York, NY; Disbanded 1967.

Erik Darling (born September 25, 1933, in Baltimore, MD), vocals, guitar, banjo; Bill Svanoe (born Willard Hooker Svanoe), vocals, guitar; Lynne Taylor (died 1982), vocals (1962–64); Mindy Stuart, vocals (1965–67).

Today remembered only for their infectious 1963 chart-topper "Walk Right In," the Rooftop Singers were in fact a musical amalgamation of impeccable pedigree and rare foresight. As they boldly stated on the back cover of their very first album, "We consider the main body of folk song as iron ore, so to speak, to be tempered into expressions of those things we wish to sing about," and with each member's varying musical backgrounds and abilities the results were never less than fascinating. After many years spent in the good musical employ of the Tarriers and the Weavers, as well as appearances as accompanist of choice on more than 30 other records by a wide range of artists, Erik Darling had finally completed an album of his own for Vanguard in 1962 when a tape arrived one day in the mail. On it, a young jazz vocalist named Lynne Taylor, fresh from stints with the Benny Goodman and Buddy Rich bands, had made a recording of herself singing harmony vocals along with each track off that very same album. Naturally intrigued, Darling sought her out and, along with his old friend Bill Svanoe, they came together, initially only to record a version of an old Gus Cannon Jug Stompers tune freshly arranged for 12-string guitar. Impulsively naming themselves the Rooftop Singers and letting Vanguard release the track, all parties involved were happily surprised to see "Walk Right In" quickly bolt to the Number One position nationwide within weeks of release. A successful appearance at the 1963 Newport Folk Festival led to four and a half years of worldwide touring, during which time they recorded three albums and did their fair share to help popularize the acoustic 12-string. Since their disbanding, Darling has continued performing and recording both as a solo artist and an accompanist, just as he had prior to the Rooftop Singers' brief but spectacular moment in the sun.

what's available: For a thoroughly enjoyable overview of their work, *The Best of the Rooftop Singers* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1992, comp. prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) presents a well-chosen 16 tracks from their trio of original, high-spirited long-players. "Working on the Railroad" is particularly infectious, in a *Sesame Street* sorta way, while Lynne Taylor's jazz training is put to good use on the Peggy-Lee-meets-the-Journeymen arrangement of Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean a Thing."

solo outings:

Erik Darling:

Border Town at Midnight ♪♪♪ (Folk Era Productions, 1994, prod. David Anthony)

influences:

◀◀ Kingston Trio, Leon S. Kurzer, Peter, Paul & Mary

▶▶ Seekers, Washington Squares, Satchel Lass Singers

Gary Pig Gold

Phil Rosenthal

See: Seldom Scene

John Rossbach

See: Mac Benford

Kevin Roth

Born December 1, 1957 in Philadelphia, PA.

Kevin Roth's career began at the age of 16, when his unique and innovative style of mountain dulcimer playing and singing was heard by Moses Asch, founder of the Folkways Records. In 1974 the first of his 12 recordings for Folkways was released, launching a distinctive and impressive career. His unusual dulcimer stylings, songwriting, and interpretive performance skills have all contributed to his popularity. In 1984 Roth's career took an unexpected turn. He recorded his first children's album, which won an American Literary Association award. Over the next 10 years, Roth recorded a dozen new recordings for family audiences, winning over a dozen awards and receiving critical acclaim from such magazines as *Entertainment Weekly, Parents, Good Housekeeping, American Baby,* and others. He has his own series of Random House publications called "Kevin Roth Presents" and his voice is heard daily singing the theme to the

hit PBS-TV show *Shining Time Station*. His concerts include performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra and at concert halls throughout the country, and several national television appearances. Roth's recordings can be purchased from Star Gazer Productions, P.O. Box 1637, Hockessin, Delaware 19707.

what to buy: Roth's latest recording for family audiences is *Now I Lay Me down to Sleep* ♪♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1996, prod. Kevin Roth) and features "lullabies for all ages." This is perhaps the best introduction to Roth's children's material and features nursery rhymes and Roth originals. His latest adult project is a new album titled *Searching for Angels* ♪♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1997, prod. Kevin Roth), featuring songs performed on the piano, dulcimer, and zither. For those more interested in Roth's dulcimer-playing, he has released a number of albums on Folkways that showcase his unusual style. Two good examples are *The Mountain Dulcimer Instrumental Album* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1977, prod. Kevin Roth) and *Mountain Dulcimer Instrumental Album, Volume II: The First Few Words* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1978, prod. Kevin Roth). Both are still in print and available in CD format and both offer compelling evidence of his prowess as a dulcimer player.

what to buy next: *Train Songs and Other Tracks* ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1996, prod. Kevin Roth) contains Roth's rendition of the *Shining Time Station* theme as well as 15 other train songs.

the rest:

Sings and Plays Dulcimer ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1975)
Somebody Give Me Direction ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1976)
The Other Side of the Mountain ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1976)
Dulcimer Instruction ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1979)
New Wind ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1980)
Women ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1981)
The Living and Breathing Wind ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1981)
Dulcimer Man ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1982)
The Quiet Times ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1982)
Don't Wait for Me and Songs of the First Decade ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1983)
Unbearable Bears ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1986)
The Secret Journey ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1987) (cassette only)
After the Rain ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1988) (cassette only)
The Sandman ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1989) (cassette only)
The Toy Maker's Christmas ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1989) (cassette only)
Strings of Joy ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1990) (cassette only)
Lullabies for Little Dreamers ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1990)
Camp and Fireside Songs ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions) (cassette only)
Dinosaurs and Dragons ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1992) (cassette only)
Animal Crackers and Other Tasty Tunes ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1992) (cassette only)
The Gentleness in Living ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1993)
Daddy Songs ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1993)
Travel Song Sing-Alongs ♪♪½ (Star Gazer Productions, 1994) (cassette only)
Adventures of Sir Rabbit & Bunny Junction Train Station ♪♪♪ (Star Gazer Productions, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Jean Ritchie, Richard Fariña, Shari Lewis

▶▶ Raffi, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer

Neal Walters

Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Formed 1991.

Sandy Rothman (born in Miami, FL), guitar; Steve Pottier (born in Denver, CO), guitar.

Sandy Rothman and Steve Pottier have had entirely separate careers, although they're both long established in the lively California bluegrass scene and have both garnered reputations as notable disciples of the great Clarence White. Their recent partnership grew naturally out of knowing and admiring each other for many years, and the result has been one memorable album of bluegrass guitar duets. A perusal of their respective resumes reveals a long history of inhabiting other people's liner notes. Rothman became a bluegrass habitué during the early '60s—in fact, in 1964 he and old friend Jerry Garcia drove halfway across the country together in a van following the Kentucky Colonels. He was already an alumnus of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys when he ended up in Boston that summer, and his experience rooming for a period with Clarence White (then the Colonels' guitarist) was a watershed experience in Rothman's musical career. He later spent time in Ohio with Earl Taylor's Stoney Mountain Boys, and with the B Natural Boys with Tom Ewing, another Monroe alumnus. Rothman also reunited with Garcia in Garcia's Acoustic Band during the late '80s, and has spent much time in Japan preaching the gospel of the "high, lonesome sound."

Pottier's career paralleled Rothman's in many ways. Although he became a White enthusiast a bit later and saw his hero play only a few times before White's death, he collected a nearly legendary personal library of Colonels recordings and made a deep study of the unique guitarist's style, a facility for which he's still known. Pottier is also a veteran of many influential Bay Area bands, including Done Gone and High Country. The

story goes that Pottier started coming around and visiting Rothman in 1991, convincing him to play some guitar again (Rothman had become better known as a banjo player). A few solo engagements went well enough to convince them to hit the recording studio, issuing an album in the spirit and memory of their hero and mentor, Clarence White.

what's available: When you listen to these two guys play, and you find yourself savoring not just the sweet, woody notes that come out but the *spaces between them,* you know the spirit of Clarence White lives on in *Bluegrass Guitar Duets* ♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1994, prod. Sandy Rothman, Steve Pottier). Originally issued in 1991 on LP, this ingratiating set of acoustic guitar duets feels as relaxed, spontaneous, and simpatico as if performed while sitting on the front porch. It's said that White could knock people out with the notes he didn't play—and while this album is by no means a run-through of his repertoire (none of the tunes here are White's or are particularly associated with him), the understated punch these two players provide show they've learned from the master well. In a musical landscape ruled by a fastest-gun-in-the-West mentality, this is a cool breeze indeed.

influences:

◀◀ Clarence White, Doc Watson, Don Reno, George Shuffler, Larry Sparks

▶▶ Steve Kaufman, David Grier, Scott Nygaard

Chris Rietz

Peter Rowan

Born July 4, 1962, in Boston, MA.

Raised in a household of musical fanatics, multi-instrumentalist/songwriter Peter Rowan's career is filled with the gyrations of someone unwilling to settle into any one musical form and excelling at all of them. Reared on the Boston folk circuit in the outfit Mother Bay State Entertainers, Rowan first made his bluegrass mark nationally singing and playing guitar for Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys during the mid-1960s. Torn by the experimental musical offshoots of the latter part of that decade, Rowan hooked up with mandolinist David Grisman (the beginning of a 30-year relationship) and formed Earth Opera, scoring a minor chart hit in 1969 with "Home to You." He would find greater commercial viability with the acoustic-fusion Seatrain a few years later before forming the on-again-off-again Rowan Brothers with siblings Chris and Lorin. A live 1973 bluegrass show at San Francisco's Boarding House featuring Rowan, Grisman, Jerry Garcia, Vassar Clements, and John Kahn became the highly regarded one-off *Old and in the Way* album, highlighted by a pair of Rowan songwriting gems, "Midnight Moonlight" and "Panama Red" (both covered by New Riders of the Purple Sage, who also recorded Rowan's "LA Cowboy"). Since that time Rowan's projects have included yet another bluegrass amalgam, *Muleskinner; Mexican Air Force* featuring accordionist Flaco Jimenez (continuing a life-long love of Tex-Mex soundings); as well as the Wild Stallions.

what to buy: Proof of Rowan's durability is the fact that his most recent release, *Bluegrass Boy* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Peter Rowan, Jim Rooney), is as satisfying as anything he's done, and therefore not a bad place to start. Joining Rowan on this set of quality bluegrass standards and originals is Laurie Lewis, Del McCoury, plus old Seatrain cohort Richard Greene.

what to buy next: Those who've longed for another set of Old and in the Way can run out and grab *High Lonesome Sound* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1996, prod. David Grisman), which unearths more supple sounds of Rowan, Garcia, Grisman, Clements, and Kahn from the Boarding House in October 1973.

the rest:

Peter Rowan ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978)
Medicine Trail ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1980)
Texican Badman ♪♪♪ (Appaloosa, 1981)
Walls of Time ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1981)
Peter Rowan with the Red Hot Pickers ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1984/1995)
The First Whippoorwill ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1985)
New Moon Rising ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Dust Bowl Children ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
All on a Rising Day ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991)
Awake Me in the New World ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993)
(With the Rowan Brothers) *Tree on a Hill* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)
(With Jerry Douglas) *Yonder* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Great American Eagle Tragedy* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1969, prod. Peter K. Siegel), a sort of Boston-psychedelia-meets acoustic-bluegrass set, includes the chart-scraper "Home to You."

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Beatles, Jerry Garcia

▶▶ John Dawson, Nashville Bluegrass Band

David Simons

Tom Rozum

See: Laurie Lewis

Rude Girls

Formed in New England, ca 1985. Disbanded 1991.

Lyn Hardy, guitar, vocals, banjo, percussion; Selma Kaplan, piano, keyboard, accordion, vocals; Debby Saperstone, autoharp, vocals; other members include Donna Hébert, vocals, fiddle, viola.

Rude Girls was a New England–based group that flourished during the late 1980s. There's a reason they were called Rude Girls. Maybe it's explained by some of the songs on *Mixed Messages*: "Safety First," about condoms; "Rag on Blues," about a lousy time of the month; and "I Can See Your Aura," about—well, about a really ugly aura. But the music of this bluegrass-based group was sweet and friendly.

what's available: *Mixed Messages* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Abby Newton) is mixed to be sure. It opens with a song about safe sex, then detours into trad territory with "Run the Riggin'." From there the composers range from Richard Thompson ("Dimming of the Day") to Ronee Blakley ("She Lays It on the Line"). Guests include Abby Newton on cello and Molly Mason on bass. *Rude Awakening* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987, prod. Cathy Fink) has a more consistent bluegrass sound and more instrumentals, perhaps because of the presence of string wizard Hébert.

influences:

◀◀ Ronnie Gilbert, Tom Lehrer

▶▶ Chenille Sisters, Iona, Venus Envy

Pamela Murray Winters

Runrig

Formed 1973.

Rory MacDonald, bass, vocals, accordion (1973–present); Calum MacDonald, percussion, vocals (1973–present); Blair Douglas, accordion (1973–74, 1978–79); Donnie Munro, vocals (1973–97); Robert MacDonald; Malcolm Jones, guitars, accordion, pipes, hurdy gurdy, whistle, jaw's harp (1979–present); Richard Cherns, keyboards (1981–86); Iain Bayne, drums, percussion, timpani (1984–present); Peter Washart, keyboards, keyboard programming (1986–present).

Beginning as a university band playing traditional dance tunes, Runrig has come a long way in 25 years. Their Gaelic folk-rock anthems (with emotional lyrics commenting on social and political conditions past and present) have won them a huge following in Scotland, where their concerts fill large stadium-like venues. Late in the summer of 1997, longtime vocalist Donnie Munro left Runrig to pursue a career in politics.

what's available: Although Runrig's 1988 release *The Cutter and the Clan* was issued in the United States by Chrysalis, it is only available now as an import. The only Runrig album presently licensed to a U.S.-based label is *Maral* ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1995/Avalanche Communications, 1996, prod. Brian Young, Runrig). It's pretty standard late-period Runrig, with Munro's charismatic voice leading the charge over the instrumentalists' energetic, rocked-up march rhythms. "Lighthouse" is a really effective track, not as bombastic as several others, but with a melody that remains in your mind long after the first time you hear it. The thoughtful lyrics use the metaphor of a lighthouse as a refuge to relate modern feelings of alienation and confusion.

worth searching for: If you can find it as an import, *The Cutter and the Clan* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1988) is worth picking up. It contains two really strong songs with environmental themes: "Protect and Survive" and "Our Earth Was Once Green."

influences:

◀◀ Dick Gaughan, Battlefield Band, Tannahill Weavers, Fairport Convention, Bruce Springsteen, Five Hand Reel

▶▶ Capercaillie, Oyster Band, Billy Bragg, Rawlins Cross, Wolfstone

Ken Roseman

Kate Rusby

Born 1974, in Yorkshire, England.

A charter member of the 1990s English folk scene's "brat pack," vocalist Kate Rusby has made quite a name for herself in just a few short years. In 1993 she recorded several tracks for *Intuition*, a sampler featuring women singers from Yorkshire. That same year Rusby started working in a duo with Kathryn Roberts. The duo actively toured for two years and produced one album, *Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts*. Then came big changes. Rusby and Roberts teamed up with fellow bratpackers the Lakeman Brothers (a predominantly instrumental trio) to form a super-group called the Equation. Expectations and hopes were high, but that really wasn't a comfortable situation for Rusby. As she explained an interview with Scottish magazine *Living Tradition:* "we joined up with the Lakeman Brothers and called ourselves The Equation and tried to get some bigger gigs, because they didn't have a singer and we wanted to make a bigger sound. It was a good set up but after a while we were offered a deal from a major recording company. I didn't want to go into pop music, but they did, so I left." Instead, Rusby

joined the Poozies, an all-female band (Karen Tweed, accordion, backing vocals; Patsy Seddon, lead and backing vocals, gut-strung harp, electro-harp, fiddle; Mary MacMaster, lead and backing vocals, metal strung harp, electro-harp) whose main singer, Sally Barker, had left to have a baby. In addition to her commitments with the Poozies, the busy Rusby has also developed quite a solo career. She guested on the Battlefield Band's *Quiet Days* and sang two songs for the soundtrack album for the television series *Sharpe*. In 1997 she released her first solo album, *Hourglass*.

what's available: So far, Rusby has only been involved with two full-length recordings. *Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts* ♪♪♪♪ (Pure Records, 1995, prod. John McCusker) came first and shows that the two Yorkshire lasses were quite effective as a duo, sounding a bit like Maddy Prior and June Tabor's incarnation as the Silly Sisters, but with sparser, more acoustic instrumental arrangements. Rusby's solo effort, *Hourglass* ♪♪♪♪ (Pure Records, 1997, prod, John McCusker), continues in a similar vein, with spare, acoustic settings and a focus on traditional material. There's a particularly fine version of "Bold Riley" where Rusby's voice is complemented perfectly by Andy Cutting's tasteful accordion playing.

worth searching for: Rusby is featured on three tracks of the *Intuition* ♪♪♪♪ (Fat Cat, 1993) sampler, one of which is a great rendition of the well-known ballad "Bonny Light Horseman." And just to show she's not always a pure traditionalist, she also sings lead on a lovely rendition of Mary Chapin Carpenter's "The Moon and St. Christopher," with Kathryn Roberts on piano and backing vocals by Pat Shaw and Julie Matthews. The *Sharpe* series soundtrack is on *Over the Hills and Far Away: The Music of Sharpe* ♪♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1996).

influences:

⏮ Nic Jones, Nanci Griffith, June Tabor, Annie Briggs, Robin & Barry Dransfield, Watersons, Dave Burland

⏭ Eliza Carthy, Sileas, Poozies

Ken Roseman

Tom Rush

Born February 8, 1941, in Portsmouth, NH.

Tom Rush began his performing career in the Boston area during the early 1960s while attending Harvard. Even before graduating in 1963, he had become a fixture on the coffeehouse and college circuit. Mixing blues and traditional songs, his early recordings were released on the Prestige label, but it wasn't until signing with Elektra that Rush and his sweet, interpretive tenor began reaching a wider audience. His self-titled debut album featured a bottleneck guitar tribute to Bukka White. His second Elektra set, 1966's *Take a Little Walk with Me*, showed Rush's more electric side and featured compositions by Bo Diddley and Buddy Holly and arrangements by Al Kooper. 1968's *The Circle Game*, with its poignant originals, interpretations of material by then-unknowns Jackson Browne and Joni Mitchell, and cover art by Linda (later-to-become-McCartney) Eastman, was a commercial and artistic career highlight. Rush moved to Columbia in 1970 where he recorded a series of albums that marry country, blues, and folk with charming and disarming ease. He has always been visionary in his choice of material, and his voice sounds as rich, soothing, and inviting today as it did when he first played Cambridge's tiny Club 47. In the early '80s, when folk singers no longer hit the charts (and Rush had already enjoyed eight hit albums), he formed his own management company, booking agency, and record label. He then sold out three consecutive concerts at Boston's Symphony Hall, documented on 1982's *Tom Rush: New Year*. Today, still sounding as vibrant and youthful as ever, Rush continues to play venues large and small. Over the years, Rush has not only been synonymous with contemporary folk music, but he's an artist's artist, cited by stars including Garth Brooks and James Taylor as a major influence.

what to buy: The gentle classic *The Circle Game* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1968, prod. Arthur Gorson) shows Rush's growth as a songwriter, and features his gorgeous instrumental "Rockport Sunday" and "No Regrets," a song about coming to terms with a heartbreaking break-up that sounds as fresh today as it did upon release 30 years ago. But *Circle Game* also finds Rush with a knack for discovering and interpreting songs by just-emerging songwriters Jackson Browne ("Shadow Dream Song"), Joni Mitchell ("Urge for Going," "Tin Angel," "The Circle Game"), and James Taylor ("Something in the Way She Moves," "Sunshine Sunshine") with distinction.

what to buy next: In his liner notes to *Tom Rush: New Year/Live at Symphony Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Night Light Recordings, 1982, prod. B.R.V. Productions, Inc., Glenn Berger), Rush writes, "Symphony Hall, set up cabaret-style, is about as close to heaven-on-earth as a performer can get." With a stellar back-up band and a program of classic Rush material, including the six-and-a-half-minute "Urge for Going" finale, this concert album is a treasure. *The Best of Tom Rush* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1975, prod. Ed Freeman, Tom Rush, Mark Spector, David Briggs) contains highlights from Rush's early-'70s Columbia years, including "These

Days," "Ladies Love Outlaws," and his intimate interpretation of Murray McLauchlan's haunting, coming-of-age "Child's Song," originally included on Rush's self-titled 1970 Columbia release.

the rest:
At the Unicorn ♪♪♪ (Night Light Recordings, 1962)
Blues, Songs, and Ballads ♪♪♪½ (Prestige, 1963/Fantasy, 1989)
Tom Rush ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1970)
Ladies Love Outlaws ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974)
Late Night Radio ♪♪♪½ (Night Light Recordings, 1984)

worth searching for: Released on his own label, *Work in Progress* ♪♪♪½ (Night Light Recordings, 1994, prod. Trevor Veitch, Glen Jordan) is a behind-the-scenes, limited edition, close-up of modern-day Rush, who describes this collection as "a kind of sketch book" of six songs in various stages of completion. It may not be slick, but it captures the singer in fine voice, tackling some pretty heavy issues, including survival and true friendship.

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Eric Von Schmidt
▶▶ Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Garth Brooks

David Sokol

Russell Family

Formed 1972, in Pipers Gap, VA.

Roscoe Russell, Galax-style dulcimer, ukulele; Bonnie Russell, Galax-style dulcimer; Roy Russell, guitar.

The Russell Family from Pipers Gap, Virginia, performs traditional music featuring the Galax-style mountain dulcimer, so called because this particular instrument is associated primarily with the Galax, Virginia, area. The instrument has a double bottom (for volume), a tear-drop shape, and all four strings are commonly tuned in unison, either to D (to play in the keys of D and G) or to E (to play in the keys of E and A). The Russells have strong first-hand ties with the formidable Galax dulcimer tradition. Ruth Russell, Roscoe's wife and mother to Bonnie and Roy, is the daughter of Jacob and Lina Melton, both of whom were recorded in 1937 by the Library of Congress, and members of the Melton family have been among the leading makers and players of dulcimers in the Galax tradition for generations. Bonnie Russell, whose dulcimer playing is the highlight of their only album release, was only 13 years old at the time *Mountain Dulcimer Galax Style* was originally released in 1972, but she exhibited a mastery of her instrument rarely equaled by performers of any age. In these days of youthful "phenoms," it is not unusual for someone as young as Bonnie to be so accomplished a musician but, in the words of Richard Nevins, "it is quite uncommon for mountain music to be as impressively ardent and incisive as Bonnie's is."

what's available: *Mountain Music Galax Style* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1972/1994, prod. Richard Nevins) is a marvelous recording spotlighting the vitality, drive, and sureness of Bonnie Russell's dulcimer playing. Roscoe Russell adds impressive backup on an unusual mountain instrument—the three-string ukulele—masterfully played in a three-finger style. This is a seminal recording of traditional dulcimer music that anyone who is interested in the genre should own.

influences:
◀◀ Jacob Melton, Raymond Melton
▶▶ Phyllis Gaskins

Neal Walters

Tom Russell

Born February 8, 1955, in Oklahoma City, OK.

Tom Russell may be best known for "Outbound Plane," which he wrote with Nanci Griffith and which became a Top 10 hit for country artist Suzy Bogguss in 1993. However, his story is more complex than that. After growing up in California, he began his career playing strip joints in Vancouver, British Columbia before moving to Austin, Texas and recording two albums with pianist Patricia Hardin. He then quit the business and moved to New York to write novels. Eventually he started playing again and later toured Europe as a cowboy singer in a Puerto Rican carnival. He recorded three albums in Norway before finally establishing himself in the States. Russell's songs are literate and literary: his best songs are narratives, often involving real people. "Blue Wing" is about a man who was once jailed with blues great Little Willie John; "William Faulkner in Hollywood" traces the novelist's disastrous run at writing screenplays to pay off Southern loan sharks; and "Haley's Comet" (written with Dave Alvin) traces the downward spiral of rock 'n' roll progenitor Bill Haley. Russell has also worked as a producer, and in 1995 he co-produced the best of the Merle Haggard tribute albums, *Tulare Dust*.

what to buy: *Poor Man's Dream* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1989, prod. Andrew Hardin, Charles Caldarola, Tom Russell, Jonas Fjeld) contains Russell's original version of "Outbound Plane" plus the narrative "Blue Wing" and two salt-of-the-earth anthems, "The

rusty & doug

Heart of the Working Man" and "Veteran's Day." And don't discount "Gallo Del Cielo," perhaps the best song ever written about a cock fight. *Hurricane Season* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1991, prod. Tom Russell, Andrew Hardin) cuts a wide cultural swath, name-checking Argentinean composer Astor Piazzolla and boxing legend Jack Johnson. The album also features Russell and Alvin's ode to Bill Haley and includes one of Russell's best non-narrative songs, "Beyond the Blues," co-written with Peter Case and Bob Neuwirth.

what to buy next: *Cowboy Real* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1992, prod. Tom Russell) is a charming collection of mostly original cowboy-style songs, and it includes two duets with folk great Ian Tyson, notably "Navajo Rug," which was the 1987 Country Music Association single of the year. To get a feel for Russell's full range as a writer and performer, check out one of two albums he has recorded with R&B wild man Barrence Whitfield: *Hillbilly Voodoo* ♪♪♪½ (East Side Digital, 1993, prod. Tom Russell) has a loose, roadhouse feel and a terrific song list that includes Bob Dylan's "Blind Willie McTell," Jesse Winchester's "Mississippi, You've Been on My Mind," and Jimmy Driftwood's "What Is the Color of the Soul of a Man?"

the rest:
Road to Bayamon ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Box of Visions ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1993)
(With Barrence Whitfield) *Cowboy Mambo* ♪♪♪ (East Side Digital, 1994)
Rose of the San Joaquin ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1995)
Songs of the West: Cowboy Collection ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1997)
The Long Way Around ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1997)

worth searching for: The import-only release *The Early Years: 1975–79* ♪♪♪ (Dark Angel, 1994), which Russell recorded with Patricia Hardin, combines the duo's early efforts, *Ring of Bone* and *Wax Museum*, plus bonus tracks. *Beyond St. Olav's Gate, 1979–92* ♪♪♪♪ (Round Tower, 1992) is an import-only best-of collection. Russell's debut as a solo artist, *Heart on a Sleeve* ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1984), has never been issued in the United States.

influences:
Merle Travis, Merle Haggard, Bob Dylan, Gram Parsons, William Faulkner

Nanci Griffith, Dave Alvin

Daniel Durchholz

Rusty & Doug

See: Doug Kershaw

Sonia Rutstein

See: disappear fear

Cathie Ryan

Born November 26, 1959, in Detroit, MI.

In recent years there has been a resurgent interest in female performers of Celtic music. No wonder; with voices as haunting and mystical as that of harpist Aine Minogue, Canadian songstress Loreena McKennitt, or the ever present Celtic/New Age performer Enya, the sound is stunningly beautiful and captivating. One of the latest upon the scene is Detroit native Cathie Ryan, formerly the lead singer of the renowned New York group Cherish the Ladies. Ryan's parents were from Kerry and Tipperary, Ireland, and Ryan gained much of her Irish musical influence from her grandmother and her own father, a singer at the Gaelic League and Irish American Club. They taught her the value of choosing the right songs. From age seven she learned the *sean nós* (pronounced "shan-nos") unaccompanied singing style and participated in All-Ireland competitions. Eventually Ryan moved to New York, where she studied under legendary sean nós singer Joe Heaney. She gained other influences in her music, however, from friends who were fans of country music, Motown, and traditional blues. Eventually, Cherish the Ladies' director and flutist Joannie Madden, who had heard Ryan sing at a party, asked Ryan to join the troupe. She spent seven years with Cherish the Ladies, singing and playing bodhrán (Irish drum) before moving on to a solo career with New Jersey–based Shanachie Records.

what's available: Ryan is nothing less than phenomenal on her self-titled debut *Cathie Ryan* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Seamus Egan). She sings in a variety of Celtic styles, from traditional Gaelic to contemporary, her voice gracing melodies by Dougie Maclean, Dave Swarbrick, and Ralph McTell, as well as the steady, buoyant rhythms of her own "Eveline," inspired by James Joyce. Particularly good is the sadly affecting love poem by John Frazier and Sean Tyrrell, "The 12th of July (Lament for the Children)," which calls for unity among people: "Your badge my patriot brother /It's the everlasting green for me /And we for one another." Though the sean nós singing she is known for is present here, so are Ryan's American influences, the rhythms and styles that have shaped the rest of her career.

worth searching for: Recorded during her tenure with Cherish the Ladies, *The Back Door* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Gabrielle Donohue, Ilene Ivers) is titled for Ryan's song, a tribute to Irish immigrants in the United States. Another effort wor-

thy of a concerted search is the Ladies' *Out and About* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Johnny Cunningham).

influences:

◀◀ Hank Williams, Emmylou Harris, Joe Heaney, Delores Keane, her grandparents

see also: *Cherish the Ladies*

Stephen Ide

Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Formed 1990, in Fredericksburg, VA.

Ann Rabson, vocals, piano, guitar; Gaye Adegbalola, vocals, guitar, harmonica, percussion; Earlene Lewis, vocals, bass (1990–91); Andra Faye McIntosh, vocals, fiddle, mandolin, guitar, bass (1994–present).

Saffire could easily have depended only on the gimmick of being a women's blues band. Fortunately, they're too talented for that. The group's central member is the wizardly Ann Rabson, whose deep voice and boogie-woogie piano sets the tone for the rest of the group. (Amazingly, Rabson didn't begin concentrating on piano playing until the 1980s.) Gaye Adegbalola and Andra Faye McIntosh play a variety of instruments and provide strong lead and harmony vocals.

what to buy: *Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women* ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1990, prod. Saffire, Bruce Iglauer) is representative of the group's best work. Highlights include the group's best-known song, "Middle-Aged Blues Boogie," which won composer Adegbalola a W.C. Handy Award for Song of the Year.

what to buy next: *Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue* ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1994, prod. Saffire, Bruce Iglauer) is worth a listen for new member McIntosh's bluegrassy instrumental touches and Rabson's excellent cover of "'T'aint Nobody's Business."

the rest:
Hot Flash ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1991)
Broadcasting ♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1992)
Cleaning House ♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1996)

editor's choice
11 country/folk albums

Peter Rowan, *Dust Bowl Children* (Sugar Hill)
Terri Allard, *Rough Lines* (Reckless Abandon)
Barry & Holly Tashian, *Harmony* (Rounder)
Ian & Sylvia, *Nashville* (Vanguard)
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar, *Take Me Up* (Rolling Robin)
Kevin Maul, *Toolshed* (Mandala Hand)
Laurie Lewis, *Earth and Sky* (Rounder)
Crowe & McLaughlin, *Going Back* (Rounder)
Bob Dylan, *Nashville Skyline* (Columbia)
Todd Phillips, *In the Pines* (Gourd)
Laurie Lewis & Tom Rozum, *The Oak and the Laurel* (Rounder)

worth searching for: *The Alligator Records Christmas Collection* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Alligator, 1992) contains Saffire's rendition of Adegbalola's "One-Parent Christmas."

solo outings:
Ann Rabson:
Music Makin' Mama ♪♪♪♪½ (Alligator, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Big Mama Thornton, Pinetop Perkins, Koko Taylor, Willie Dixon

▶▶ Satan & Adam

Pamela Murray Winters

Buffy Sainte-Marie

Born February 20, 1941, in Piapot Reserve, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The anti-war and pro–Native American anthems that Buffy Sainte-Marie sang during the 1960s has given way to soundtrack composing, *Sesame Street* appearances, and a doctorate of fine arts. Her fourteenth album, *Coincidences and Likely Stories*, reveals a continued strength in her songwriting and singing. Born to full-blooded Cree Indians on an Indian reservation in Saskatchewan, Canada, Sainte-Marie was orphaned and adopted as an infant, and raised in Massachusetts. Her interest

buffy sainte-marie

in music was sparked while attending the University of Massachusetts. After graduating with a degree in Oriental philosophy, she moved to New York's Greenwich Village and became enraptured by the folk-music scene. Following a guest performance at an open mic at the Gaslight Cafe, she signed a management deal and began touring throughout the East Coast. Signed by Vanguard, Sainte-Marie recorded her first album, *It's My Way*, in 1964. Highlighted by her chilling survey of Native American struggles, "Now That the Buffalo's Gone," the album helped to spread the word of her potent songwriting. Sainte-Marie's greatest success came in 1966 when her song "Universal Soldier" was recorded by folk-pop singer Donovan and became an anthem of the growing anti-war movement. Sainte-Marie's songs have subsequently been covered by vocalists ranging from Neil Diamond to Glen Campbell. Topical songs represent only a portion of her repertoire. While her early albums took a sparsely produced, acoustic folk approach, she has increasingly broadened her musical palette. *Fire and Fleet and Candlelight*, her 1967 album, included one of the earliest interpretations of Joni Mitchell's "Circle Game," while *I'm Gonna Be a Country Girl Again* was recorded the following year in Nashville and reflected Sainte-Marie's love of country music. Beginning during the late 1970s, Sainte-Marie, who had settled in Hawaii, and her son, Dakota Starblanket Wolfchild, were regulars on *Sesame Street*, singing about a variety of social and political issues. Composer of soundtracks for such films as *Starman*, *Jewel of the Nile*, and *9 1/2 Weeks*, she received an Oscar in 1982 as co-writer of "Up Where We Belong," the theme song of the film *An Officer and a Gentleman*, produced by her husband, Jack Nitzche.

what to buy: Sainte-Marie's debut album, *It's My Way!* ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1964) remains one of folk music's most chilling recordings. Accompanying her tremolo-heavy alto on acoustic guitar and mouth bow, Sainte-Marie takes direct aim at U.S. society. The opening track, "Now That the Buffalo's Gone," is a haunting overview of Native American history, while "The Universal Soldier," later a hit for Donovan, became a theme song of the anti-war movement.

what to buy next: Recorded in Nashville, *I'm Gonna Be a Country Girl Again* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968, prod. Bob Lurie, Maynard Solomon) pays tribute to Sainte-Marie's country music influences. Accompanied by Nashville session players, including Grady Martin (electric guitar), Junior Huskey (bass), Floyd Cramer (piano), and Sonny Osborne (banjo), she shows her mastery of rural music and pre-dates Dylan's *Nashville Skyline* by a year.

the rest:
Many a Mile ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
Little Wheel, Spin and Spin ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1966)
Fire and Fleet and Candlelight ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1967)
Illuminations ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1969)
The Best of Buffy Sainte-Marie, Volume I ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970)
She Used to Be a Ballerina ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1971)
Moonshot ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1972)
Quiet Places ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1973)
Buffy ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1974)
Native North American Child (An Odyssey) ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1974)
Changing Woman ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1975)
Sweet America ♪♪ (Vanguard, 1976)
Coincidence and Likely Stories ♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1992)
Up Where We Belong ♪♪♪ (EMI, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Joan Baez
▶▶ Joni Mitchell, Donovan

Craig Harris

Salamander Crossing

Formed 1991, in Amherst, MA.

Andrew Kinsey, bass, vocals; Rani Arbo, fiddle, viola, vocals; Jeff Kelliher, guitar, harmonica, vocals; Tim Farnham, banjo.

This New England quartet infuses spirited and melodic originals and songs by artists ranging from Tim O'Brien to the Beatles with a strong respect for bluegrass tradition to evoke a folky back-porch friendliness. Its reverential but contemporary sound has made Salamander Crossing a favorite on the festival circuit. Dobro/banjo wizard Tony Furtado guests on *Passion Train*.

what to buy: *Salamander Crossing* ♪♪♪ (Signature Sounds, 1995, prod. Guy DeVito), the group's debut album, is an inviting collection of rootsy contemporary folk played with living-room informality. *Passion Train* ♪♪♪ (Signature Sounds, 1996, prod. Brooks Williams), the group's second album, reached the Top 10 of the Americana chart with its friendly mix of evocative original songs and nods to Bill Monroe and Bruce Springsteen.

the rest:
Bottleneck Dreams ♪♪♪♪ (Signature Sounds, 1998)

Saffire **(Photo by Marc Norberg)**

les sampou

influences:

Bill Monroe, Seldom Scene

Blue Highway

David Sokol

Les Sampou

Born November 4, 1961, in Norwalk, CT.

Les Sampou's music reflects blues, folk, and rock influences. Although she's been compared with Bonnie Raitt and Rory Block, Sampou has created her own unique eclectic sound. Raised in a suburb of Boston, she toyed with her father's guitar and taught herself to play harmonica as a youngster. Although she became a regular concert-goer, she didn't take music seriously until attending a show by Ellen McIlwaine at the Harvard Square folk music coffeehouse Passims. Inspired by McIlwaine's dynamic performance, she became a devoted guitar student of Boston-based acoustic blues master Paul Rishell. Sampou's debut album, *Sweet Perfume*, was hailed as one of the top acoustic albums of 1993. She continued to evolve the following year when she participated in Christine Lavin's songwriting retreat on Martha's Vineyard and was a finalist in the Boston Acoustic Underground Competition. In addition to being named New Folk Artist of the Year by radio station WUMB-FM in Boston, she won the prestigious New Folk award at the Kerrville Festival in Texas. Sampou has continued to evolve with her second album, *Fall from Grace*.

what to buy: With her second album, *Fall from Grace* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1996, prod. Mason Daring), Sampou took a further step as a songwriter with all original material. Although less blues-oriented than *Sweet Perfume*, the album showed that she'd lost none of the gutsy fire of her earlier work. Accompanied by former Muddy Waters harmonica player Jerry Portnoy and guitarist Duke Levine, Sampou emerged as a powerful songsmith. She offers a sensitive view at life in a trailer park ("Holy Land") and provides insightful looks at difficult relationships in "The Things I Should've Said," "Weather Vane," and "I Already Know." While the emphasis is on folk-rooted songs, the blues remained an important ingredient of Sampou's repertoire. "Bulls-Eye" is a hard-rocking blues tune featuring Portnoy on harmonica.

what to buy next: Sampou's debut album, *Sweet Perfume* ♪♪♪ (MoNando, 1993, prod. Les Sampou, Paul Caruso), marked her as a promising newcomer. With instrumental support by such stellar players as Johnny Cunningham (fiddle), James Montgomery (harmonica), and Tim Archibald (bass), she displayed her songwriting skills, with such tunes as "Chinatown" and the title track, and showed her interpretative talents with soulful renditions of Robert Johnson's "Traveling Blues" and Bessie Smith's "It Won't Be You."

influences:

Ellen McIlwaine, Bonnie Raitt, Rory Block, Paul Rishell

Anni Clark, Maria Sangiolo, Barbara Kessler

Craig Harris

Tommy Sands

Born in Rostrevor, Co. Down, Ireland.

Tommy Sands is a singer, a guitarist, and one of Ireland's truly great songwriters. His songs deal most often with questions of reconciliation, personal and political, and it's no surprise; the small farm in war-torn Northern Ireland where he grew up with his parents and six siblings was often the locus where Catholics and Protestants got together in friendly, intimate circumstances for music, dancing, and fun. His father and six uncles all played the fiddle, his mother played the accordion, and his six aunts lilted for dances, so there was never an absence of music. His first recollections of tunes and songs are from a time when he was too young to participate; he would hear the music of the session coming in under the bedroom door. Catholics and Protestants making music together demonstrated to the young Sands children that the lines drawn between us by political allegiance are artificial, and that they can be transcended by ordinary people.

The sessions also gave Sands his start as a musician and songwriter. After taking up the fiddle for a while, he became more interested in singing, and eventually in songwriting, which he initially saw as a direct outgrowth of traditional music, marking a continuity of traditional creativity. Sands left the farm to go to college, where he studied philosophy and theology. He was nearing home on his final return from university, unsure of his future, wondering if he'd end up working in the ditches like the men he passed along the way, when a black taxi filled with his siblings passed him going the other way. It stopped, and his brother Colum rolled the window down. "We're going to play a concert," he said. "We've got your guitar in the back of the car." Tommy hopped in the taxi, and became a professional musician. The Sands Family, composed of Tommy, Eugene, Ben, Colum, and Ann Sands, all siblings, became one of the great groups of the 1960s and 1970s

Irish folk revival. Tommy remembers feeling the influence of the Clancy Brothers, as well as that of American folk music, people like Pete Seeger and Joan Baez. A first-place award in a national ballad-group contest won them a concert trip to New York City in 1970; eventually they were playing Carnegie Hall. But the political troubles at home made the family want to stay closer to Ireland, so most of their touring over the years was in Europe. During one of those tours, in 1975, tragedy struck the family. Their youngest brother, Eugene (or Dino, as he was known), was killed in an auto accident going from gig to gig. After that, the family's professional life underwent some major changes. Ann didn't have the heart to tour Germany anymore, so any family tours there were restricted to the three brothers, Ben, Colum, and Tommy. Meanwhile, Tommy had started his weekly radio program, which is now well into its second decade. The Sands Family, after 14 albums and numerous tours, was reunited as a professional group only once a year for the summer music festivals in Ireland. And Tommy started to tour the world on his own. This situation, for the most part, prevails to this day. Sands can often be seen in the United States, touring on his own, occasionally with the Green Fields of America, with Mick Moloney, or with accordion player Mairtin O'Connor.

what to buy: *Singing of the Times* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1989, prod. Colum Sands) features two of Tommy's best-known political songs, "There Were Roses" and "Daughters and Sons." The first of these is probably his most powerful song of all; it recalls a sad event in Sands's youth when two of his friends, a Catholic and a Protestant, were murdered in the Northern Irish "troubles." Another nice touch is the inclusion of some old Sands Family tracks, two of which feature the late Dino Sands. Backing musicians, in addition to the Sands family, include Dónal Lunny (bouzouki), Arty McGlynn (guitar), Nollaig Casey (fiddle), and Desi Wilkinson (flute).

what to buy next: *Beyond the Shadows* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Tommy Sands, Colum Sands, Kieran Goss) has several challenging songs on it. "1999" is a call for peace in Northern Ireland, as urgent today after the "cease-fire" as it was in 1992. "Dresden" explores the feelings of people who have suffered under oppression their whole lives. From the Nazis to the allied bombardment to occupation to the Iron Curtain, and finally to the toppling of the Berlin wall, the song follows the story of one small family. Like "There Were Roses," both are quiet and sad songs that don't preach. *Beyond the Shadows* also features Sands's rollicking emigration ballad, "When the Boys Come Rolling Home," and his piece about Sean O'Casey, "Shadow of O'Casey." Guests this time include Steve Cooney (guitar, bass, keyboards), Martin O'Connor (button accordion), and Tao Seeger (voice and percussion). Sands's third album, *The Heart's a Wonder* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Tommy Sands), also explores these themes. Like everyone in Northern Ireland, he views the recent cease-fires as a reason to hope for the future. He knows, however, that a solution will only be reached by hard work. "No matter what the eventual solution is to be," he says, "ordinary people have to learn to live together." To that end, he has written "The Music of Healing," his most celebrated song since "There Were Roses." It is a plea for understanding, for love, and for peace. In its refrain, "sing me the music of healing," it crystallizes the prayers of many Irish people. Another of his songs from the album, "The Age of Uncertainty," makes it clear how far we still have to go to get back to simpler days of peace, like the peace, however fleeting, that the Sands family enjoyed as children: "And someone, surely somewhere, somehow can recall the time/ When people didn't lock their doors to strangers in the night time /And we were neighbor's children then and dancers danced in time /And we couldn't wait for twelve o'clock till our parents said goodnight."

worth searching for: Apart from Sands's albums, there are currently no CDs by the Sands Family available in the United States. However, keep a lookout in the used record bins; the Sands family recorded 14 albums for companies in Ireland and Germany, and any of them is a collector's item today.

influences:

◀◀ Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, the Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, the Sands Family

▶▶ Colm Sands, Ben Sands, Sean Tyrrel

Steve Winick

Maria Sangiolo

Born December 10, 1963, in Dorchester, MA.

Soprano-voiced singer-songwriter Maria Sangiolo explores issues of the heart through sensitive, acoustic melodies. Whether she's singing a romantic song or a political ballad, she expresses a direct and honest vision. The niece of an opera singer, Sangiolo didn't write an original song until after she had graduated from Simmons College in Boston with a degree in communications in 1988. Sharpening her singer-songwriter skills at open mics, she first attracted attention for her deeply personal lyricism and emotional vocals. While the first of two

self-produced albums, *Hard Words*, helped spread the word, the second, *Eyes of the Heart*, produced by singer-songwriter Brooks Williams, enabled her to become a nationally touring artist. Sangiolo's third album, *Follow Your Own Road*, was co-produced by multi-instrumentalist John Curtis of the Pousette-Dart Band.

what to buy: Sangiolo's second album, *Eyes of the World* ♪♪♪♪ (Raging River, 1993, prod. Brooks Williams), marked her as an artist deserving further attention. With her delicate finger-style acoustic guitar and warm vocals accompanied by Jennifer Hirsch (acoustic bass), Susan Wybiral (percussion), and Ron Curcio (piano and backing vocals), Sangiolo allows her poetic words to glide with emotion. Guest musicians include Orrin Star (mandolin) and Chris Smither (guitar).

what to buy next: Sangiolo's first nationally released album, *Follow Your Own Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Signature Sounds, 1997, prod. Maria Sangiolo, John Curtis), follows the emotional approach of its self-produced predecessor. Backed by an all-star band that includes John Sands (percussion), Richard Gates and Jen Hersh (bass), Jim Henry (acoustic guitar), Matt Leavenworth (fiddle), Gideon Freudmann (cello), and co-producer Curtis (mandolin and guitar), Sangiolo leads the listener on an sensitive journey through her emotions.

the rest:
Hard Words ♪♪♪ (Raging River, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Joan Baez, Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell, Carolyn Hester

▶▶ Brooks Williams, Greg Greenway, Ellis Paul

Craig Harris

Maggie Sansone

Born in Miami, FL.

Maggie Sansone brings a unique beauty and vision to the ancient music of the Celts. As a musician, she has been a major force in the developing popularity of the hammered dulcimer in Celtic music, both through her recordings and also through her performances at Celtic, Renaissance, and folk festivals. As a teacher, she created an innovative music book series for the hammered dulcimer and has published several music books through Mel Bay Publications. As an independent label executive, she owns and operates Maggie's Music in her adopted home town of Annapolis, Maryland. The label has released nearly 25 albums for worldwide distribution, most focusing on the music of the Celts. The label has received four "Wammie" Record Label of the Year awards from the Washington (D.C.) Area Musicians Association. Sansone's own albums have also received Indie awards from the Association for Independent Music (AFIM). She has been featured on CBS-TV's *Sunday Morning* and National Public Radio's *All Things Considered, Performance Today,* and *Thistle and Shamrock*. Her albums ring with a Renaissance spirit, a fusion of ancient sounds and modern sensibility, fueled by rich arrangements and innovative use of new and old instruments.

what to buy: On *A Scottish Christmas* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1996, prod. Charlie Pilzer), Sansone teams up with Scottish fiddler Bonnie Rideout and guitarist Al Petteway for one of the best seasonal albums ever. Featuring pipes, bells, hammered dulcimer, fiddle, and cello, it lifts you away to castle banquet halls with roaring fires and to desolate snow-filled forests, in a celebration of Christmas, Hogmanay, and the New Year. On *Ancient Noels* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1993, prod. Charlie Pilzer), Sansone teams with Ensemble Galilei, Rideout, percussionist Ben Harms, and guitarist and citternist Zan McLeod to deliver an unusual and special holiday recording that you'll want to have available all year long. Renaissance rhythms and haunting medieval hymns bring to life images of desert landscapes, stone monasteries, and the origins of Christmas.

what to buy next: *Dance upon the Shore* ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1994, prod. Charlie Pilzer) finds Sansone in a jazzy crossover into what she calls a "cool Celtic voyage to Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, and the Isle of Man." It features her hammered dulcimer but also adds Bob Read's soprano saxophone, clarinet, and alto flute, Steve Bloom's excellent percussion, and the stringed wizardry of both Robin Bullock and Petteway to the mix.

the rest:
Sounds of the Season ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1988)
Traditions ♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1989)
Mist and Stone ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1990)
Sounds of the Season II ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music, 1991)
(With Sue Richards, Bonnie Rideout, and Ensemble Galilei) *Music in the Great Hall* ♪♪♪½ (Maggie's Music, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Bonnie Rideout, Malcolm Dalglish

▶▶ Ceoltoiri, Karen Ashbrook

see also: *Bonnie Rideout, Al Petteway*

Neal Walters

Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Formed 1978, in Lafayette, LA.

Marc Savoy, accordion, vocals; Ann Savoy, guitar, vocals; Michael Doucet, fiddle, vocals.

This occasional band is dedicated to the perpetuation of traditional Cajun music; their music is rooted in the sound of the Gulf Coast Cajun culture. They record and tour whenever member Michael Doucet's busy schedule (he is the leader of the popular progressive Cajun band Beausoleil) allows. Although well known for his inventive fiddle forays with Beausoleil, Doucet's playing with Savoy-Doucet is firmly within the tradition; he is conversant with and mindful of the work of his fiddling forebears at all times. He has been particularly influenced by Dennis McGee and two great Creole fiddlers, Canray Fontenot and Amédée Ardoin. Marc Savoy is probably the most accomplished accordionist in traditional Cajun styles and is also well known as an accordion builder. His wife Ann, born in St. Louis and raised in Virginia, is a Cajun by marriage and has embraced the musical traditions of the Cajun culture enthusiastically. She is a forceful rhythm guitarist and singer. Their instrumental work is exemplary, and they are fine singers as well.

what to buy: *Home Music with Spirits* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1992, prod. Chris Strachwitz) contains classic waltzes, two-steps, stomps, and blues from the Cajun repertoire. It also includes a wonderful version of the "Cajun national anthem," "Jolie Blonde." *Two-Step d' Amédée* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1988, prod. Chris Strachwitz, Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band) is a mix of live and studio cuts, just as good as *Home Music with Spirits* with the added excitement of seven live cuts. An all-live set from three dances, *Live! At the Dance* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1994, prod. Chris Strachwitz) effectively captures the palpable excitement of traditional Cajun dance music.

what to buy next: On *Now and Then* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1996, prod. Scott Ardoin), Ken Smith, another outstanding fiddler, less adventurous, perhaps, and more melodic than Doucet, sits in on another outstanding bunch of Cajun classics with the Savoys.

worth searching for: *Cajun Jam Session* ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1989, prod. Chris Strachwitz) features Doucet along with guitarist Alan Senauke and accordionist Danny Poullard in an impromptu recording of a live radio show from 1983. It's an enjoyable, if occasionally ragged, set of traditional Cajun music.

solo outings:
Michael Doucet:
Beau Solo ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1989)

Marc Savoy:
(With Dewey Balfa and D.L. Menard) *Under a Green Oak Tree* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1977)
(With Wallace Read) *Cajun House Party* ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1979)
Oh, What a Night ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1981)

influences:

◀◀ Iry LeJeune, Harry Choates, Cleoma Falcon, Canray Fontenot, Amédée Ardoin, Dewey Balfa, Nathan Abshire, Dennis McGee

▶▶ Steve Riley, Balfa Toujours, California Cajun Orchestra

Randy Pitts

The Saw Doctors

Formed 1986, in Tuam, Co. Galway, Ireland.

Leo Moran, guitar, vocals; Davy Carton, vocals, guitar; Pearse Doherty, bass, vocals, whistle; John Donnelly, drums, vocals. Past members include John "Turps" Burke, vocals, mandolin, Hammond organ, bodhrán, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, tambourine, mandocello, harmonica, fiddle; Padraig Stevens, drums; Anthony Thistlethwaite, guitar, saxophone; Mary O'Connor.

The Saw Doctors are an excellent rock 'n' roll group whose music is based as much on their rural Irish roots as on great rock music from all over. Influenced by a diverse array of people, including the Undertones, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, and Jimi Hendrix, the Saw Doctors locate their direct roots in the Tuam punk band Blaze X, which featured soon-to-be Saw Doctor Davy Carton. Several years after Blaze X broke up, Carton's friends Leo Moran and Mary O'Connor drafted him into a band that was playing some of his old Blaze X material. Soon, they christened themselves the Saw Doctors. The lineup had already changed several times by the time they began recording, but the focus remained the same: folk/pop/rock songs that dealt with issues of concern to people who lived real lives in rural Ireland. A touch of Irish traditional music lightens their sound on occasion, and the influence of the Irish song tradition can be heard in their songwriting.

what to buy: The group's Irish roots are most apparent on their second disc, *All the Way from Tuam* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Shamtown, 1992, prod. Phil Tennant). The title track and the album opener are both modeled on traditional Irish songs extolling the virtues of a favorite place. "All the Way from Tuam" tells of the local characters and events of the band's hometown, in the rich dialect of Tuam, which is far more impenetrable than that of Galway city:

"They'd be callin' us smokies, the lads from the city/But I didn't care what they called me/Just plank it in lively across for the noodle, sham/His jills with the KD's a Gomey." The most energetic song on the album is "Broke My Heart," the tale of a missed opportunity on the soccer field that ruins a young man's outlook as surely as a failed romance. It also reveals a great deal about life in rural Ireland and what matters to people there in a concrete and direct way that is refreshing. Like the words, the music on the disc is inflected by the Irish tradition; several songs are built on riffs that are really reels. One of these, "Hay Wrap," which became a number one single in Ireland, contains a blazing display of mandolin and guitar work for fans of electrified Irish dance music, while the other, "Never Mind the Strangers," is more laid back. This album may be the Saw Doctors' most complete album, with only a few missteps among its songs.

what to buy next: *If This Is Rock & Roll, I Want My Old Job Back* ♪♪♪♪ (Shamtown, 1991, prod. Phil Tennant, Mike Scott) is a set of finely crafted, poppy, rock 'n' roll songs with a bit of Irish flavor. The best are the ones that will get you dancing uncontrollably. "I Useta Lover," the group's smashing hit single, is one of these, a delightful rave-up mixing sex and religion in dangerous ways: "I useta see her up the chapel when she went to Sunday Mass/And when she'd go up to receive I'd kneel down there and watch her pass/The glory of her ass . . ." Similarly, "Presentation Boarder" has to do with a nubile young boarding school student in the care of the presentation order of nuns. And, perhaps most scandalous of all, "That's What She Said Last Night" is a barroom conversation with a cad who kisses and tells. All of these have catchy choruses and happy beats. Other highlights are the wistful "N 17," about missing the road that leads home, and "Why Do I Always Want You," a very intense love song. "Red Cortina," a sweet song about first love, expresses the opinion that "first love stays with you forever." Indeed, and so will this album. *Same Oul' Town* ♪♪♪♪ (Shamtown, 1996, prod. Phil Tennant, Jim Higgins, Kenny Ralph, Saw Doctors) shows off the Saw Doctors in a mellower mood. In addition to a few songs that show Tuam's rough edges a bit, it includes songs about controversial and painful issues; "Every Day," which is overtly about women making a "joyless journey to Britain," is actually about abortion, which is illegal in Ireland and therefore the cause of many such boat trips. Cleverly, the band avoids overt reference to abortion. They also avoid moralizing about the issue, recommending only that such forlorn travelers be welcomed home with love. Most of the other songs are in this more reflective mood, though there are exceptions: "I Want You More," for example, features a Ramones-like chorus reminiscent of "I Useta Lover," classic country-rock style low guitar, and silly lyrics like "I want you more than the stars in the sky, a mountain bike or a GTI." In short, *Same Oul' Town* has all the elements that make their other albums such classics, but in slightly different proportions that make it a bit less over-the-top, a bit richer, and just a touch more serious.

influences:
◀◀ The Undertones, Blaze X, the Waterboys

Steve Winick

Scartaglen

See: Connie Dover

Claudia Schmidt

Born early 1950s, in MI.

Multi-instrumentalist and raspy-voiced vocalist Claudia Schmidt sets poetic lyricism and heartfelt storytelling to acoustic melodies. A frequent guest on Garrison Keillor's National Public Radio show, *A Prairie Home Companion*, the gap-toothed songstress weaves a unique musical tapestry of traditional folk, jazz, Tin Pan Alley, blues, protest songs, and Quaker hymnal influences. Schmidt, who's released seven solo albums and two albums with folksinger Sally Rogers, became smitten with music after moving to Chicago in 1974 to take a job as a secretary and officer manager. Discovering a thriving acoustic music scene, she taught herself to play dulcimer, 12-string guitar, and the deluxe pianolin, a 52-string, zither-like instrument that's plucked or strummed with the left hand and bowed with the right. Giving notice at her day job, she turned her attention to a musical career. Within five years, she had signed with Flying Fish and had released her debut solo album. Although she moved for a while to Wisconsin and Minnesota before settling with her husband, Bill Pallardino, on Beaver Island on Lake Michigan, Schmidt continued to establish herself as an leading acoustic artist. In 1992 her original score, composed with noted director Frank Galati, for a new translation of Bertold Brecht's *The Good Person of Setzuan* received a prestigious Jefferson award for outstanding achievement in Chicago-area theater. Since 1995 most of her attention has been focused on a bed and breakfast that she and her husband operate at an old log farmhouse that they restored.

what to buy: Schmidt's most recent album, *It Looks Fine from Here* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1994, prod. Claudia Schmidt), showcases her romantic lyricism in an intimate, acoustic, setting. Ac-

companying herself on 12-string guitar and mountain dulcimer and joined by Dean McGraw (six-string guitar) and percussionist Marc Anderson, Schmidt sings of winter love, quiet hills, and stars at night.

what to buy next: With *Essential Tension* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1991, prod. Eric Bain Peltoniemi), Schmidt sets her songs to spirited arrangements featuring piano, keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, percussion, fiddle, harp, and a three-piece horn section.

the rest:
Claudia Schmidt ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1979)
Midwestern Heart ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1981)
New Goodbyes, Old Helloes ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1983)
Out of the Dark ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1985)
(With Sally Rogers) *Closing the Distance* ♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1987)
Big Earful ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1987)
(With Sally Rogers) *While We Live* ♪♪½ (Red House, 1992)

influences:
Bob Gibson, Steve Goodman, Jean Ritchie

Sally Rogers, Anne Hills

see also: *Sally Rogers*

Craig Harris

David Schnaufer

Born c. 1953, in Hearne, TX.

By virtue of talent and location, David Schnaufer has become one of the best-known mountain dulcimer players of his time. A Nashville resident, Schnaufer is the dulcimer player of choice for country music, and he has played on albums by Kathy Mattea, the Judds, Mark O'Connor, and others. Schnaufer, originally a harmonica player, was first drawn to the dulcimer after seeing one in a music shop, but he soon became proficient enough on the instrument to win the Walnut Valley National Mountain Dulcimer Championship in 1976. He performed and recorded with West Virginia dulcimer player Alan Freeman, Karen McKay, Fred Meyer, and Bonnie Carol before moving to Nashville in 1985. There, in addition to his solo and session work, he played with the country-rock group the Cactus Brothers during the late '80s and early '90s. He continues to live and perform in Nashville, where he also teaches dulcimer. His students have included Cyndi Lauper, with whom Schnaufer recorded on her *Sisters of Avalon* album.

what to buy: Schnaufer recorded two cassettes, *Dulcimer Player* and *Dulcimer Deluxe*, during the late '80s and put the bulk of them on *Dulcimer Player Deluxe* ♪♪♪½ (SFL, 1989, prod. John Lomax III, Mark Miller, Melanie Wells), a 73-minute, 26-track CD with tunes ranging from "Wildwood Flower" and "Wings of a Dove" to "Over the Rainbow" and the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun." Schnaufer has a canny knack for blending the commercial with the traditional, and his follow-up, *Dulcimer Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (SFL, 1992, prod. John Lomax III, Mark Miller, David Schnaufer, Melanie Wells), features guests ranging from guitarists Mark Knopfler and Albert Lee to Tejano star Santiago Jimenez, and material ranging from "Down Yonder" and "Blackberry Blossom" to the Everly Brothers' "All I Have to Do Is Dream" and Ben E. King's "Spanish Harlem."

the rest:
(With the Cactus Brothers) *The Cactus Brothers* ♪♪♪ (Liberty, 1993)
(With the Cactus Brothers) *24 Hrs., 7 Days a Week* ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1995)

worth searching for: Schnaufer has a 90-minute instructional video called *Learning Mountain Dulcimer* (HMS, 1996).

influences:
Emmylou Harris, Gram Parsons, Jean Simmons Jennings, Bonnie Russell

Steve Siefert, Lee Rowe, Lorraine Lee Hammond

Brian Mansfield

Steve Schneider

Born August 20, 1951, in New York, NY.

Innovative and talented New York City musician Steve Schneider has played hammered dulcimer on movie soundtracks, television, and radio and was the first dulcimist to play in Broadway's *The Secret Garden* from 1991 to 1993. Schneider trained as a classical pianist and he combines that precision with expressiveness and creativity in his hammered dulcimer and accordion music. He is a frequent performer and teacher at festivals, sharing his expertise and encouraging dulcimists across the country. Schneider's musical journeys have introduced him to many talented musicians, many of whom have collaborated with him on various recordings, such as Paul Oortz, a native of Belgium and a master of classical and steel string guitars, and Dave Neiman, a hammered dulcimer player from Cambridge, Massachusetts.

what to buy: *Momentum* ♪♪♪♪½ (Salient MusicWorks, 1997, prod. Steve Schneider, Paul Oorts) is a stunning release from Schneider and Paul Oorts, and it features a heaping helping of Schneider's tasteful and innovative hammered dulcimer playing (and arranging). Hearing either of these two musicians alone is a treat; hearing them together is about as good as it

gets. Their musical interests range from the samba sounds of Brazil to the music of the Beatles, and they don't just play the tunes, they make them their own. They get excellent help from Sprocket J. Royer (bass), Semyon Fridman (cello), Rosie Rounds (flute), Joyce Anderson (violin), and Vanderlei Periera (percussion).

what to buy next: *Tuesday's Child* ♪♪♪♪ (Salient MusicWorks, 1991, prod. Abby Newton) is Schneider's first recording and features six original compositions interspersed among such traditional tunes as "Webb's Hornpipe," a Welsh hornpipe, "Farewell Marion/La Petite Soeur," an English and French tune, and "Zoierli/Landerli," where he assimilates a Swiss Appenzeller yodel and waltz on the hammered dulcimer and accordion. His original pieces flow nicely with this collection and include "The Shepherdess" and "When Peanuts Are Emeralds." Several excellent musicians assist on this recording, including John Kirk (violin), Christa Patton (flute, recorder, pennywhistle, guitar, bodhrán), and Selma Kaplan (piano). *The Door to Christmas* ♪♪♪♪ (Water Lion Music, 1993, prod. Steve Schneider, Dave Neiman) features the hammered dulcimer playing of Schneider and Dave Neiman, but Schneider's exceptional piano playing is highlighted throughout. They are assisted by Brian Koonin (guitars, bass), Semyon Fridman (cello), Roy Sansom and Roxanne Layton (recorders), and Susan Worland (violin). There are many familiar Christmas melodies, like "Angels We Have Heard on High," with two Schneider originals, "The Eagle King's Carol" and "The Door to Christmas." All of Schneider's recordings are available from Salient MusicWorks, P.O. Box 34, Congers, NY 10920, including *A Place Just Right*, a recording with Simple Gifts.

influences:

◀◀ Victor Borge, Elmer Bernstein, the Beatles, the Incredible String Band, Keith Jarrett, Rafael Rabello, Phil Cunningham, Bill Evans, Bill Spence

▶▶ Walt Michael, Malcolm Dalglish

see also: *Simple Gifts*

Heidi Cerrigione

Helen Schneyer

Born January 10, 1921, in New York, NY.

Helen Schneyer is one of the living treasures of American traditional music. She began singing professionally a half-century ago with Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, and others at New York hootenannies. Since then, she's sung at the White House for Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, performed on *A Prairie Home Companion*, and helped found the Folklore Society of Greater Washington (D.C.). She has also lectured on music at colleges and universities and collected songs from African American communities in upstate New York, Maryland, and Virginia. Her rough-hewn contralto is a perfect storytelling vehicle and is surprisingly suited to spirituals, as she proves on "Soon One Morning" on *Somber, Sacred, and Silly*. Schneyer now lives in Vermont.

what's available: *Somber, Sacred & Silly* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Straight Arrow, 1992, prod. Michael Billingsley, Helen Schneyer) is an excellent collection of traditional and old-timey songs, recorded in a Vermont meeting house with piano, cello, and backing vocals, but often just with Schneyer's own room-stilling voice.

the rest:

Ballads, Broadsides, and Hymns ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1974)
On the Hallelujah Line ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1981)

influences:

◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Alan Lomax

▶▶ Norma Waterson, Marianne Faithfull, Bob Franke

Pamela Murray Winters

Schooner Fare

Formed 1975, in Portland, ME.

Chuck Romanoff, vocals, 12-string guitar, four-string banjo; Steve Romanoff, vocals, six-string and 12-string guitars, four-string banjo; Tom Rowe, vocals, electric bass, pennywhistle.

Schooner Fare combines the maritime tradition of sea chanteys with the energetic, congregation-like harmonies of the Kingston Trio, Chad Mitchell Trio, and the Clancy Brothers. Over the past two decades, the trio has effectively interwoven interpretations of folk classics, including "Wild Mountain Thyme" and "Si Bheag Si Mhor," with the reworking of such pop tunes as Harry Belafonte's "Jamaica Farewell" and "Banana Boat Song" and Ray Charles's "Hit the Road Jack," tradition-rooted originals, including a memorable tribute to whales, "Leviathan," and a celebration of their home town, "Portland Town." The band originated in 1975 during an impromptu backstage jamming session by brothers Chuck and Steve Romanoff, who were members of a short-lived folk group, and Tom Rowe. Initially conceived as a brother duet, the group expanded when Rowe left the band he was with and became a full-time member. Securing a weekly gig at the Holy Mackerel in Portland and performing in pubs and folk music coffeehouses on the East

Coast, Schooner Fare developed a unique musical approach. Although the band's earliest albums—*Day of the Clipper* and *Closer to the Wind*—established it as a leading purveyor of maritime music, Schooner Fare has continued to expand its musical vocabulary. The group's 1987 album, *Home for the Holidays*, features traditional carols and seasonal songs sung in Hebrew, French, German, and Spanish, while its 1997 recording, *KidSongs*, is aimed at the youngest members of their audience. The group re-recorded many of its best-known tunes with a small orchestra conducted by Michael Braz for their 1989 release, *Classic*. Their songwriting skills are reflected on their 1993 album, *For the Times*, which includes six original tunes, including the hilarious ditty "Too Funky for the Folkies (But Too Folky for the Times)."

what to buy: Schooner Fare celebrated its tenth anniversary with the live *The First 10 Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Outer Green, 1986, prod. Ken Ford). A two-LP set, recorded at the Birchmere in Alexandria, Virginia, the collection shows the diversity of the trio's repertoire. In addition to traditional sea-related tunes, such as "Barrett's Privateers," "The Banks of Sicily," and "Cape St. Mary's," the group adapts their boisterous vocal harmonies to pop songs, including a medley of songs by the Seekers, "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow" by Carole King and Gerry Goffin, and "Ease on down the Road" from the musical *The Wiz*.

what to buy next: The traditional songs that made up Schooner Fare's initial repertoire are resurrected on *Finnegan's Wake* ♪♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1995). While many of the tunes are standards of traditional folk music, including "Nancy Whiskey," "Moonshiner," "The Wild Colonial Boy," and "Drunken Sailor," the trio's enthusiasm brings a fresh approach to their material.

the rest:

Day of the Clipper ♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1978)
Closer to the Wind ♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1981)
Live! ♪♪♪ (Outer Green, 1983)
We the People ♪♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1985)
Home for the Holidays ♪♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1987)
Classic ♪♪♪ (Outer Green, 1989)
Signs of Home ♪♪ (Outer Green, 1990)
For the Times ♪♪½ (Outer Green, 1993)
KidSongs ♪♪♪ (Outer Green, 1997)

influences:

Pete Seeger, the Weavers, the Kingston Trio, the Chad Mitchell Trio, the Limeliters

Gordon Bok, Cormac McCarthy, Devonsquare

Craig Harris

Tracy Schwarz /Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio

Born September 13, 1938, in New York, NY.

New York City–born and raised, Tracy Schwarz began working with the New Lost City Ramblers as a replacement for Tom Paley in 1962, and shortly thereafter met a young Dewey Balfa at the Newport Folk Festival. The two men hit it off and so began a long friendship. Schwarz's development as a Cajun fiddler and accordionist is chronicled on individual tracks of various New Lost City Ramblers albums. His first collaboration with Balfa was the Folkways LP *How to Play Cajun Fiddle*, released in 1976. The two worked together at many festivals and workshops. You can hear the Balfa family influence in the plain lonesome quality of Schwarz's music, along with some hint of the Appalachian music mined by the New Lost City Ramblers.

what to buy: On *Mes Amis!* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1996, prod. Lee Blackwell, Tracy Schwarz, Chuck Eller, Matt Haney), what you get is consistent quality. Schwarz is never going to overwhelm you with emotions like Michael Doucet or leap through syncopated modulation like Steve Riley; instead you'll get something that's steady and dignified.

what to buy next: *Les Quatre Vieux Garçons* ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1984, prod. Quatre Vieux Garçons) brings together Tracy and Peter Schwarz with Dewey and Tony Balfa to play some old favorites. Peter had been studying with Dewey and the project gave them a chance to record their fiddle interplay. Papa Tracy adds accordion and fiddle to the mix. Tony is Rodney Balfa's son and plays guitar in the same driving percussive way.

the rest:

(With Dewey Balfa) *How to Play Cajun Fiddle* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1976) (cassette only)
Louisiana and You ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1990) (cassette only)
Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1993)

worth searching for: *Souvenirs* ♪♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1985, prod. Tracy Schwarz) was made under Dewey Balfa's name, but features the same group as on *Les Quatre Vieux Garçons* with the addition of superb accordionist Robert Jardell. Recapturing some of the old Balfa magic, this album consists primarily of Dewey Balfa originals played on three fiddles, with Dewey in the lead, Peter Schwarz an octave below, and Tracy playing the tenor parts in the middle. The record also contains "Bienvenue Au Paradis," a Tracy Schwarz original written after the tragic

the 1990s

The last decade of the millennium has spawned yet another folk revival of sorts, largely at a more grass roots level. Although the major record labels continued to ignore all but the most established draws with a folkie bent, labels like Rounder, Shanachie, Green Linnet, and Sugar Hill flourished, bringing new artists to national prominence. Later in the decade, several new "designer" labels like Waterbug, Signature Sounds, and 1-800-Prime-CD championed the latest of the steady crop of talented singer-songwriters to step into the fold. World Music became a genre, and adventurous performances by traditional musicians from all corners of the world started to garner sales and airplay. Publications like *Dirty Linen, Performing Songwriter, Folk Roots,* and a revitalized *Sing Out!* started to make more regional artists national stars, and a coffeehouse and house concert circuit started to flourish. The advent of the Internet allowed information to be disseminated rapidly (and sometimes fervently) about new artists like Dar Williams and Ani DiFranco. The North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance was established as a national clearing house and advocacy group for acoustic music, as well as a meeting point for people in the increasingly diverse acoustic music field. As the millennium wanes, folk music in all its various forms is healthier, more diverse, and more popular than it had been since the sixties.

Michael Parrish

death of Dewey's brothers, Rodney and Will, in an automobile accident.

influences:

◀◀ Balfa Brothers, Lawrence Walker, Nathan Abshire

▶▶ Balfa Toujours, Horace Trahan, Steve Riley

see also: *Steve Riley, New Lost City Ramblers, Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker*

Jared Snyder

Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Formed 1988.

Tracy Schwarz (born September 13, 1938, in New York, NY); Ginny Hawker (born in VA).

In the liner notes to their one CD together, Ginny Hawker and Tracy Schwarz admit "It would be an unthinkable sin against nature for two people like us not to sing together. It's part of who we are individually, and therefore a cornerstone of our relationship." This "need" to sing is one of the reasons Schwarz and Hawker are such a perfect match. Through their shared experiences they can pull out these old, Southern, mountain songs and sing them with a feeling that is clearly audible to the listener. Their roots run deep into many different levels of Southern song, from bluegrass to country to the sacred songs of the Primitive Baptists. Schwarz, of the New Lost City Ramblers and numerous other solo and band projects, provides tasteful musical accompaniment to their two voices, which blend together to tell you stories about their lives and people like them in old-time southern Appalachia.

what's available: Schwarz and Hawker teamed up on *Deep Hollows and High Ridges* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1995, prod. Tracy Schwarz, Ginny Hawker) and recorded one of the best CDs of traditional southern mountain music ever released. This 13-track CD can be seen as a cross section of the lives of these two fabulous singers. You have songs from the beginning of commercial country music, from Wade and Julia Mainer and the Carter Family that they love so much; then there are bluegrass duets by the Louvin Brothers, the Stanley Brothers, and Bill Monroe/Jimmy Martin; and then the pure mountain music of Almeda Riddle and Hazel Dickens. It is all here on this one recording, and all of it is done perfectly. This is a splendid set from start to finish.

influences:

◀◀ Primitive Baptist Hymnal, Hazel Dickens & Alice Gerrard, Louvin Brothers

▶▶ Ann & Phil Case

see also: *New Lost City Ramblers, Tracy Schwarz, Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice*

Steve Gardner

Carla Sciaky

Born 1954, in Brooklyn, NY.

Carla Sciaky (pronounced See-AH-kee) traces her love for

music to the earliest stages of her childhood, when her mother worked as a nursery school teacher and camp counselor. "I sang and danced when I was two," she says, "it was a very natural part of my life." She yearned to play the piano like her mother. By the time she was in grade school, her formal training was underway. Sciaky's musical bent took a decided twist after she spent a couple of consecutive summers with her grandmother in Mexico City. It was there that she learned to play the guitar. By then she was listening to a lot of the protest and folk-rock singers of the late '60s, and her first formal band was a high school folk-rock group, Propinquity, which played music "as heavy as the Grateful Dead and as gentle as Joni Mitchell." In college, she took up urban studies, a move designed to keep her mind off of music. Within two years, she was smitten by the music bug all over again, lured by a recorder workshop. The teacher suggested she join an early music ensemble at the college and it was there that she developed her taste for traditional and ethnic music. She started her solo career in 1981 and now plays a dozen instruments, including the Bulgarian gudulka (violin), the psaltery, and the concertina. Her distinctively pure and agile voice (think Bonnie Dobson or Kathy Larisch) is immediately enticing, while her versatility adds depth and spice. Though she sees herself as a singer/guitarist who writes songs rather than as a songwriter, Sciaky has written some excellent material. In addition to her solo work, she has played off and on for several years with different groups in Denver, including a trio with Mary Stribling and guitarist Mary Flower and as a longtime member of a raucously entertaining all-woman band called the Mother Folkers, the "most carefully pronounced name in show business." Acclaimed for her soprano voice and her award-winning songwriting, Sciaky is also a talented instrumentalist, adding violin, concertina, and guitar fingerpicking backup to her songs.

what to buy: *The Awakening* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Pete Sutherland) is a gorgeous album with superior production values and a superb collection of supporting musicians, including Claudia Schmidt and Mollie O'Brien on vocals. Sciaky has served as artist-in-residence at elementary schools throughout the country, and in songwriting workshops has guided school children in composing lyrics and music; *Wishes and Dreams* ♪♪♪ (Alacazam, 1981) is the result. The songs are funny, hopeful, poignant, and insightful. Titles include "A Rainy Day," "School Lunch," and "Growing Up." Tim O'Brien on mandolin and vocals, and several fellow Mother Folkers all serve to reinforce the strength of Sciaky's sensitive songwriting and distinctively clear voice. Her songs reach into many emotional landscapes. The title cut expresses the excitement of waking up to the world within and without, while the musically striking "I Cannot Tell You" and "Is This Water?" explore more shadowy sides of the same. Heartbreak is evident in the country-tinged "There Are Three Reasons," while her trademark humor takes over in "Insomnia Blues," an audience favorite.

what to buy next: Either *Spin the Weaver's Song* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Pete Sutherland) or *The Undertow* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Pete Sutherland) would be excellent purchases. The former is a celebration of weaving, spinning, and sheep-shearing songs from all over the world, telling the stories of women and men that have carried the process "from sheep to shawl" over the years. Sciaky's homage to the craft is warm, witty, and as classic as the craft itself. The latter features songs that are memorable and performances that are no less than exquisite. *The Undertow* is full of understatement yet filled with a sense of honesty and emotion. In addition to her own material, she does songs by Clive Gregson, Jane Gillman, and Tim O'Brien.

the rest:
In Between ♪♪♪ (Propinquity, 1985)
Under the Quarter Moon ♪♪♪ (Propinquity, 1988)

influences:
Bonnie Dobson, Joan Baez
Priscilla Herdman, Cindy Kallet

Neal Walters

Darrell Scott

Darrell Scott is a talented songwriter and multi-instrumentalist (guitar, pedal steel, drums, bass, dobro, banjo, mandolin, autoharp, harmonica, and seemingly everything else that can be plucked, beat, or blown) who has worked with Sam Bush, Tim O'Brien, and Guy Clark. He also has written some songs that have been recorded by others, but 1997's *Aloha from Nashville* marked his first time out as a solo artist showcasing and playing his own material.

what's available: *Aloha from Nashville* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1997, prod. Darrell Scott) is his debut solo release. On it Scott shows his versatility by touching on Western swing in "Head South," storytelling folk in "The Ballad of Martha White," and a bout of light-hearted fun in "Spelling Bee Romance." The best song on this album, however, is "You'll Never Leave Harlan Alive," which is the sad tale of a family married (for better or for worse) to

the coal mines of eastern Kentucky. If there is any justice in this world, this song will become a folk standard for anyone trying to tell a story with a guitar and a voice.

influences:
⏪ Sam Bush, Guy Clark

Steve Gardner

Mike Scott

See: The Waterboys

Earl Scruggs

See: Flatt & Scruggs

Seals & Crofts

Formed 1969, in Los Angeles, CA.

Jim Seals, vocals, guitar, saxophone, fiddle; Dash Crofts (born Darnell Crofts), vocals, mandolin, keyboards, guitar, drums.

Jimmy Seals and Dash Crofts are two Texas natives who met on the club circuit during the '50s. They wound up playing together in the Champs ("Tequila") and later moved to Los Angeles, where they worked sessions, formed bands, and finally settled into working as a duo. Devout followers of the Baha'i faith, Seals and Crofts scored a recording contract in 1971 and were on radio in short order with seminal soft-rock hits such as "Summer Breeze," "Hummingbird," "Diamond Girl," and the high school yearbook special "We May Never Pass This Way Again."

what's available: You'll find all the duo's hits on *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1975, prod. Louie Shelton), a collection of tuneful, sturdy melodies. The duo's fourth album, *Summer Breeze* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972/1994, prod. Louie Shelton), is also available but is wholly inessential. These days, Seals and Crofts rarely play together; Seals farms coffee in Costa Rica, while Crofts was last seen plying his trade in Nashville.

influences:
⏪ Crosby, Stills & Nash, the Lettermen, New Christy Minstrels
⏩ England Dan & John Ford Coley, Indigo Girls, Behan Johnson

Gary Graff

John Sebastian

See: Lovin' Spoonful

Sector 27

See: Tom Robinson

Mike Seeger

Born August 15, 1933, in New York, NY.

Half brother of Pete Seeger, Mike Seeger was raised in Washington, D.C. His parents, Charles and Ruth Seeger, were classical musicians and composers who became interested in traditional American music during the 1930s. As a result, their children, Mike included, were brought up in a home full of Library of Congress recordings and informal singing sessions. Even a woman who worked at Mike's childhood home, Elizabeth Cotton from Carrboro, North Carolina, was influential in his musical development when he learned that she was a magnificent guitar player. (Seeger would eventually record her performing in 1957.) From 1958 until 1979, Seeger was a member of the New Lost City Ramblers, which was one of the most important bands of the '60s folk music and old-time string band revivals. Not only an important musician, he is significant for the numerous field recordings he made of traditional musicians, including *American Banjo Scruggs Style*, which Neil Rosenberg cites in his *Bluegrass: A History* as the first bluegrass LP. Seeger is still releasing important field recordings. In 1997, with Smithsonian-Folkways, he released *Close to Home: Old Time Music from Mike Seeger's Collection*, which showcases such musicians of the '50s and '60s as Elizabeth Cotton, Tom Ashley, Wade Ward, and Dock Boggs.

what to buy: Recommending just a few of Seeger's albums is tough. He has so many sides that without at least a handful of releases you aren't getting the full picture. However, *Solo: Old-Time Country Music* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Mike Seeger) is a record that presents him as you would probably see him today in concert, going solo and performing a lot of the old-time songs that he loves so much. Seeger is at his best, though, when he is performing with a friend so they can bounce ideas off of each other and let the creative juices do the rest of the work. *Way down in North Carolina* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Paul Brown, Mike Seeger) is such a recording, and is well worth checking out.

what to buy next: *Third Annual Farewell Reunion* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Mike Seeger) is more about what Seeger sees as important and entertaining in the world of folk music today than about Seeger himself. But that's no complaint; this is one terrific album, with an all-star lineup of guests including Ralph Stanley, Jones and Leva, Tim O'Brien, Tommy Jarrell, and another fellow once well-known in the folk music world . . . Bob Dylan.

the rest:
American Banjo Scruggs Style ♪♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1957)

Old-Time Country Music ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1962)
Mike Seeger ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1964)
Tipple, Loom, and Rail, Songs of the Industrialization of the South ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1965)
(With Peggy Seeger) *Mike and Peggy Seeger* ♪♪♪ (Argo, 1966)
(With wife, Alice Gerrard Seeger) *Mike and Alice Seeger in Concert* ♪♪♪ (King (Japan), 1970)
(With Peggy Seeger) *American Folk Songs for Children* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1970/1987)
Music from the True Vine ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1971)
Second Annual Farewell Reunion ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1972)
(With Alice Gerrard) *Mike Seeger and Alice Gerrard* ♪♪♪♪ (Greenhays, 1980)
Fresh Old-Time String Band Music ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
(With Penny and Peggy Seeger) *American Folk Songs for Christmas* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989)
(With Peggy, Barbara, and Penny Seeger) *Animal Folk Songs for Children* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
Close to Home: Old Time Music from Mike Seeger's Collection ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian-Folkways, 1997)

worth searching for: *Get Acquainted Waltz* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1975/1997, prod. Mike Seeger, Chris Strachwitz) features Seeger alongside Hazel Dickens and his then-wife Alice Gerrard, backed by Seeger's New Lost City Ramblers bandmate Tracy Schwarz, all billed as the Strange Creek Singers.

solo outings:
A. Robic and the Exertions:
Old Time Music Dance Party ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)

influences:
⏮ Elizabeth Cotton, Kilby Snow, Dock Boggs, Tommy Jarrell
⏭ Bob Dylan, Fuzzy Mountain String Band, Bruce Molsky

see also: *New Lost City Ramblers, Paul Brown, Strange Creek Singers, Hazel & Alice*

Steve Gardner

Peggy Seeger

Born Margaret Seeger, June 17, 1935, in New York, NY.

The oldest daughter of musicologist Charles Seeger and his second wife, Ruth Crawford (one of the most influential women composers of the twentieth century), Peggy Seeger is the sister of Mike Seeger, the half-sister of Pete Seeger, and the widow of late Scottish folklorist and songwriter Ewan MacColl. During the more than 40 years since her self-titled debut recording, Seeger has combined political activism with the folk song tradition. While she's excelled as an interpreter, Seeger, who plays banjo and guitar, has also made her presence felt as a songwriter. Her best-known compositions include "Gonna Be an Engineer," which has become an anthem of the women's movement, and "The Ballad of Springhill," a powerful song about a 1958 Nova Scotia mining disaster.

Seeger grew up surrounded by music. Although she studied classical harmony, music theory, and orchestration at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, folk music has remained her prime focus. Self-taught on the banjo, she plays in the old, frailing style. Europe has been the setting for most of Seeger's adult life. After traveling to Holland, Belgium, France, and Italy to collect folk songs, in 1955, she returned to England the following year to perform in a radio play, *Dark of the Moon,* at the request of folklorist Alan Lomax. While in England, she met and fell in love with MacColl, who wrote his classic tune "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" for her. They were married in 1958 and remained musical collaborators until MacColl died in 1989. Although she moved to England, Seeger has continued to perform at folk coffeehouses and festivals in the United States. In addition to her solo recordings and duo albums with MacColl, Seeger has recorded with Guy Carawan, Tom Paley, her brother Mike, and younger sisters Penny and Barbara. *The Long Harvest*, a 10-album collection of traditional British and American folksongs recorded by Seeger and MacColl, received a prestigious Audio award in 1967. Seeger was the subject of a six-part 1994 radio documentary produced by Jim Lloyd for the BBC. Her book, *The Peggy Seeger Songbook, Warts and All,* was published by Music Sales in 1997.

what to buy: Seeger's most productive years came when she recorded for Folkways. That era is documented on the CD *The Folkway Years 1955–92: Songs of Love and Politics* ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1992). Highlights include her original recording of "Gonna Be an Engineer" and her rendition of her late husband and singing partner Ewan MacColl's love song, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face."

what to buy next: *Classic Peggy Seeger* ♪♪♪½ (Blackthorne, 1996) brings together tracks recorded by Seeger and released on the Topic label during the early 1950s.

best of the rest:
(With Mike and Penny Seeger and families) *American Folksongs for Christmas* ♪♪ (Folkways, 1955/Rounder, 1989)
Peggy Seeger ♪♪ (Topic, 1956)
(With Barbara and Penny Seeger) *Three Sisters* ♪♪½ (Prestige, 1957)
(With Mike Seeger) *American Folksongs for Children* ♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1957/ Rounder, 1977)

(With Guy Carawan) *We Sing America* ♪♪ (Redwood, 1958)
(With Guy Carawan and Alan Lomax) *Folksong Saturday Night* ♪♪ (Prestige, 1958)
(With Ewan MacColl) *Classic Scots Ballads* ♪♪♪♪ (Tradition, 1959/1997)
(With Ewan MacColl) *Lover's Garland* ♪♪½ (Pye, 1962)
(With Mike Seeger) *Mike and Peggy Seeger* ♪♪♪ (Argo, 1966)
(With Mike Seeger) *American Folk Songs for Children* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1970/1987)
(With Ewan MacColl) *At the Present Moment* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1973)
Familiar Faces ♪♪ (Riverside, 1988)
(With Penny and Mike Seeger) *American Folk Songs for Christmas* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989)
(With Mike, Barbara, and Penny Seeger) *Animal Folk Songs for Children* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1992)
(With Irene Scott) *Almost Commercially Viable* ♪♪½ (Kapp, 1992)
Odd Collection ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996)
(With Ewan MacColl) *Folk on Two* ♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1996)

influences:

Ronnie Gilbert, Jean Ritchie, Elizabeth Cotton, Pete Seeger, Charles Seeger, Ruth Crawford Seeger

Anne Hills, Priscilla Herdman, Cindy Mangsen, Sally Rogers, Ewan MacColl, Billy Bragg

see also: *Pete Seeger, Mike Seeger, Guy Carawan, Ewan MacColl*

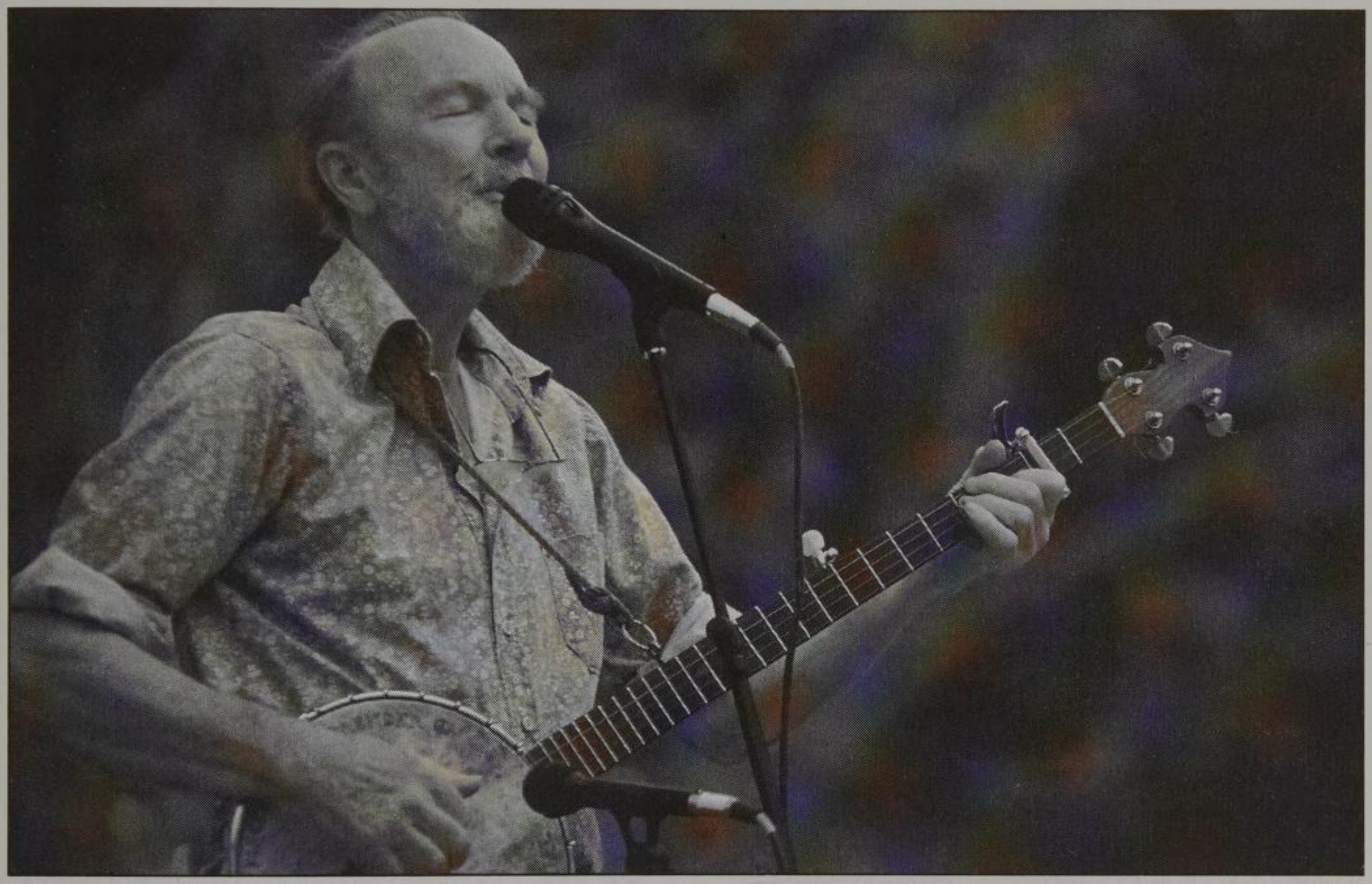
Craig Harris

Pete Seeger

Born May 3, 1919, in New York, NY.

Regarded as America's best-loved and most influential modern folksinger, Pete Seeger has touched millions of lives with ballads rich in history, humor, and a sense of social justice. The son of a musicologist and a concert violinist, Seeger took his trademark five-string banjo to the road during the 1930s, where he joined Woody Guthrie at labor union rallies and formed the Almanac Singers. In 1948 Seeger formed the Weavers, popularizing such classics as "On Top of Old Smokey" and Leadbelly's "Goodnight Irene." But during the early '50s—at the peak of the group's success—Seeger lost bookings and record contracts when he was blacklisted during the anti-communist witch-hunts of the day. But his political convictions grew more resonant, and during the 1960s he emerged as a solo artist for the cause of social justice. Singing at rallies to support such notables as Martin Luther King Jr., Seeger produced the hits "If I Had a Hammer" and "We Shall Overcome"—which were embraced as anthems for the civil rights movement. The '60s also witnessed Seeger's memorable appearances at the Newport Folk Festivals, with rousing audience singalongs of Spanish, African, and Negro work ballads, as well as new protest songs. Seeger's writing gift provided numerous memorable hits, including "Guantanamera" and his remarkable casting of the biblical Ecclesiastes "Turn! Turn! Turn!" Additionally, he helped engineer the '60s folk revival by introducing such bright young talents as Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, Arlo Guthrie, and Peter, Paul, and Mary. Seeger has since published dozens of articles and more than 20 books on folk music, and started the popular folk song journal *Sing Out!* He was awarded the nation's highest artistic honors at the Kennedy Center in 1994—a small vindication after the McCarthy debacle—while in 1996 he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. And just when you might expect the seasoned sage to rest on his laurels, he recorded the 1997 Grammy Award–winning CD *Pete*—at the ripe young age of 77. Of his long and prolific career Seeger said, "What I want to do . . . is give people something that encourages the creative process and gets people out of the boxes they've been put in." And regarding a job well done Joan Baez responded that Seeger's "life and music have been a continuum of contributions to the uplifting of the human spirit, and the betterment of the human condition everywhere in this world."

what to buy: Folk aficionados maintain that no one ever left a Pete Seeger concert unchanged—and not surprisingly his classic live album is very evocative. The two-CD, digitally remastered *We Shall Overcome* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989, prod. John Hammond), originally recorded in 1963 at the acoustically fine Carnegie Hall, features Seeger at his peak, for 122 minutes (40 songs in all) of musical bliss. Stories, traditional numbers, covers of emerging artists, and a smattering of Seeger originals—all are dressed in the simple elegance of Pete's banjo accompaniments and his ingenious personal style. And his amazing rapport with his audience is evident throughout, with rousing sing-along choruses to get you going. Most notable are Tom Paxton's "My Rambling Boy" and "What Did You Learn in School Today," as well as Bob Dylan's "Who Killed Davey Moore?" and "A Hard Rain's a-Gonna Fall." Traditional favorites include "Oh Freedom" and "Deep Blue Sea," while Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land" shines of American liberty. But most touching is Seeger's own musical rendering of a poem by the Cuban nationalist Jose Marti—"Guantanamera." *We Shall Overcome* stands as the definitive recording of folk music's definitive performer. And a nice complement to this gem is *A Link in the Chain* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1996, prod. Lawrence Cohn). Despite a little overlap in song ti-



Pete Seeger **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

tles, the latter features the best-available sampling of Seeger's original material, re-mastered from live recordings throughout the '60s. The two-CD set opens with Pete picking and whistling through his instrumental composition "Living in the Country." Continuing with levity, the original "Get up and Go" answers the proverbial question, "How do I know my youth is all spent? /My get up and go has got up and went." Other fine Seeger compositions include "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy," "Oh, Had I a Golden Thread," "My Name Is Liza Kalvelage," "Last Train to Nuremberg," "This Old Car," and his spiritual anthem "Turn! Turn! Turn!." Finally, Seeger's haunting ballad "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" reverberates with the anguish of a burgeoning war in Vietnam. This album will endure as a vital "snapshot" of a most tumultuous and artistically rich decade of American history.

what to buy next: *American Industrial Folk Ballads* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1956, prod. John Hammond) is more vintage Seeger, but this time as a studio recording, presenting the joys and struggles of miners, farmers, and textile workers. With liner notes and a new introduction, this album is a historic landmark in a union town, set in the modest fidelity of pre-stereo recording—a real collector's item. And finally, the Grammy Award–winning CD *Pete* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Living Music, 1996, prod. Paul Winter, Tom Bates) shows Seeger back into the studio for the first time in decades, with a generous selection of his best-known numbers. And, at age 77, his undiminished energy and spirit will have you wondering what kind of vitamins he's on. Joined by several choruses and some notable guest musicians, Seeger delivers in decent voice: "Kisses Sweeter than Wine," "Garbage," "Sailing down My Golden River," "The Water Is Wide," "My Rainbow Race," and more. Regarding his continuing purpose in music Seeger muses: "The artist in ancient times inspired, entertained, and educated his fellow citizens. Modern artists have an additional responsibility—to encourage others to be artists." Mission accomplished.

best of the rest:

Darling Corey and Goofing-Off Suite ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1950)
American Folk Songs for Children ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1953)
Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Little Fishes ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways, 1954)
Song and Play Time ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1958)
Folk Songs for Young People ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1959)
Abiyoyo and Other Story Songs for Children ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1960)
American Game and Activity Songs ♪♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1962)
Carry It On: Songs of American Working People ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1963)
Traditional Christmas Carols ♪♪♪♪½ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1967)
Waist Deep in Big Muddy and Other Love Songs ♪♪♪♪½ (Legacy, 1967)
The World of Pete Seeger ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1974)
(With Arlo Guthrie) *Together in Concert* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1975)
Singalong Demonstration Concert ♪♪♪½ (Folkways/Smithsonian, 1980)
(With Arlo Guthrie) *Precious Friend* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1982)
(With Arlo Guthrie) *More Together Again in Concert* ♪♪♪½ (Rising Son, 1994)
(With Carolyn Hester) *Pete Seeger and Carolyn Hester* ♪♪♪½ (United Audio Entertainment)

worth searching for: *Pete Seeger's Family Concert* ♪♪♪♪ (Sony, 1992, prod. Jim Brown, Ginger Brown, Harold Leventhal) was recorded near the artist's home on the banks of the Hudson River to promote his environmental action group, the Clearwater Foundation. This out-of-print disc shows up periodically at used record stores.

influences:

⏮ Stephen Foster, Lee Hays, Leadbelly, Uncle Dave Macon, Woody Guthrie, Malvina Reynolds, Willie Dixon, Paul Winter

⏭ Weavers, Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, Arlo Guthrie, John Prine, Peter, Paul & Mary, Bill Staines, Byrds, Judy Collins, Joan Baez, just about everyone else who has recorded folk music

see also: *Weavers*

Art Wojtowicz

Geoff Seitz

Born December 5, 1954, in MO.

Geoff Seitz started his musical career by learning to play drums at age eight. He added guitar and piano over the years, and took up the fiddle at age 19. Missouri fiddling is primarily dance music, and that was Seitz's main interest from the start. He reads music—unusual for an old-time fiddler—and that has enabled him to draw on the *Old-Time Fiddler's Repertory,* the extensive written collection published by the University of Missouri Press. He has played with the Sweetwater String Band, the Rural Valley Revelers, Cousin Curtis and the Cash Rebates, and the Ill-Mo Boys. He has won numerous fiddle contests, in his home state of Missouri and in other places, such as at the Old-Time Fiddler's convention in Galax, Virginia, and the Appalachian String Band Festival in Clifftop, West Virginia. Seitz lives in St. Louis, where he builds and restores stringed instruments.

what to buy: Seitz's most recent recording is *The Good Old Days Are Here* ♪♪♪♪½ (Oceana Productions, 1995, prod. Geoff Seitz). Your feet won't keep still when you listen to this CD, but it isn't just dance music—it's dance music with some of the most unusual instruments you've ever heard accompanying the fiddle, and it's a heck of a lot of fun. A piano always sounds good behind a dance fiddler, and Emily Buckhannon's touch adds a lot to these tunes. There's highly competent guitar and banjo accompaniment, provided mostly by Jim Nelson and Rich Hibbs, respectively. There's also the mandolin (Curt Buckhannon) and the bass (Forrest Rose). But hold on, we're not done yet: there's also the bones, hands clapping, a wood whiskey box being thumped vigorously with something (by Seitz), a bass drum, a jawbone, corrugated roofing, and—no kidding—a water pump. Okay, so the water pump isn't really used as a percussion instrument. But the others are, and all of this stuff works extremely well. It comes across loud and clear that these folks had a ball making this disc. Other musicians making an appearance are Jeff Miller (banjo), Tom Mittlebronn (guitar), Dave Landreth (banjo), Kevin McKeever (piano), and Larry McNally (button accordion). Michelle Belanger provides the sound of dancing feet. Many of these musicians have played with Seitz in other bands; Nelson and Curt Buckhannon were the other two Ill-Mo Boys. The tune selection is primarily from Missouri, and includes "Lantern in the Ditch," one of several beautiful tunes from Missouri fiddler Bob Walters that were documented in *The Old Time Fiddler's Repertory.* There's also a smattering of tunes from elsewhere, including standards like "Arkansas Traveler" and "Cumberland Gap," a tune from the Irish harper Turlough O'Carolan, and a rousing composition by Seitz called "Chicago Fiddlin'," a hard-driving dance tune that is one of the disc's most enjoyable selections. No dance is complete without a waltz, and this disc winds up the evening with a delightful one called the "Rose of Sharon Waltz," also written by Seitz. *The Good Old Days Are Here* might be hard to find in record stores, but you can order it

from Oceana Productions, 4175 Loughborough Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116.

what to buy next: You can hear more of Seitz, along with Buckhannon and Nelson, on two cassettes of the Ill-Mo Boys, *Fine as Frog's Hair* ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1991, prod. Larry McBride) and *Timely Old Tunes and Beyond* ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1988, prod. Larry McBride), which consist primarily of dance music from Missouri and Illinois. The latter also contains many familiar tunes and a few Midwestern surprises.

influences:

⏪ Bob Walters, Charlie Walden

⏩ Ill-Mo Boys, Volo Bogtrotters, Chirps Smith

Dave Shombert

The Seldom Scene

Formed 1971, in Arlington, VA.

John Duffey (died December 10, 1996), mandolin, lead and harmony vocals (1971–96); Ben Eldridge, banjo, vocals (1971–present); Mike Auldridge, dobro (1971–95); John Starling, guitar, lead vocals (1971–77, 1992–94); Tom Gray, bass (1971–86); Lou Reid, guitar, lead vocals (1986–92); Phil Rosenthal, guitar, lead vocals (1977–85); T. Michael Coleman, bass guitar (1986–95); Moondi Klein, guitar, lead vocals (1994–95); Dudley Connell, guitar, lead vocals (1996–present); Ronnie Simpkins, bass, vocals (1996–present); Fred Travers, dobro, vocals (1996–present).

Former Country Gentlemen John Duffey and Ben Eldridge founded the highly influential Seldom Scene, noted far and wide for mixing traditional tunes with country, pop, and folk songs. The band has survived numerous personnel changes to remain one of the most renowned bands in bluegrass for a quarter century. Mike Auldridge, T. Michael Coleman, and Moondi Klein left the Scene in 1995 to work full-time with Chesapeake. Duffy's death in late 1996 left a big hole as well.

what to buy: *Scene 20: 20th-Anniversary Concert* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. T. Michael Coleman) was recorded over two nights at the legendary Birchmere in Alexandria, Virginia, the group's regular home for many years. It reunites different lineups of the band and features a guest appearance by Emmylou Harris.

what to buy next: For *Like We Used to Be* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994), John Starling briefly returned to the band and left behind this terrific collection of 13 songs ranging from standards by the Stanley Brothers and Woody Guthrie to the original "I'll Take You Home."

the rest:

Act 3 ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1973)
Old Train ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1974)
Recorded Live at the Cellar Door ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1975)
The New Seldom Scene Album ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1976/1989)
. . . At the Scene ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1983)
The Best of the Seldom Scene, Volume I ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1986)
A Change of Scenery ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988)
Scenic Roots ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Dream Scene ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)

worth searching for: *Act II* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1973) is worth a look.

solo outings:

Mike Auldridge:
Mike Auldridge and Old Dog ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978)
(With Lou Reid and T. Michael Coleman) *High Time* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1989)
Treasures Untold ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Eight String Swing ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992)

John Starling:
Long Time Gone ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Waitin' on a Southern Train ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995)

influences:

⏪ Country Gentlemen, New Shades of Grass

⏩ Alison Krauss & Union Station, Chesapeake

see also: *Country Gentlemen, Chesapeake*

Douglas Fulmer

Martin Sexton

Born 1966, in Syracuse, NY.

With multi-octave tenor vocals, sensitive acoustic guitar playing, and poetic lyricism, Martin Sexton has been setting ears aflame with his music. Only a few years from his days as a Harvard Square street singer, Sexton has built a following from coast to coast and is one of acoustic music's most successful new artists. The winner of Boston Music Awards as Outstanding New Acoustic Act of 1995 and Best Song/Best Songwriter of 1996 for his song "Glory Bound," Sexton was the recipient of a prestigious Artist of the Year award at the National Academy of Songwriters' Underground Acoustic concert at the Troubadour club in Hollywood, California, in 1994. The youngest of six boys, Sexton was the tenth child in an Irish Catholic family of a dozen children. His music awakening came when he discovered a copy of the Beatles' *Abbey Road* that one of his siblings left in the basement. The experience left Sexton with an unquenchable thirst for music. As a youngster, he attracted crowds at

school with his impersonations of Stevie Wonder; throughout his teenage years he played with bands in his hometown, singing the Top 40 hits of the 1980s. By 1989, however, he had gone as far as he could with music in Syracuse and moved to Boston. Although he planned to move in with a brother, he found his own apartment and a job as a waiter in a cafe within a day, and was beginning to audition for bands. His musical direction changed after seeing a street musician for the first time. After being fired from his cafe job, he switched to acoustic guitar and took to the streets himself. Relocated to western Massachusetts, Sexton has continued to advance in great strides, going from opening shows for Jackson Browne, John Hiatt, Stephen Stills, and Art Garfunkel to headlining clubs and coffeehouses on his own.

what to buy: Sexton's long-awaited debut CD, *Black Sheep* ♪♪♪♪♡ (Black Wolf, 1995), has placed him in the upper echelon of new acoustic music. Accompanied by Joe Donnelly (percussion), Greg Holt (bass), and Brad Hatfield (piano and synthesizer), he showcases his multi-octave voice and unique, horn-like, vocal improvisations.

what to buy next: Sexton had just switched to acoustic guitar when he recorded *In the Journey* ♪♪♪ (self-released, 1990/1997, prod. Martin Sexton) in a friend's attic studio. Despite its low budget, the nine-song collection sold an impressive 16,000 copies when released on cassette. Reissued on CD, the album remains a powerful display of soulful vocalizing and poetic lyricism.

worth searching for: One of Sexton's earliest compositions, "Free World," was included on the CD soundtrack album of the film *Two Days in the Valley.*

influences:

◀◀ Beatles, Louis Armstrong, Al Jarreau, Ray Charles

▶▶ Ellis Paul, Peter Mulvey

Craig Harris

Morgan Sexton

Born January 28, 1911, near Linefork, KY. Died January 1992.

Electronic media—radio, movies, the phonograph—have been with us for three-quarters of a century now, and there may not be very many artists like Morgan Sexton left. He learned to play the old songs and dance tunes on the banjo as a youngster, not with any self-conscious notion of being an "artist" but because this was what folks did to entertain themselves, and the indigenous music of southeastern Kentucky was what they knew. Sexton's father died in the great influenza epidemic in 1918, and a few years later Sexton left the fourth grade to work to help his struggling family. His education finished, he spent the rest of his life in Linefork, working at lumber camps, rock and limestone quarries, and finally (like so many in the high Appalachians) the coal mines. But it was in 1928 when, still an adolescent, he bought his first "real" banjo: a Stella, ordered from the Sears and Roebuck catalog for $10.86. He had already learned some of the basics from his older sister Hettie, a good player, and the acquisition of the new banjo blew his smoldering interest into a bright flame: Sexton found himself playing constantly, sometimes even falling asleep with the instrument across his body. He would have lived and died playing at schools and family functions except that another musician—his nephew, Lee Sexton—introduced him to some of the music producers at Appalshop, a cultural media center in nearby Whitesburg, an imprint of which is the June Appal record label. In 1988, at age 77, Sexton performed on a concert stage for the first time in his life, at Appalshop's Seedtime on the Cumberland festival. His first recording, *Rock Dust*, was released in 1989 to much acclaim, and was followed by appearances at the Celebration of Traditional Music at Berea College, Kentucky; the Augusta Heritage Festival in Elkins, West Virginia; and the Tennessee Banjo Institute in Lebanon, Tennessee. Finally, in 1991, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded Sexton the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship award. He died of cancer at age 81 in January 1992.

what's available: June Appal issued the *Rock Dust* album in its entirety, along with a generous helping of newly recorded material, all on a treasure of a CD, *Shady Grove* ♪♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1990, prod. Nancy Adams), which now stands as this unique artist's complete recorded legacy. Sexton's music is nearly as free of artifice as may be humanly possible: unpolished and completely without self-consciousness, it's a direct artifact of who he was, and how and where he lived and died. His voice is as honest and rough-hewn as the handle of a grubbing hoe, and his banjo has a timeless-sounding pentatonism of almost startling delicacy and warmth. These songs, and this intimate personal style, are a brief glimpse into a distant past, when southeast Kentucky's forbidding mountains kept its people in near-isolation from the rest of the world.

influences:

◀◀ His father, his sister, his neighbors

▶▶ Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Roscoe Holcomb, Jean Ritchie

Chris Rietz

Bob Shank

Born November 3, 1950, in Morgantown, WV.

Bob Shank is a veteran hammered dulcimer player who has been playing for more than 20 years, both as a solo artist and as a member of Hickory Wind, one of the first bands to feature a hammered dulcimer during the '70s. Shank has also played a lot of dance music as a member of bands like the Percolators and Curmudgeon. He currently plays mostly solo and is focusing on his new recording studio business, Otter Slide Studios.

what's available: *Hammer Dulcimer Solos* ♪♪♪♪ (Otter Slide Productions, 1996, prod. Bob Shank, Otter Slide Studios) demonstrates Shank's inventive playing and arranging, as he begins simply and then builds in musical complexity, incorporating variation after variation. This seemingly bottomless well of inspiration elevates his playing of these more or less familiar tunes from the merely ordinary. The solos include such selections as the Shaker melody "Simple Gifts," a gentle hymn "In the Garden," and several toe-tapping contra-dance tunes like "Cuffy" and "Morpeth's Rant." *Hammer Dulcimer Solos* is available from the artist at Otter Slide Productions, 1225 Corvet Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505.

worth searching for: There are three 1970s-era releases by Hickory Wind: *At the Wednesday Night Waltz* ♪♪♪ (Adelphi, 1974, prod. Gene Rosenthal, Black Dog Productions), *Fresh Produce* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1975, prod. Michael Melford), and *Crossing Devil's Bridge* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1978, prod. Michael Melford), all of which are out of print. Shank's hammered dulcimer is found on about half the cuts, but you'll hear his banjo, guitar, and vocals along with fellow musicians Pete Tenney (fiddle, mandolin), Sam Morgan (mandolin, Dobro, guitar, vocals), Glen McCarthy (bass, vocals), and Mark Walbridge (guitar, vocals).

influences:

◀◀ Russell Fluharty, Paul Van Arsdale, Sam Rizzetta

▶▶ Linda Thomas, Walt Michael, Rick Thum

Heidi Cerrigione

Sharon Shannon

Born June 8, 1967, in Ruan, Co. Clare, Ireland.

Sharon Shannon is at the top of a stellar crop of young Irish musicians bringing traditional music to the attention of a new generation in Ireland and the United States. An amazingly talented musician with a firm grasp of traditional music and killer chops on both button accordion and fiddle, Shannon has taken her solid foundation in Irish music and expanded upon it, adding influences from the world of popular music and from other cultures whose music she is drawn to.

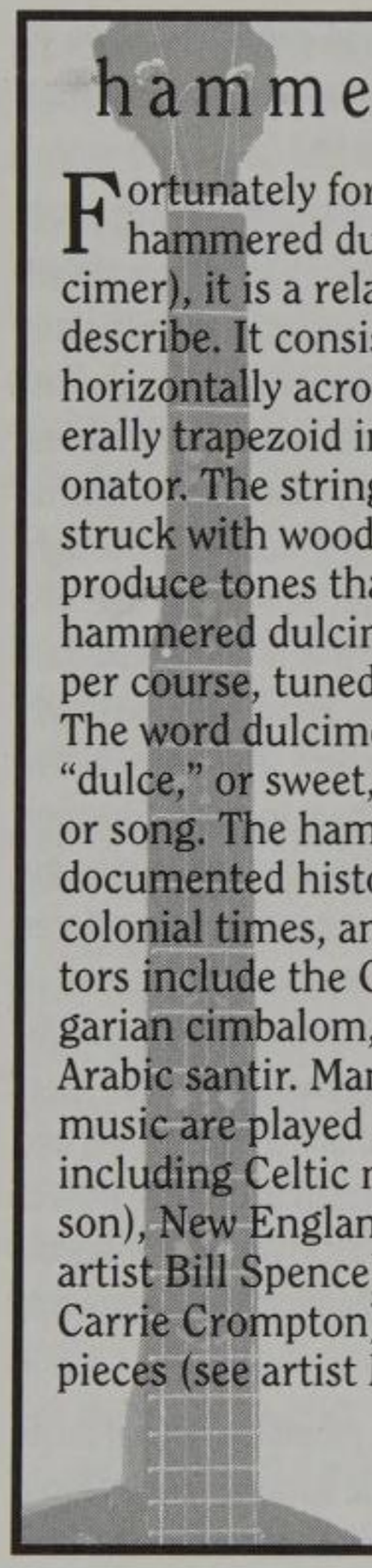
Growing up in North Clare, one of the hotbeds of Irish traditional music and the home turf of the legendary Kilfenora Ceili Band, Shannon was surrounded by dancers and musicians from an early age. Her brother Gary, a fine flute player, and sister Mary, the banjo player with the Irish band the Bumblebees, were early influences, as was Frank Custy, a local music teacher credited with giving many of Clare's young musicians the right start. She was performing professionally at an early age as a member of the band Disirt Tola, a group that also counted Gary and Mary Shannon, piper Ronan Browne, and concertina player Gearoid O'hAllmhurain among its members. They were active through the '80s and released one album in 1984. Shannon was also active in Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann tours during the 1980s, where she met the great piano accordion player Karen Tweed, whose repertoire and style were very influential in Shannon's development. After a short period with the group Arcady during the late 1980s, Shannon was asked by Mike Scott to join the Waterboys. She spent a year and a half touring and recording with the band and being exposed to a whole host of new musical ideas and styles. After Scott changed the band's direction to a less folk-oriented style, Shannon left the group to pursue a solo career.

Her first solo album, recorded in 1990, mixed traditional tunes with a somewhat pop-oriented acoustic backing and featured appearances by Liam O'Maonlai of Hothouse Flowers and Adam Clayton from U2, as well as many of her former Waterboys bandmates. Their support put her name in front of the Irish popular music press and made her a star to young Irish audiences. Her appearance on the 1992 *A Woman's Heart* album, the best-selling album in Irish history, cemented her status as one of Ireland's leading young artists. Since then she has toured throughout the United States and Europe and recorded two more albums.

Shannon is a dynamite musician on both fiddle and accordion, her playing is firmly rooted in the Irish tradition, and she has a great store of traditional tunes. She is also a young, adventurous musician completely at home in a pop-music idiom. As a result, her arrangements are often more adventurous than on many Irish traditional albums, employing drum machines, synthesizers, saxophones, and other instruments rarely heard in traditional Irish music. While her adventurous style often irritates hard-core traditionalists, her playing is firmly rooted in Irish traditional style, and anyone who wants to hear the best

716 *lauchlin shaw & a.c. overton*

hammered dulcimer



Fortunately for those who have never seen a hammered dulcimer (also hammer dulcimer), it is a relatively simple instrument to describe. It consists of metal strings stretched horizontally across a shallow wooden box, generally trapezoid in shape, which acts as a resonator. The strings vary in length and are struck with wooden mallets (hammers), to produce tones that vary in pitch. A typical hammered dulcimer has two or three strings per course, tuned in unison, similar to a piano. The word dulcimer comes from the Greek "dulce," or sweet, and the Latin word "melos," or song. The hammered dulcimer has a well-documented history in America, dating back to colonial times, and its European/Asian ancestors include the German hackbrett, the Hungarian cimbalom, the Greek santouri, and the Arabic santir. Many different styles of folk music are played on the hammered dulcimer, including Celtic music (see artist Joemy Wilson), New England contra dance music (see artist Bill Spence), Baroque music (see artist Carrie Crompton), or contemporary folk choir pieces (see artist Malcolm Dalglish).

Heidi Cerrigione

contemporary players of traditional Irish music is obligated to give her a listen.

what to buy: *Each Little Thing* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Dónal Lunny), Shannon's third album, is her most cohesive and self assured. Working with producer Dónal Lunny and a crack crew of musicians, including guitarist Steve Cooney and fiddler Winnie Horan, Shannon has produced an album that combines traditional and contemporary influences in a completely personal musical statement. From the adventurous version of Grace Jones's "Libertango," featuring vocalist Kirsty MacColl, and a cover of Fleetwood Mac's "Never Going Back Again" to a sweet version of Junior Crehan's "With Her Lovely Long Hair," Shannon mixes her influences into a tasty musical stew, with the steady hand of producer Lunny keeping things from getting too far out of control. While not everything works (for example the hooked-on-classics sounding programming on "Bag of Cats"), everything betrays the stamp of an artist exploring new ideas and synthesizing new music out of the old.

what to buy next: *Sharon Shannon* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1991, prod. John Dunford) was Shannon's debut album, and her most musically conservative. While her playing is astounding as always, the arrangements are spare and subdued, with less of the adventurousness of her later recordings. Highlights include the slow air "Marbhna Luimni," and a killer set of box tunes from the pen of Phil Cunningham. Shannon's adventurousness in repertoire is well-displayed with an imaginative pairing of a Kerry slide and a Cajun dance tune, as well as a recording of a Portuguese Corodinio. If you're a hard-core traditional Irish music fan, this would be the album to purchase.

what to avoid: *Mind the Gap* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Dennis Bovell, John Dunford) is an album by an artist searching for a style. The control and sophistication developed by Shannon for her *Each Little Thing* album were not yet there when she made this recording. As usual, her taste in tunes is tremendous, and her playing is great, but saxophonist Richie Buckley has little feel for traditional music and producer Dennis Bovell's tracks seem too restrained. All in all, the pieces just don't fit together.

worth searching for: One of Shannon's first recorded appearances was on *Ceol Tigh Neachtain* ♪♪♪♪ (Gael Linn, 1989, prod. Brendan O'Regan), a sampler featuring many of the fine young musicians in Galway at the time. Other highlights include appearances by fiddler Sean Smyth and Sean Nos singer Deirbhile Ni Bhrolchain. Good luck finding the *Disirt Tola* album; you'll have to search used record stores in Ireland.

influences:

- Tommy Peoples, Karen Tweed, Martin O'Connor

see also: Ashley MacIsaac, Mary Custy Band, Natalie MacMaster, Eileen Ivers

The Waterboys

Tony Ziselberger

Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Formed c. 1952, in Lillington, NC.

Aaron Chauncey "A.C." Overton (born 1926, in Chatham County, NC), banjo; Lauchlin Shaw (born February 10, 1912, in Anderson Creek, NC), fiddle.

Lauchlin Shaw and A.C. Overton are two old-time musicians

from the Piedmont (central) area of North Carolina. Shaw lives on a 200-acre farm in southern Harnett County, North Carolina, and plays the fiddle. Overton, who lives near Raleigh now, plays two finger banjo. Many of the tunes that they play have only been found in central North Carolina, which is rare. Most of the fiddle and banjo tunes that were collected in North Carolina were taken from the mountain country east of where these two traditionalists grew up.

what's available: *Sally with the Run-down Shoes* ♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1996, prod. Wayne Martin) was a recording made at the request of the North Carolina Arts Council, which wanted to document these two musicians and their music. It is a wonderful recording with extremely interesting liner notes that give full biographies of the two men along with informative notes about the songs. This recording will be well received by both the academic who wants to learn more about fiddle and banjo stylings outside of the southern Appalachians, and the fan who just wants to hear some great old-time fiddle and banjo dance music.

influences:

◀◀ Virgil Craven, Colin Shaw, Herman Overton, Uncle Dave Macon

▶▶ Marvin Gaster, Evelyn Shaw

Steve Gardner

Shegui

See: The House Band

Cosy Sheridan

Born December 11, 1964, in Concord, NH.

Cosy Sheridan has a light voice reminiscent of Janis Ian's, and it's matched by a light sense of humor, even when dealing with some very heavy topics. The New England–based singer-songwriter began her career singing in bars in Maine and New Hampshire and picking up tricks of the trade from other musicians. With 1992's *Quietly Led*, her star was on the ascendancy, and she's turned out a remarkably consistent set of albums since then.

what's available: *Quietly Led* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1992, prod. Kent Allyn, Rick Watson, Cosy Sheridan) includes "Losing Game," a sharp-tongued look at how culture warps a woman's perception of her body. Its concluding track, "Lullabies," is a sentimental glimpse of childhood bedtime worthy of Robert Louis Stevenson. *Saturn Return* ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1994, prod. Cosy Sheridan, Kent Allyn, Gerry Putnam) has some excellent Sheridan compositions, including "Me and My Father." *One Sure Thing* ♪♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1996, prod. Darleen Wilson), a live album, contains a good sampling of Sheridan's songs.

influences:

◀◀ Janis Ian, Cheryl Wheeler

▶▶ Lisa McCormick, Susan Werner

Pamela Murray Winters

Richard Shindell

Born August 3, 1960, in NJ.

Richard Shindell is a New York–based singer-songwriter whose finely crafted original ballads are set to sensitive, acoustic-based melodies. While his songs have been covered by Dar Williams ("Nora") and Joan Baez ("Fishing," "Money for Floods," "Reunion Hill"), Shindell has continued to make great strides on his own with his intimate solo performances and three masterful albums—*Sparrows Point*, *Blue Divide*, and *Reunion Hill*—placing him among the upper echelon of contemporary acoustic music. A former student of religion at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, Shindell has continued to explore his religious convictions through songs like "The Ballad of Mary Magdelena" and "Beyond the Iron Gate." Growing up on Long Island, he honed his early musical skills as a guitarist. As a student at Moravian College in Pennsylvania, he performed with the Razzy Dazzy Spasm Band, an informal cover band that included future singer-songwriter John Gorka as one of two frontmen. Leaving the band and transferring to Hobarth College in New York, where he earned an undergraduate degree in philosophy, Shindell continued to evolve as a musician. After attending Union Theological Seminary for two years, in the mid-1980s, he left school to focus on his music. He recorded several songs for the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine*, including his first recording, "On a Sea of Fleur-de-lis," in 1988. Signed by Shanachie, he made his presence felt from the start with the sarcastic kiss-off song, "Are You Happy Now?," the opening track of *Sparrow's Point*. In 1997 he toured the United States, as opening act and guitarist for Dar Williams, and Europe, with a showcase of "new" talent hosted by Joan Baez.

what to buy: Shindell's third album, *Reunion Hill* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Larry Campbell), combines the poetic balladry of his debut, *Sparrows Point*, with the production values of his second effort, *Blue Divide*. With his storytelling lyrics set to the pedal steel guitar, lap steel, fiddle, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, and bouzouki melodies of Larry Campbell, and the har-

monies and duet singing of Lucy Kaplansky, Shindell shows his strength as a songsmith. The collection includes two songs—"Money for Floods" and the title track—that were covered by Joan Baez on her 1997 album, *Gone from Danger*.

what to buy next: Shindell's debut, *Sparrows Point* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. Richard Shindell, David Seitz, Steve Addabbo), marked him as a songwriter worthy of further attention. The opening track, "Are You Happy Now?," is an unforgettable, tongue-in-jowl, farewell to an ex-lover.

the rest:
Blue Divide ♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Townes Van Zandt, John Gorka
▶▶ Dar Williams, Lucy Kaplansky

Craig Harris

Michelle Shocked

Born Michelle Johnston, February 24, 1962, in Dallas, TX.

One of the most gifted and outspoken artists to emerge from the late-'80s singer-songwriter movement that spawned Tracy Chapman and Suzanne Vega, Michelle Shocked can be a captivating storyteller. She possesses a sassy, soulful voice and an endearing blend of east Texas charm and New York street savvy. But she also exhibits a stubborn commitment to her art that sometimes overwhelms her good intentions and rubs against the greedy grain of the music industry. Discovered playing around a campfire in 1986 at Texas' legendary Kerrville Folk Festival, Shocked became an instant overseas sensation after a Walkman-recorded tape of her songs got released on London's Cooking Vinyl Records. She signed to Mercury in 1988 but the relationship was acrimonious at best: the two parties bickered over everything from album-cover art (she proposed posing in blackface on the cover of 1991's *Arkansas Traveler* to drive home the belabored point that black musicians have been robbed of their legacy by white artists) to the stylistic direction of her jazzy *Captain Swing*. When Mercury balked at releasing the dark, brooding songs she proposed for *Kind Hearted Woman*, she filed suit against the label, citing a California labor law that sets a seven-year term limit on personal services contracts. The feud was settled out of court in April 1996, allowing Shocked to sign an unusual contract with Private Music that (a) gives her the freedom to pitch stylistically diverse projects to different record companies if Private chooses not to release them; and (b) stipulates performance levels for the label in terms of the promotion and marketing of her music. Her devious parting shot was a retrospective called *Mercury Poise*—a sly twist on Graham Parker's infamous diatribe against the label, "Mercury Poisoning."

what to buy: *Kind Hearted Woman* ♪♪♪♪½ (Private Music, 1996, prod. Bones Howe), inspired by the death of her grandmother, is a soul-stirring, intensely personal work about loss and the painful search for closure. The howling midwife crisis of "Stillborn" and the dark-humored blues of "Eddie" are startling, but her stark, hushed delivery of the mournful "A Child like Grace" is both riveting and revelatory. Her poignant major-label debut, *Short Sharp Shocked* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1988, prod. Pete Anderson), blends rustic reminisces about her east Texas childhood with chugging country-rockers and the Dylanesque "Anchorage," which remains her most touching and timeless song.

what to buy next: *The Texas Campfire Tapes* ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1986, prod. Pete Lawrence) contains the intimate, now-mythical Kerrville recordings, complete with crickets and low-fidelity sound. Three songs—"Fogtown," "Don't You Mess around with My Little Sister," and "The Secret to a Long Life"—would be rerecorded on later albums.

what to avoid: *Captain Swing* ♪♪ (Mercury, 1989, prod. Pete Anderson) has its nostalgic charms, but such novelties as "God Is a Real Estate Developer" and "Looks like Mona Lisa (Smells like Tuna Fish)" cross the line between lighthearted and lightweight.

worth searching for: Since leaving Mercury, Shocked has been recording limited-edition, hand-numbered CDs in her New Orleans home that she's selling exclusively at her shows. The original solo electric guitar versions of songs destined for *Kind Hearted Woman* (self-released, 1994) vanished quickly. *Artists Make Lousy Slaves* (self-released, 1996) is a direct-to-DAT duo effort that finds her sharing lead vocals with Fiachna O'Braondin of Hothouse Flowers and includes the jaunty "Laundry Day" and an *a cappella* reading of "The Water Is Wide."

the rest:
Arkansas Traveler ♪♪♪½ (Mercury, 1991)
Mercury Poise: 1988–95 ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Jean Ritchie, Guy Clark, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Ani DiFranco

David Okamoto

Jon Sholle

Jon Sholle is an incredibly versatile guitarist who has played

Michelle Shocked **(© Ken Settle)**

bluegrass with Peter Rowan and Andy Statman, new acoustic music with the David Grisman Quintet, pop with the likes of Melissa Manchester and Bette Midler, jazz with giants like Esther Phillips and Sonny Stitt, and even backed beat poet Allen Ginsberg on several recordings. In a career spanning three decades, Sholle has released only two albums under his own name, but both are worthy of attention.

what's available: *Catfish for Supper* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1979) is a lively, eclectic recording that delves into classic jazz, Western swing, and bluegrass. *Out of the Frying Pan* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996) is a straighter bluegrass offering on which Sholle plays with most of the New York bluegrass mafia (Andy Statman, Kenny Kosek, Tony Trischka, and Keith Edwards). David Grisman plays on Sholle's Dawgish swing tune, "Jon's Jump."

influences:

◀◀ T. Bone Walker, Django Reinhardt, Lester Flatt

▶▶ Scott Nygaard, David Grier

see also: *David Grisman, Andy Statman*

Michael Parrish

Shooglenifty

Formed 1994, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Iain Macleod, mandolin, tenor banjo; Angus R. Grant; Carry Finlayson, banjo, banjax; Malcolm Crosbie, acoustic guitar, electric guitar; Conrad Iviteky, bass; James MacKintosh, drums, percussion, piano.

At the forefront of Scotland's '90s generation of "roots" bands is Shooglenifty. The group describes itself as "hypnofunkadelic ambient trad" or "acid croft." If that doesn't help, think of a buzzing fusion of traditional Scottish dance music with modern pop/rhythm grooves. Equally at home playing on a folk/world music festival stage or at urban concert halls and dance clubs, the band has traveled extensively, thrilling audiences in the United Kingdom, Poland, Spain, Denmark, and as far afield as

Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, and Malaysia. Shooglenifty has recorded two studio albums and one live set, and members of the band also participated in the Afro Celt Sound System recording project.

what's available: The group's first album, *Venus in Tweeds* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1994, prod. Jim Sutherland), is a bit softer than its successor, *A Whiskey Lass* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1996, prod. Jim Sutherland). On *A Whiskey Lass* the rhythms are tougher; drums are more prominent and much better used to become a fully integrated part of the band. The band as a whole played with more confidence and their music acquired an exciting edge.

worth searching for: *Live at Selwyn Hall* (WOMAD Select/Real World, 1996, prod. Iain Macleod, James MacKintosh) is the group's only other recording.

influences:

◀◀ Mouth Music, Capercaillie, Moving Hearts, Edward II

▶▶ Afro Celt Sound System, Peatbog Faeries, Old Blind Dogs, Talitha Mackenzie, Mary Jane Lamond

Ken Roseman

Jane Siberry

Born October 12, 1955, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

A Canadian musician who brings song, poetry, film, and technology together, Siberry sings in a style that makes her nearly impossible to fit into any format—although "electrified, modern folk" is as close a description as you can get. From a humble recording beginning, Siberry financed her first record, *No Borders Here*, by tips earned from waitressing as she studied microbiology at the University of Guelph. Since then, she has tackled rock and jazz in styles reminiscent of Laurie Anderson—only more melodic. Her most recent works are fodder for easy-listeners who like something a little sexy and blue with their love songs. Siberry's concert performances wow audiences with self-produced videos, stream-of-consciousness rambles, and even question-and-answer sessions. "How do you do your hair?" is one question that seems to pop up frequently to this multi-coiffed musician.

what to buy: *When I Was a Boy* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1993, prod. Jane Siberry, Brian Eno, Michael Brook) is a dark, beautiful masterpiece. It's a wash of vocal and keyboard textures, and some of the songs resemble short movies, complete with a cast of singing angels and medieval-style sinners, such as the electronic "Temple" or "An Angel Stepped Down," both heavy on Old Testament imagery.

what to buy next: *Bound by the Beauty* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1989, prod. Jane Siberry, John Switzer) has the excellent title track and "Something about Trains," two k.d. lang–like country-folk-rock songs anchored by Siberry's powerful, angelic voice. *No Borders Here* ♪♪♪½ (Duke Street, 1984, prod. Jon Goldsmith, Kerry Crawford, Jane Siberry, John Switzer) was Siberry's first release, and is worth getting for "Mimi on the Beach," an underground hit in Canada.

what to avoid: Siberry recorded 13 songs she wrote as a teenager on the appropriately titled *Teenager* ♪♪ (Sheeba, 1996). Clean and sparse, the songs charm in their innocent way—they're recommended for die-hard fans, but are best for a historical point of view.

the rest:
The Walking ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1988)

worth searching for: Siberry's brooding "She's like the Swallow," on Hector Zazou's Arctic-song collection *Songs from the Cold Seas* ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1995, prod. Hector Zazou) is a gem following in the same style as *When I Was a Boy*.

influences:

◀◀ Laurie Anderson, Joni Mitchell, Kate Bush, Emmylou Harris, Peter Gabriel, Brian Eno, Daniel Lanois

▶▶ Suzanne Vega, Sinéad O'Connor, k.d. lang, Enya, Björk

Jack Jackson

Rockin' Sidney

Born Sidney Simien, April 9, 1938, in Lebeau, LA.

Rockin' Sidney Simien began playing guitar and harmonica before discovering accordion (he also played organ in Lake Charles lounges). He started playing professionally in his late teens and had his first regional hit in 1957. His 1962 hit record "No Good Woman" was backed with "You Ain't Nothin but Fine," which would eventually be covered by Rockpile. During his days on the soul circuit he was Count Rockin' Sidney and performed wearing a turban. Like Lynn August, he also worked the Lafayette circuit as an organist. Starting in the 1970s he began to work more in a zydeco vein that owed much to Clifton Chenier, but in 1985 he struck gold with the unlikely hit "My Toot Toot." This song is loosely based on a French expression for a term of endearment, "my special all and all." "Toot Toot" won a Grammy and received radio airplay far outside of the

normal spectrum for zydeco recordings. As to be expected, Sidney's sound is much more soul- and R&B-influenced than most other zydeco performers. His recordings are almost always a mixed bag.

what to buy: *My Toot Toot* ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1986, prod. Sidney Simien) includes the more band-oriented version of "My Toot Toot," probably the most well-known zydeco song there is. He covers his hits with a good solid band that includes Katie Webster, Warren Storm, and Marcus Miller, but the record is still missing the level of passion and excitement found on most zydeco records.

what to buy next: Sidney plays all the instruments on *My Zydeco Shoes Got the Zydeco Blues* ♪♪½ (Maison de Soul, 1984, prod. Sidney Simien). Sometimes this works, sometimes it doesn't. It contains many of the same tunes as *My Toot Toot*.

the rest:
Give Me a Good Time Woman ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1982)

worth searching for: Forget about "Toot Toot"; *Rockin' Sydney and His Dukes: They Call Me Rockin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Flyright, 1974, prod. Floyd Soileau) is the record that you want to check out. It's not zydeco or Cajun music, it's the R&B that you could find in the same area in the 1960s and 1970s. This is what Rockin' Sidney is really known for, and it brings together his hits and his B-sides. The most famous track here is "You Ain't Nothin' but Fine," but there are plenty of excellent tunes to go around.

influences:

- Clifton Chenier
- Nathan Williams, Lynn August, Zydeco Force, John Delafose

Jared Snyder

Paul Siebel

Born 1937, in Buffalo, NY.

Even though Paul Siebel hasn't been active as a working musician since the early 1980s, he has achieved near-legendary status, ranking alongside such icons as Joni Mitchell and Bob Dylan as one of the best writers to come out of the "folk scare" of the 1960s. Siebel's songs endure as masterpieces of modern songwriting: unforgettable melodies paired with an uncanny instinct for blending poetry, storytelling, and incisive character sketches. His songs have been covered by Bonnie Raitt ("Louise," "Any Day Woman"), Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Waylon Jennings, and many others. Siebel is also a passionate and intense singer, with the ability to be tender, sarcastic, occasionally joyful, but more often melancholy and regretful. The nasal quality of his voice is reminiscent of Dylan—but a Dylan with a huge vocal range, who sings in tune, and is a hellacious yodeler. Born in upstate New York at the tail end of the depression, Siebel taught himself to play guitar while in his teens, drawing ideas, inspiration, and vocal stylings from such country music stars as Hank Snow and Hank Williams. After serving in the military, he returned home and began performing in local folk clubs in 1962. In 1965 he moved to Greenwich Village, at that time a hotbed of talented folk musicians including Dylan, Jerry Jeff Walker, the Lovin' Spoonful, and Dave Van Ronk. In 1969 Elektra record producer Peter Siegel made a demo recording of Siebel, backed by guitarist David Bromberg, which he passed on to Elektra Records A&R man Jac Holzman. Holzman offered Siebel a very modest recording contract; there was only enough money for four three-hour recording sessions, which resulted in Siebel's debut album, *Woodsmoke and Oranges*. Perhaps the tiny budget was a blessing in disguise, for *Woodsmoke and Oranges* is exceptional in its emotional spontaneity. Siebel continued to tour through the 1970s, but became disenchanted with the music business and retired from performing during the early '80s. He had never had any enthusiasm for the interviews, rehearsals, and publicity events that go along with the business side of making music. His songwriting muse seemed to have deserted him too, after two albums, and he found himself getting irritated when fans would ask him whether he'd written any new songs. As he said in 1996, "I wasn't moving. It got to a point of either go forward with this or stop."

what to buy: The recent *Paul Siebel* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder, 1995, prod. Peter K. Siegel, Robert W. Zachary Jr.) contains Siebel's landmark debut album in its entirety and much of his follow-up album as well. Here are his best-known songs, "Louise" and "Any Day Woman," but also many little-known gems like the sardonic "Miss Cherry Lane," a scathing depiction of a groupie: "She's really quite commonplace, she pencils it on her face, and very well-read, reading magazines." "Long Afternoons" is a wistful remembering of a bygone love affair. Both the poignant "Bride 45" (a great version of this song has been recorded by Rosalie Sorrells) and "My Town" expose the dark underside of post–World War II suburbia. *Woodsmoke and Oranges* may be one of the best albums of all time, of any genre. Every single song on it is a work of genius. As if Siebel's incredibly intense singing and his beautifully crafted songs weren't enough, the album also features a crack backup band,

including guitar virtuoso David Bromberg, fiddler Richard Greene, and veteran Nashville steel player Weldon Myrick.

what to buy next: If you can find it, buy *Jack-Knife Gypsy* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1970, prod. Robert W. Zachary Jr.). This will give you the six tracks from Siebel's second album that didn't make the Philo reissue, including such really fine songs as the Cajunesque "The Captain's Daughter" and "Hillbilly Child," which (like "Then Came the Children" on *Woodsmoke and Oranges*) is sung from the vantage point of the disillusioned, world-weary older generation trying to relate to someone who is just beginning adulthood.

what to avoid: Although Siebel is listed as appearing on *Woodstock Mountains/Music from Mud Acres* (Rounder, 1987), he's not actually on this CD; look for the LP instead.

worth searching for: *Live at McCabes* ♪♪♪ (Rag Baby LP, 1981) was recorded at McCabe's in Santa Monica, California, with accompaniment by David Bromberg and Gary White, both of whom played on *Woodsmoke and Oranges*. In addition to his familiar originals, Siebel also sings songs from some of the musicians who inspired him, such as Jimmie Rodgers. Siebel can also be heard singing the Hank Williams classic "Weary Blues" on the LP compilation *Woodstock Mountains* ♪♪½ (Rounder, 1977, prod. Happy Traum).

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Snow, Hank Williams, Bob Dylan, Dave Van Ronk

▶▶ Bonnie Raitt, Iain Matthews, Emmylou Harris, Butch Hancock, Robert Earl Keen

see also: *David Bromberg*

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Dick Siegel

Born December 28, 1948, in Newark, NJ.

A veteran of several semi-successful Midwest bands during the '70s and '80s (most notably Siegel Schwall), Dick Siegel didn't really hit his stride until he went solo during the mid-'70s. His work is based on folk music, but the folk is taken uptown and uptempo with a big jolt of finger-snapping jive. His songs have an old-fashioned feel—his venues are "joints," and they're usually "jumpin'." Lyrically, Siegel sticks with the simple subjects like listening to a favorite band or the joys of eating breakfast at a favored Ann Arbor, Michigan, hangout. In 1992 he won a New Folk award at the Kerrville Folk Festival and has since become a popular fixture on the folk circuit.

what to buy: Siegel first released *Snap!* ♪♪♪♪ (Boo-Kay, 1980/Schoolkids, 1992, prod. Neil Scott, Dick Siegel) on his own tiny Boo-Kay records, but it wasn't until its re-release more than a decade later that the record found a wider audience for its jazzy swing sound.

what to buy next: On *Angels Aweigh* ♪♪♪½ (Schoolkids, 1994, prod. Paul Pearcy, Dick Siegel), Siegel loses some of the jazziness and puts the emphasis on a gentler folk sound.

what to avoid: Siegel's turn with '80s party band Tracy Lee and the Leonards on the cassette-only *Tomorrow Morning* ♪ (Schoolkids, 1993, prod. Dick Siegel, George Bedard, Greg Ward) sounds dated now.

worth searching for: During the '80s, Siegel made a compilation of his live performances with his band the Ministers of Melody on the cassette-only *Dick Siegel Live* ♪♪½ (Boo-Kay, 1984, prod. Dick Siegel).

influences:

◀◀ Dr. John, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Townes Van Zandt, Mark Eitzel, John Doe (X)

Jill Hamilton

Sileas

Formed 1985, in Scotland.

Patsy Seddon, vocals, harps; Mary Macmaster, vocals, harps.

Using unusual rhythms and a sense of their Scottish heritage, Patsy Seddon and Mary Macmaster have created a new standard in Scottish harp music. The only professional harp duo in Scotland, they have imbued their native music with their own creativity, and brought it alive with their vibrant harping. They have brought a variety of new repertoire to the harp, importing exciting reels and strathspeys from pipers, and bringing dance music alive. This is an amazing feat, especially considering that the two never set out to become musicians. They were both drawn to the harp at separate times of their lives, but somehow came together, with the help of a workshop, a college, and the formation of a band called Sprangeen. They are also a part of the Poozies. There are an abundance of singing harpers in the folk scene, but usually they are primarily a harper or primarily a singer, not both. One of the things that makes Sileas so unusual is the dual talent of both Macmaster and Seddon. Both women have dynamic voices and use them to create rich har-

monies paired with stunning melodies throughout their music. Their mouth music and waulking songs are phenomenal, combining traditional lyrics and melodies with their own sense of rhythm and harmony, weaving a new texture to the fabric of the music. Along with these compelling vocals, they add their exciting harping. Seddon studied with Alison Kinnaird for four years as a child, where she gained a solid understanding of the Scottish style of playing. Macmaster is self-taught, but still plays a mean harp. The two have explored the versatility of the instrument, bringing it to new levels with their own techniques and voices. Their sound is distinct, both due to their terrific blend of voices and the combination of wire-strung, gut-strung, and electro harps.

what to buy: *Delighted with Harps* ♪♪♪♪½ (Lapwing, 1986/ Green Linnet 1987, prod. Freeland Barbour) captures the spirit of traditional Scottish music with such treats as "The North Brig o' Edinburgh," a delightfully rhythmic strathspey, and "Da Day Dawn," a dreamy air singing praise of the morning. Their evocative singing of the waulking song "Tha Mulad" can give one chills. *Beating Harps* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1988 prod. Freeland Barbour) continues the high standards set in their first album. Of particular note are a haunting love song, "Ca' the Yowes," and a fun march/strathspey/reel set featuring "The Devil in the Kitchen."

what to buy next: *Play on Light* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1996, prod. Jim Sutherland) continues in the strong tradition of the first two albums, with delightful tracks, including the sad tale of "May Colvin," a fascinating rendition of "Ain't No Sunshine," and a show-stealing set that includes the sparkling original "Planxty Crockery" and the memorable and traditional "Domhnall Dubh." There's a touch heavier production to this one, which makes it a little less live and exciting.

what to avoid: *Harpbreakers* ♪♪♪ (Lapwing, 1990) is a nice album with excellent tunes, but it has a heavier use of the electro harp, which causes it to lose the traditional, acoustic feel the rest of their albums have.

influences:

Alison Kinnaird, Alan Stivell, Easy Club, Salif Keita, Morag MacLeod

Sue Richards, Knodel & Valencia

Jo Hughey Morrison

Silly Sisters

See: June Tabor, Steeleye Span

Silly Wizard

Formed 1972, in Edinburgh, Scotland. Disbanded 1988.

Andy M. Stewart, vocals, banjo; Phil Cunningham, accordion, keyboards, whistle; John Cunningham, fiddle, vocals; Gordon Jones, acoustic guitar, bodhrán, vocals; Martin Hadden, bass, guitar, vocals.

Characterized as one of the most traditional of all folk bands, Silly Wizard was known for their electric playing of mostly acoustic instruments. John Cunningham's flying fiddle, his brother Phil's amazing accordion, Andy Stewart's stirring vocals, and Gordon Jones's accompanying guitar helped define the band's sound. Rivaling the best of contemporary folk groups, Silly Wizard brought a unique chemistry to the stage, through its members' good-natured humor and technically brilliant musicianship, not to mention a passion for the music and performance itself. Rivaling Steeleye Span in its focus and aim, Silly Wizard's music was distinctly different from anything else popular on the folk circuit of the day. Perhaps this was largely due to the group's unquestionably Scottish sound and Stewart's powerful sense of song and ballad. The group's history was tumultuous. It started as a threesome (Gordon Jones, Bob Thomas, and John Cunningham), working around Cunningham's schedule, as he was only 14 at the time. These three recorded an album with singer Maddy Taylor, but it was never released. Soon after this, Stewart joined the group, along with John's younger brother Phil, on accordion. Living in squalid digs and fighting to keep their heads above water, they finally had a major breakthrough with a huge recording offer from a London firm. However, the deal fell through, leaving them to find their own way to the top. They eventually recorded 10 albums and toured all over Europe and America, building a reputation as solid as their musicianship. Their fiery dance tunes and soulful ballads live on in their excellent recordings, despite the band's demise.

what to buy: Widely considered the ultimate Silly Wizard recording, *Live Wizardry* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988, prod. Phil Cunningham) captures the scope and spirit of the band in concert, playing their best-loved tunes. Live performance definitely brings out the best in this group, as shown through such tracks as the moving "The Valley of Strathmore" and the energetic "The Queen of Argyll." Another excellent collection of the band's work is *The Best of Silly Wizard* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Silly Wizard), which includes a number of its most popular songs.

what to buy next: With a delightful selection of tunes, *So Many Partings* ♪♪♪♪½ (Highway, 1978/ Shanachie, 1989, prod. Archie

Fisher, Silly Wizard) may show the best mix of ballads and dance tunes of any of the albums. Standout tracks include Andy Stewart's "The Highland Clearances," a heartfelt lament about the loss of natural landscape in Scotland, and the stirring "Donald McGillavry/O'Neill's Cavalry March." *Caledonia's Hardy Sons* ♪♪♪ (Highway, 1978/Shanachie, 1989, prod. Silly Wizard, John Zollman) displays the excellent accordion work of Phil Cunningham and includes two of the group's best ballads, "Fhear a Bhata" and "Broom o' the Cowdenknowes."

what to avoid: *Golden, Golden* ♪♪♪♪ (REL/Green Linnet, 1989) and *Silly Wizard: Live in America* ♪♪♪♪ (REL/Green Linnet, 1989) are a pair of recordings that captured the band in concert in Boston. These two were later released on a single album, *Live Wizardry*. *Live Wizardry* is missing only one track from the original pair, so is the better choice for most fans.

the rest:
Wild and Beautiful ♪♪♪ (Highway, 1981/Shanachie, 1982)
Kiss the Tears Away ♪♪ (Highway, 1983/Shanachie, 1987)
Glint of Silver ♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1986)

influences:
◀◀ Dougie MacLean, Boys of the Lough, Whistlebinkies, Planxty
▶▶ Capercaillie, Tannahill Weavers

see also: *John Cunningham, Phil Cunningham, Andy Stewart, Nightnoise*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Shel Silverstein

Born November 23, 1932, in Chicago, IL.

A man of varied talents, Shel Silverstein divided his creative life into two parts: a writer/cartoonist who wrote both children's books and social commentary for *Playboy*; and a witty songwriter who wrapped novel lyrics around simple folk tunes. In 1969 Johnny Cash recorded Silverstein's "A Boy Named Sue" live at San Quentin Prison, and the song eventually flew to #2 on the Hot 100 to become the commercial highlight of Cash's career. Loretta Lynn recorded "One's on the Way," and Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show got a pair of huge hits out of the writer's "Sylvia's Mother" and "Cover of the *Rolling Stone*."

what's available: *Where the Sidewalk Ends* ♪♪♪ (Sony Kid's Music, 1976/1992) shows Silverstein's gift for penning kids tunes with stuff like "Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me Too" and "Crocodile's Toothache."

the rest:
The Great Conch Train Robbery (Flying Fish)
A Light in the Attic ♪♪♪ (Sony Kid's Music, 1992)

worth searching for: *Freakin' at the Freakers Ball* ♪♪♪ (CBS, 1969, prod. Roy Halee) became a 1969 cult classic due to its abundance of counterculture/hippie themes, including the hilarious title track, "I Got Stoned and I Missed It," and "Don't Give a Dose to the One You Love Most," while 1972's *Songs and Stories* ♪♪♪ (Parachute, 1972, prod. Ron Haffkine) includes such commendable titles as "Never Bite a Married Woman on the Thigh" and "Someone Ate the Baby."

influences:
◀◀ Tom Lehrer
▶▶ Dr. Hook

David Simons

Simon & Garfunkel

Formed 1956, in New York, NY. Disbanded 1970.

Paul Simon (born October 13, 1941, in Newark, NJ), vocals, guitar; Art Garfunkel (born November 5, 1941, in New York, NY), vocals.

Never mind that their first hit happened after they had broken up a second time; Simon and Garfunkel proved one of the most durable of the folk groups of the '60s—and all-time. Boyhood friends who had a minor hit ("Hey, Schoolgirl") in 1957 as Tom and Jerry, they recorded on and off, including a folk album, *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.*, in 1964 before Simon headed off to England. It might have ended there, but for producer Tom Wilson; the rock backing that he added to "The Sounds of Silence" sounds more forced and intrusive today than it did back then, but it proved perfect radio fare for the mid-'60s alongside the chiming guitars of the Byrds' "Turn, Turn, Turn" and the Beatles' "We Can Work It Out." Simon returned and came up with literate, ambitious songs like "Homeward Bound," "I Am a Rock," "The Dangling Conversation," "The Boxer," and "Mrs. Robinson"—the latter a massive hit in the soundtrack for *The Graduate*. With equally ambitious production, they became some of the era's biggest hits and threaded together the folk/protest movement of the early '60s, Simon's earlier Brill Building apprenticeship, and the burgeoning singer/songwriter movement. If his confessional lyrics often seemed pretentiously literary (see "Richard Cory") and were considered sophomoric tripe by some critics, they were also seen as poetry by the baby boom generation entering college. In fact, Simon's lyrics often found their way into college literature and poetry courses. The obvious

disparity and tension in the act—Simon was musically adept, wrote the songs and sang most of them; Garfunkel played no instrument, sang harmony and occasional lead—resulted in their parting while they were at a creative and commercial peak with *Bridge over Troubled Water*, their most successful album and, with the title track (their last Number One), Garfunkel's best moment. Garfunkel went on to films (*Catch-22, Carnal Knowledge*) and a part-time recording career. Simon began a more successful solo career. They have collaborated occasionally since then, including a massive reunion concert in New York's Central Park during 1981. After Simon and Garfunkel, any nerd with a sensitive lyric, a few guitar moves, and a friend singing would become fair game for the pop market.

what to buy: *Bookends* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel, Roy Halee) holds together like a concept album, with the film hit "Mrs. Robinson" crassly tacked on at the end. *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1966, prod. Bob Johnston) is their real first album together as S&G.

what to buy next: *Bridge over Troubled Water* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1970, prod. Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel, Roy Halee) is considered their masterpiece, though today it sounds overproduced. *Sounds of Silence* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1966, prod. Bob Johnston) is basically an electric reworking of *The Paul Simon Songbook* (CBS UK, 1965), adding the electrified "Sounds of Silence."

what to avoid: Yes, *The Graduate* ♪ (Columbia, 1968, prod. Teo Macero) was an important soundtrack; no, it doesn't have anything new on it except "Mrs. Robinson." *The Concert in Central Park* ♪ (Warner Bros., 1982, prod. Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel, Roy Halee, Phil Ramone) is a too-late attempt to recapture the magic.

the rest:
Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M. ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1964)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972)
Old Friends ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: *Collected Works* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990, prod. various) combines all the studio albums on three compact discs.

influences:
◀◀ Pete Seeger, Weavers, Peter, Paul & Mary, Bob Dylan, Kingston Trio, Beach Boys, Everly Brothers

▶▶ James Taylor, George Harrison, Jim Croce, Jackson Browne, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Joe Henry, Sheryl Crow

see also: *Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel*

Leland Rucker

Carly Simon

Born June 25, 1945, in New York, NY.

Carly Simon's career began more than 30 years ago when she dueted with her sister, Lucy, on "Winken Blinken, and Nod," a modest hit on the Kapp label. After a couple of false starts, Simon—whose father co-founded the Simon & Schuster publishing house and who was married to James Taylor between 1972–83—landed a deal with Elektra and her self-titled debut was released in 1971. Her warm, often vulnerable-sounding vocals share romantic intimacies, child-like wonders, and bold observations. Though she's released a continuous stream of recordings, the '70s remain her most accomplished decade; part of her appeal, as well as a problem, is that no one knows quite what to expect from one recording to the next—an artistically bold approach but one that hasn't helped Simon build a loyal, dependable audience. Her spotty *Hotcakes* album is a case in point; she scored a hit with the buoyant "Mockingbird" (a duet with Taylor), but it was her more introspective and heartfelt songs, such as "Haven't Got Time for the Pain," that rang the truest.

what to buy: Simon's first three albums remain her best. *No Secrets* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1972, prod. Richard Perry) is forthright, passionate, and wonderfully outspoken, particularly on the great put-down classic "You're So Vain." Her debut, *Carly Simon* ♪♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1971, prod. Eddie Kramer), is a fine melding of rock, pop, blues, country, and ballads. She landed a deserved Top 10 with the lead track, "That's the Way I Always Heard It Should Be." *Anticipation* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1971, prod. Paul Samwell-Smith) is not as varied and lacks the instrumental depth of Simon's debut, but her vocals carry the album in an increasingly confident and, at times, confidential manner.

what to buy next: *Coming around Again* ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1987, prod. various) is a mature, confident work with hits in the title track, "All I Want Is You," and "Give Me All Night." *Letters Never Sent* ♪♪♪½ (Arista, 1994) takes an interesting concept—notes and letters that Simon has stashed away—and turns it into a rich, personal musical outing.

what to avoid: Simon's to attempts to cover American popular standards generally wind up in failure. Though her heart may be in *Torch* **woof!** (Warner Bros., 1981) and *My Romance* **woof!** (Arista, 1990), her pipes and tone are incompatible, so removed from the high quality of the real thing as to be an embarrassment.

the rest:
Hotcakes ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1974)
Playing Possum ♪♪ (Elektra, 1975)

mountain dulcimer

The mountain dulcimer is often referred to as a fretted dulcimer, Appalachian dulcimer, or lap dulcimer, in an effort to differentiate it from the hammered dulcimer, which is no relation. The mountain dulcimer heard in most folk recordings is a long, narrow, fretted instrument played flat on one's lap, most often strung with three or four strings. Early mountain dulcimers evolved in the late eighteenth century in the southern Appalachian mountains from a German instrument called the scheitholt. The dulcimer was considered a safe and proper instrument by those God-fearing people who felt the fiddle to be a rakish instrument only for rowdy dances. The dulcimer was perfect for accompanying the old songs and hymns and became a popular parlor instrument. Old-timers today can still remember having them in the house when they were growing up. Dulcimers are commonly played with bare fingers, but various "picks" are utilized, including turkey quills, willow switches, and of course, standard guitar picks. On rare occasions a dulcimer is played with a bow. Typically the left hand is used for noting the strings, but occasionally dulcimer players will use a wooden "noter" to fret the strings. One fine example of the many different styles of mountain dulcimer playing can be heard on *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* (Susan Trump Music, 1997).

Heidi Cerrigione

The Best of Carly Simon ♪♪♪ (Elektra, 1975/1987)
Another Passenger ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1976)
Boys in the Trees ♪♪ (Elektra, 1978)
Spy ♪½ (Elektra, 1979)
Come Upstairs ♪♪½ (Elektra, 1980)
Hello Big Man ♪½ (Warner Bros., 1983)
Spoiled Girl **woof!** (Epic, 1985)
Heartburn ♪♪ (soundtrack; Arista, 1986)
Working Girl ♪♪ (soundtrack; Arista, 1988)
Greatest Hits Live ♪♪½ (Arista, 1988)
Have You Seen Me Lately ♪ (Arista, 1990)
Postcards from the Edge ♪♪ (soundtrack; Arista, 1990)
This Is My Life ♪♪ (soundtrack; Qwest, 1992)
Clouds in My Coffee: 1965–95 ♪♪½ (Arista, 1995)
Film Noir ♪♪½ (Arista, 1997)

influences:

James Taylor, Cat Stevens, Joni Mitchell, Carole King, Laura Nyro, Judy Collins, William Butler Yeats

Melissa Manchester, Olivia Newton-John, Helen Reddy, Yvonne Elliman

Patrick McCarty

Paul Simon

Born October 13, 1941, in Newark, NJ.

Riding high on the success of Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge over Troubled Water"—the duo's last gasp—Paul Simon began strong as a solo artist, churning out five hits from his first three albums before cooling off. His attempt at a movie about the life of a touring rock act (*One Trick Pony*) flopped, and his 1983 *Hearts and Bones*—which started as a reunion album with Garfunkel—is still his worst-seller. In 1986 he took a chance, recording with South African musicians and then adding his own lyrics to the instrumental tracks. The resulting collaboration, *Graceland*, became one of the most influential albums of the '80s, exposing African music to American mainstream audiences like never before. Since then, he has recorded only one studio album, *The Rhythm of the Saints*, a less-successful attempt to fuse Brazilian music and his lyrics. Still, he remains one of the rock era's most accomplished and ambitious artists. His musical, *The Capeman*, written with Derek Walcott, appeared on Broadway in early 1998.

what to buy: *Graceland* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1986, prod. Paul Simon) is an amazing comeback and still the best collaboration between a Western songwriter and African musicians. *Paul Simon* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972, prod. Paul Simon, Roy Halee) picks up the world music groove—which he lightly pursued with former partner Art Garfunkel—on the hits "Mother and Child Reunion" and "Me and Julio down by the Schoolyard."

what to buy next: *Live Rhymin'* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1974, prod. Phil Ramone), is a well-recorded live set that features the Dixie Hummingbirds singing backup and the Peruvian folk troupe Urubamba. *Still Crazy after All These Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros.

Paul Simon **(© Ken Settle)**

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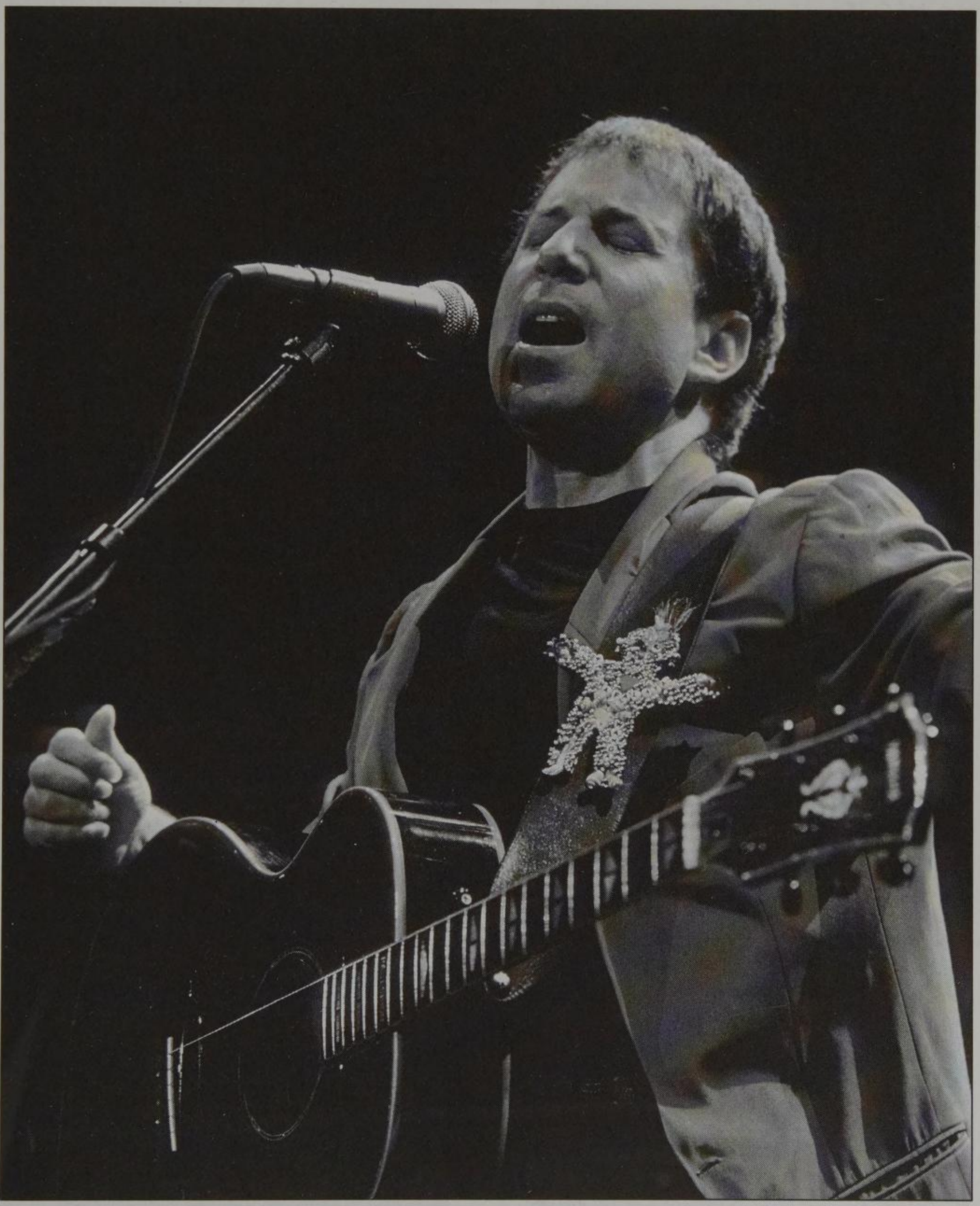


mark simos

1975, prod. Paul Simon) features classy songs caught in a rich, '70s-styled production.

what to avoid: *Hearts and Bones* ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1983, prod. Paul Simon, Russ Titelman, Roy Halee, Lenny Waronker) contains one great song ("The Late Great Johnny Ace"), but also features selections such as "When Numbers Get Serious" and "Cars Are Cars," which are as silly as their titles imply.

the rest:
There Goes Rhymin' Simon ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1973)
Greatest Hits, Etc. ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1977)
One Trick Pony ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1980)
Negotiations and Love Songs ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1988)
The Rhythm of the Saints ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1990)
Paul Simon's Concert in the Park ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1991)
Paul Simon 1964/1993 ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1993)
Songs from the Capeman ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1997)

worth searching for: *Paul Simon: The Collection* ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1991), a three-volume Japanese set that includes a selection of Simon's hits, a live set from his "Graceland" tour, and an interview, is worth scouting for.

influences:
◀◀ Pete Seeger, Weavers, Peter, Paul & Mary, Bob Dylan, Kingston Trio, Beach Boys, Everly Brothers

▶▶ James Taylor, George Harrison, Jim Croce, Jackson Browne, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Joe Henry, Sheryl Crow

see also: *Simon & Garfunkel*

Leland Rucker

Mark Simos

Born July 11, 1956, in Cleveland, OH.

Mark Simos is a modern-day traditionalist, a songwriter, and fiddler extraordinaire who has carved out a niche that includes bluegrass, Irish, Klezmer, Southern old-time, and Quebecois music. He calls his style "traditional music from imaginary countries," and there's a worldly spirituality that flavors his compositions, be they upbeat traditional, old-time fiddle music, contradance confections, or moving country-folk ballads. Back during the 1970s, Simos was a mainstay in California's Irish music scene, and over the years he's performed and recorded with many top-notch American and Irish traditional musicians. Simos appears on albums by Childsplay, John Whelan and Eileen Ivers, and Mick Moloney and Eugene O'Donnell, among others. His songs have been recorded by various artists including Alison Krauss, Ranch Romance, Kate Brislin and Jody Stecher, and Laurie Lewis. Simos's website, which shares its name with that of his publishing company, is www.devachan.com.

what's available: *Race the River Jordan* ♪♪♪♪ (Yodel-Ay-Hee, 1995, prod. Peter Langston, Mark Simos), subtitled "New Old-Time Style Fiddle Tunes," is the first Simos album to bear only his name (it's billed as Mark Simos and Friends). Consisting of original fiddle tunes and fresh Southern old-time material, the instrumental album (only the title track contains vocals) sparkles with a friendly, familiar back-porch spontaneity. Besides Simos's fiddle and piano (he calls it "frontier piano"), the impressive cast of players and friends includes Molly Tenenbaum (banjo), Daniel Steinberg (piano, flute), David Cahn (bass, mandolin, guitar), Dirk Powell (banjo, fiddle, bass, accordion), Jere Canote (guitar), and co-producer Langston (acoustic bass, guitar). Simos's considerable sense of humor comes through in the liner notes, which describe various songs as being inspired by reasons to give up coffee, a strange smell at a party, and a cat who went from crying piteously to meowing along with the fiddle while hearing a tape by Luther Strong.

worth searching for: These won't be hard to find. Alison Krauss and Union Station's *So Long So Wrong* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Alison Krauss and Union Station) contains two Simos compositions, "Deeper than Crying" and the album's first single, "Find My Way Back to My Heart." Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum's Grammy-nominated *The Oak and the Laurel* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Laurie Lewis, Tom Rozum) features Simos's gorgeous love song, "Sleepy Eyes."

influences:
◀◀ The Band, Martin Carthy, Clare fiddler and flute player Joe Murtagh

▶▶ Alison Krauss, Laurie Lewis

David Sokol

Simple Gifts

Formed 1989, in Lemont, PA.

Linda Littleton, violin, recorder, bowed psaltery, hammered dulcimer (1989–present); Rachel Hall, English concertina, piano (1994–present); Karen Hirshon, violin, mandolin, banjolin, guitar, spoons, tambourine (1995–present); Toby Carlson, recorders, viola da gamba, bass viol (1989–94); Paul Oorts, guitar, mandolin, banjo (1991–95); Mark Fowler, mountain dulcimer (1989–91).

Simple Gifts presents an exciting and varied sound of international folk music that reflects the wide range and broad musical background of its members. Drawing on an impressive variety

of ethnic folk styles, the group plays everything from lively Irish jigs and down-home American reels to hard-driving Klezmer frailachs and haunting Gypsy melodies, spicing the mix with distinctive rhythms of Balkan dance music, the lush sounds of Scandinavian twin fiddling, and original compositions written in a traditional style. Linda Littleton studied classical music for many years and serves as principal second violin of the Nittany Valley Symphony. She has always been intrigued by other styles and hopes to further the group's exploration into the music of her own eastern European and Jewish ancestors. Rachel Hall began playing piano for Cincinnati contra dances when she was in junior high school. A Watson fellowship allowed her to spend a year studying traditional dance music in Norway, the Shetland Islands, Scotland, and Ireland. Karen Hirshon is a native of Illinois and was a founding member of the bluegrass band Whetstone Run. As the newest member of Simple Gifts, this multi-instrumentalist brings a deep love of American music and some interesting percussion ideas. Former band members include Toby Carlson, a founding member of Nova Consort, which performs Renaissance and medieval music; and Paul Oorts, a native of Belgium who plays in all styles, from bluegrass to ragtime to new acoustic to more traditional folk.

what to buy: *Down by the Sally Gardens* ♪♪♪♪ (Purple Finch Productions, 1992, prod. Simple Gifts) is a collection of instrumental music from England, Ireland, and America that includes some contra and square-dance music, like "Liberty/St. Anne's Reel" and "Off to California/The Rights of Man," and English country dance tunes, like "Heartsease" and "Hole in the Wall." Oorts's outstanding guitar begins the title cut, underscored by Carlson's excellent viola da gamba, and then the two are joined by Littleton's sweet lyrical violin. Later in the recording, Celia Wyckoff (recorder, bass) joins Simple Gifts on two selections.

what to buy next: *A Place Just Right* ♪♪♪♪ (Purple Finch Productions, 1994, prod. Linda Littleton, Paul Oorts) includes talented Steve Schneider (hammered dulcimer, accordion), a wonderful addition to the Simple Gifts ensemble. This collection of traditional and original folk melodies contains two of Schneider's original compositions, "Jonah's Waltz" and "Zachary Duncan," as well as Littleton's "Nathan's Song," and the "Second Anniversary Waltz" written with Oorts. The arrangements are clearly innovative and feature the incredible talent of all four musicians. The newest recording, *Other Places, Other Times* ♪♪♪½ (Purple Finch Productions, 1996, prod. Seth Austen, Linda Littleton, Rachel Hall), is the result of a collaboration among three women of material from their most recent musical adventures to eastern Europe and Scandinavia. The selections include Klezmer, Romanian, Bulgarian, Irish, English, Scandinavian, Israeli, American, and original tunes. Although they treat each style of music with respect, you won't find the usual arrangements here. All of the Simple Gifts recordings are presented with comprehensive liner notes and are available from Simple Gifts, P.O. Box 968, Lemont, PA 16851.

the rest:
Simple Gifts ♪♪♪ (Purple Finch Productions, 1991) (cassette only)

influences:
◀◀ Natalie MacMaster, House Band, Helicon, Eileen Ivers
▶▶ Broadside Electric, No Strings Attached

see also: *Steve Schneider*

Heidi Cerrigione

Martin Simpson /Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson /Band of Angels

Born May 5, 1953, in Scunthorpe, South Humberside, England.

Band of Angels: Jessica Ruby Simpson, vocals, percussion; Martin Simpson, guitar, vocal; Lisa Ekstrom, accordion, whistle, vocals; Alisa Fineman, harmonium, guitar, vocals; Kimball Hurd, mandolin, mandola, guitar, vocals; Barry Phillips, cello, bowed psaltery, harmonium, percussion, vocals.

That one so young as Martin Simpson is mentioned in the same breath as Martin Carthy and John Renbourn testifies to the skill of this innovative British guitarist. Simpson began playing guitar as the age of 12. By 18 he was opening for Steeleye Span on its British tour and had released his first album. In the years that followed, he has accompanied June Tabor, briefly joined the Albion Band, worked with Metamora, and released a number of albums. Since 1987 he has been living in the United States with his American wife, poet Jessica Ruby Simpson, with whom he has worked with the Band of Angels. American blues and gospel play a significant part in Simpson's musical style, and he moves between genres with great ease. A friend suggested an alternate title for *Cool and Unusual*: "Celtic Schmeltic."

what to buy: *Cool and Unusual* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1997, prod. Martin Simpson) ambles over the musical landscape, with Simpson on guitar and banjo accompanied by bowed tambour,

marovany, cello, lap slide acoustic guitar, etc. The lack of vocals adds to the album's sense of mystery; the melodies could be from anywhere.

what to buy next: Simpson and wife's *Band of Angels* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996) won't appeal to everyone. Ruby Simpson's voice–frail, wavering, sometimes flat—is an acquired taste. Her lyrics, however, are intriguing and filled with imagery. The instrumentation has the eerie, Eastern-Celtic effects found on some of Richard and Linda Thompson's albums.

best of the rest:
Closer Walk with Thee ♪♪♪½ (Gourd, 1994)
Live ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1997)

worth searching for: Simpson's guitar work is a fitting accompaniment to June Tabor's voice on their album together, *A Cut Above* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1989/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Paul Brown).

influences:
◀◀ Martin Carthy, Richard & Linda Thompson, David Lindley
▶▶ Béla Fleck & the Flecktones

Pamela Murray Winters

Martin & Jessica Simpson

See: Martin Simpson

Sixteen Ninety-One

See: The Bothy Band

Ricky Skaggs

Born July 18, 1954, in Cordell, KY.

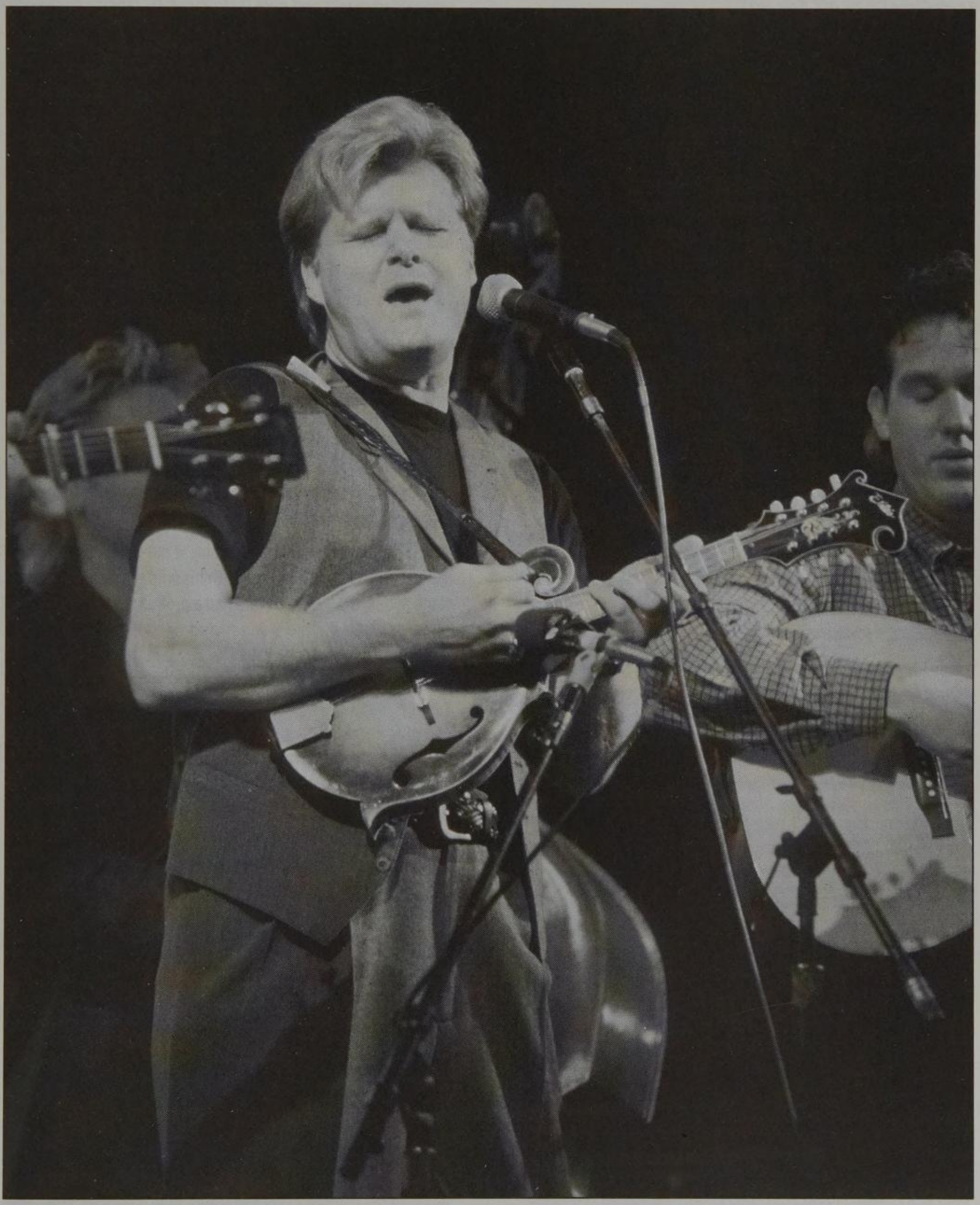
One of the most successful country artists of the 1980s, and also one of the most influential, Ricky Skaggs is credited with bringing bluegrass and roots music back into vogue shortly after the troubling *Urban Cowboy* phase had mercifully been laid to rest. A mandolin whiz before he hit his teens and a member of Ralph Stanley's Clinch Mountain Boys at age 15, alongside boyhood pal Keith Whitley, Skaggs retreated to the Washington, D.C., area by 19, tiring of life as a traveling bluegrass musician. However, his early retirement was short-lived after the Country Gentlemen invited him to tour with them. Following stints with J.D. Crowe and the New South and the Seldom Scene, Skaggs formed Boone Creek, adding electric instruments and drums to his band's sound. After Boone Creek's demise, he joined Emmylou Harris's Hot Band in 1977, replacing Rodney Crowell and putting his own bluegrass stamp on a string of Harris's late 1970s and early 1980s records, like the acoustic *Roses in the Snow*. Following a pair of critically acclaimed records on Sugar Hill during the late 1970s, Skaggs signed with Epic and began an impressive hitmaking streak, scoring 10 Number One singles in four short years, including his 1984 smash "Uncle Pen," the first bluegrass song to hit the top since Flatt and Scruggs's "Ballad of Jed Clampett" in 1963. Skaggs married Sharon White, of the Whites, in 1981 and joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1982. In 1985 the Country Music Association named him its Entertainer of the Year. After leaving Epic, he signed with Atlantic in 1995. Although some time has passed since Skaggs had a big charting single, he's still involved in several musical ventures, including a concert series taped for TNN at the historic Ryman Auditorium, as well as producing records for Dolly Parton and the Whites. Seen by many as a sort of successor to the late Bill Monroe, Skaggs prefers instead to be considered as one of many merely carrying on Monroe's legacy. The best of Skaggs's recorded work, however, would suggest otherwise.

what to buy: *Bluegrass Rules* ♪♪♪♪½ (Skaggs Family/Rounder, 1997, prod. Ricky Skaggs) is an energetic, faithful "mainstream" bluegrass record that sacrifices none of the traditional sound to gain accessibility. It's a real winner, and truly a bright spot in Skaggs's recent career. *Highways and Heartaches* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1982, prod. Ricky Skaggs) contains three Number One singles, including Guy Clark's "Heartbroke," and stands as simply one of the best country albums of the 1980s, though it's certainly rivaled by its predecessor, *Waitin' for the Sun to Shine* ♪♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1981, prod. Ricky Skaggs).

what to buy next: Prior to his Epic signing, Skaggs was signed to independent Sugar Hill, where he made two exceptional records that leaned more heavily on bluegrass, but still showed Skaggs's penchant for experimentation. *Sweet Temptation* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1979) is a bluegrass/honky-tonk mixture, and *Skaggs and Rice* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1980), with guitarist Tony Rice, is a pure delight with spare instrumentation and an old-time sound.

the rest:
Family and Friends ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982/1986)
Don't Cheat in Our Hometown ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill/Epic, 1983)
Country Boy ♪♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1984)
Live in London ♪♪♪♪ (Epic, 1985)

Ricky Skaggs **(© Jack Vartoogian)**



Love's Gonna Get Ya! ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1986)
Comin' Home to Stay ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1988)
Kentucky Thunder ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1989)
(With Keith Whitley) *Second Generation Bluegrass* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1990)
My Father's Son ♪♪♪½ (Epic/Word, 1991)
Super Hits ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1993)
That's It ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1994)
Solid Ground ♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1995)
Country Pride ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1995)
Country Songs ♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)
Life Is a Journey ♪♪♪½ (Atlantic, 1997)
The Best of Ricky Skaggs N/A (Epic/Legacy, 1998)

worth searching for: With a band that includes Skaggs, Jerry Douglas, and Terry Baucom, *Boone Creek* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1977) is pretty progressive stuff, featuring horns, synthesizers, and Skaggs taking a few lead vocals, including a fair Ralph Stanley impression on "Drifting Too Far from the Shore."

influences:

◀◀ Emmylou Harris, Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley

▶▶ Jerry Douglas, Keith Whitley, Steve Wariner

Stephen L. Betts

Skeeter & the Skidmarks

Formed 1984, in Galax, VA.

Edwin Lacy, banjo, vocals; Scott Freeman, fiddle, mandolin, vocals; Willard Gayheart, guitar, vocals; Sandy Grover, bass, vocals.

Skeeter and the Skidmarks successfully combine a bluegrass style with the old-time mountain sound that bluegrass sprang from and adds in some beautifully done *a cappella* pieces.

what to buy: Their most recent recording is *Hubbin' It* ♪♪♪½ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Kerry Hay), a mix of traditional tunes and their own compositions. The band is tight instrumentally and vocally, with very well done harmony arrangements, such as on "Lead Me Gently Home, Father." "When the Roses Bloom in Dixieland" also stands out on this disc. It's unusual for a band that has a strong bluegrass orientation to use the clawhammer banjo style, and Edwin Lacy's clean and crisp playing stands out in this regard. Scott Freeman's fiddle is sweet and smooth, and Willard Gayheart and Sandy Grover provide rock-steady backup on guitar and bass, respectively. Fans of bluegrass and old-time music alike will enjoy this recording.

what to buy next: The group's earlier release, *Alternate Roots* ♪♪♪½ (Hay Holler, 1994, prod. Kerry Hay) is a similar mix of accompanied vocals and pure instrumentals, ranging from such old standards as "Liberty" to some of the group's own compositions. All four combine vocals on a rousing gospel piece, "I Know the Lord (Has Laid His Hands on Me)." The sound is the same as on their later release, not hard-core bluegrass but not strictly traditional, either, and should appeal to fans of both.

influences:

◀◀ Highwoods String Band

▶▶ Freighthoppers, Primitive Characters

Dave Shombert

The Skillet Lickers

Formed c. 1926, in and around Atlanta, GA.

James Gideon "Gid" Tanner (born June 6, 1885, in Thomas Bridge, GA; died May 13, 1960), fiddle, banjo; Clayton McMichen (born January 26, 1900, in Allatoona, GA; died in 1970), fiddle; Riley Puckett (born May 7, 1894, in Alpharetta, GA; died in 1946), guitar, vocals; Fate Norris, banjo; Lowe Stokes, fiddle; Bert Layne, fiddle.

The Skillet Lickers were the preeminent old-time string band of the 1920s. Led by Gid Tanner, with his wild red hair and wacky stage antics, the Skillet Lickers had a profound impact on musicians, as well as in radio and recording, both in their infancy and during the band's heyday. The group featured four fiddlers including Tanner, whose comic routines became as well known as their music. Riley Puckett, the blind singer and guitarist, played in a style that would be imitated especially successfully by groups like the Carter Family. Invited to record in New York in 1924, Tanner and Puckett were teamed up with Clayton McMichen and Fate Norris in order to give the band a bigger sound. The combination worked immediately, and by 1926, when their first recordings were released, the Skillet Lickers were a hit. Recordings of their comic skits were bigger sellers than their fiddle music, and Puckett's vocal recordings also sold well. This created a shift in the focus of the group and a name change, to the rather unwieldy "Gid Tanner and His Skillet Lickers with Clayton McMichen and Riley Puckett." The group began to splinter, and McMichen, who had worked in the studio with Jimmie Rodgers, left to form Clayton McMichen and His Georgia Wildcats. Tanner recorded with Puckett one last time in 1934, for Bluebird, with his teenage son joining them, along with mandolin player Ted Hawkins. McMichen would go on to form a Dixieland band in 1944, and couldn't escape the old-time/folk revival of the 1960s. Puckett worked for a number of years on various radio programs and recording with only

moderate success. Today few people understand the strong influence the Skillet Lickers had on the development of string band music.

what's available: Sadly, their catalog hasn't been treated with the respect it deserves, but, with a little hunting, fans will find music from this seminal outfit available. The only CD release to date is *The Skillet Lickers: Old Time Fiddle Tunes and Songs from North Georgia* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1996). It's a good introduction to the band and should be readily available.

worth searching for: There are a number of LPs on both County and Rounder still available at yard sales. Don't let them get away.

influences:

- Clayton McMichen & His Georgia Wildcats, Fiddlin' John Carson
- Freighthoppers, Mac Benford & His Woodshed All-Stars

see also: *Riley Puckett*

Stephen L. Betts

Patrick Sky

Born Patrick Lynch, October 2, 1940, in College Park, GA.

The strange and sometimes sordid saga of Patrick Sky can be interpreted in many ways, most obviously as a musical David and Goliath fable, but one thing is without question: unlike countless numbers of his contemporaries in the so-called '60s Protest Movement, when push came to heave-ho Sky was never once afraid to put his mouth where his harmonica was, nor to risk it all—career, reputation and peace of mind—for songs and stands he truly believed in. Sky's musical background is not that much different from those of his fellow Greenwich Villagers: disillusioned with what society was offering the college-age man of the era, he found solace, and then inspiration, in the writings of Will Rogers and the songs of Woody Guthrie, and no less an authority than Dave Van Ronk was soon proclaiming Sky to be "one of the best storytellers I know." His live sets from the time were alternately moving and annoying, witty and scatological, bitter and bittersweet, but never less than memorable, and by the time of his first album released in 1965 he was already becoming a force to be reckoned with in folk music circles. As the decade progressed, and Sky (along with girlfriend Buffy Sainte-Marie) became more involved with issues pertaining to the plight of the Native American, his songwriting became more biting and his performances, now legendary for their unpredictability, less frequent. When he *did* sing in those days, his shows consisted more and more of a series of songs so confrontational in its lyrical stance that many wondered if the acceptable bounds of satire had somehow been breached. The song titles themselves, "Bake Dat Chicken Pie," "Ramblin' Hunchback," "Vatican Caskets," and "Child Molesting Blues," were enough to frighten away many listeners, to say nothing of the many record companies who rejected outright an album's worth of such material recorded during March 1971. Despite a high-profile campaign in *The New York Post* by journalist Al Aronowitz begging for its release, this album languished unheard for two years until it was finally picked up by a small label called Adelphi and unleashed upon an incredulous world under the title *Songs That Made America Famous*. It has since become legendary, as much for its cover art and label design (two butt cheeks proudly pressed flat together in a parody of the Apple Records logo) as for its musical content. Not surprisingly perhaps, Sky hasn't been much heard from since, though he remains active in record production (he supervised Mississippi John Hurt's final sessions) and apparently even performs sporadically to this day. One interesting, perhaps vindicating footnote however: on a recent trip to his ancestral homeland, Sky happened upon a most unusual Irish village where the townsfolk gather in the local pub every Friday night to sing *Songs That Made America Famous* in its entirety, word for word and note for note.

what to buy: The album that was simultaneously being hailed as "*the* social commentary disc of the decade" and scorned as "a disgrace to the nation" when it was first issued in 1973, *Songs That Made America Famous* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Adelphi, 1997, prod. Alex Bennett, Patrick Sky) sounds no less offensively brilliant today. The daddy of all things politically incorrect, this album proves Sky did much more than simply walk the social-commentary walk when it came to confronting Nixonian America, and he did it, as he always did, with a hearty if suspect smile. Meanwhile, Dylan was shopping for pottery and scoring Peckinpah Westerns, just to put things in their proper historical perspective.

what to buy next: His debut disc, *Patrick Sky* ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1965/1995), is a comparatively meek and mild offering, sweet and competent and, in comparison to what lay ahead, inconsequential. Call it "The Freewheelin' Pat Sky."

worth searching for: Although they're becoming increasingly hard to find, *A Harvest of Gentle Clang* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966), *Reality Is Bad Enough* ♪♪♪½ (Verve/Forecast, 1968), and *Pho-*

tographs ♪♪♪½ (Verve/Forecast, 1969) are all worth acquiring as important elements of the overall Sky experience.

influences:

◀◀ Bertolt Brecht, Lenny Bruce, the Marquis de Sade

▶▶ John Butler Train, G.G. Allin, Lenny Molotov

Gary Pig Gold

Skyedance

Formed 1995, under the name Alasdair Fraser Band. Renamed Skyedance, 1996.

Alasdair Fraser, fiddle, viola; Eric Rigler, Great Highland Bagpipes, uilleann pipes, Scottish small-pipes; Chris Norman, wooden flute, piccolo; Paul Machlis, piano, organ, keyboards; Mick Linden, fretless bass; Peter Maund, percussion.

Combining the creative talents of fiddler Alasdair Fraser, flautist Chris Norman, keyboardist Paul Machlis, and piper Eric Rigler invites a whole new idiom in folk music onto the scene. This is exactly what happened upon the formation of Skyedance. Norman's classically traditional values and Machlis's New Age/modern keyboard technique blend with the traditional roots of Fraser and Rigler to form a fascinating and exciting blend of modern traditional music with a Scottish edge. Adding the talents of Mick Linden on bass and Peter Maund on percussion, this band achieves a great depth of emotion through their music. Named for a collection of Gaelic song and dance tunes put together on the Isle of Skye in the 1700s, the group manages to capture those Celtic roots and use them as a basis from which to grow. Their music is characterized by soaring fiddle lines, lilting flute, haunting bagpipe strains, and a percussive background of piano, bass, and bodhrán. Their repertoire is almost entirely original music; music that shows a depth of knowledge and a variety of backgrounds spun together to form a delightful web of sound, ready to snare its listener.

what's available: *Way out to Hope Street* ♪♪♪½ (Culburnie, 1997, prod. Skyedance) ranges from the seductively gentle sound of the haunting Norman-penned "Lupine" to the driving beat and kicking rhythms of the title track, "Way out to Hope Street." This album features a delightful mix of gentle, lazy airs, toe-tapping dance tunes, and New Age melodies, all with a bit of a Celtic twist. All the members show a true talent for music composition. Despite the excellence of the collection of original works, the recording's highlight has to be the intoxicating arrangement of a traditional Scottish set, "The Skyedance Reels: Ruilleadh Cailleach/The Bird's Nest/Harris Dance."

influences:

◀◀ Buddy MacMaster, Hamish Moore, Alain Froment, Helicon

▶▶ Nightnoise, Battlefield Band

see also: *Alasdair Fraser, Chris Norman, Baltimore Consort*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Skylark

Formed c. 1987, in Ireland.

Len Graham, vocals; Garry Ó Briain, mandocello, guitar, keyboards; Gerry O'Connor, fiddle, viola; Máirtin O'Connor, accordion.

Teaming up a bunch of guys who were all outstanding solo musicians before they came together doesn't always guarantee a good mix, but Skylark brings together great solo talent and comes up with gold. Len Graham won the All-Ireland championship of traditional singing in 1971 and, after a stint with Boys of the Lough, made a strong solo career. Garry Ó Briain is widely regarded as one of the top accompanists, as well as a solid soloist. He played formerly in several bands, including Aengus and Buttons and Bow. Gerry O'Connor, formerly of Kinvara, has won multiple fiddle awards for his outstanding playing. Máirtin O'Connor, of Delores Keane's band and De Danann fame, has been wowing audiences with his amazing accordion technique for many years. It might seem that combining all that talent in one group would produce a battle of the egos and a fight for supremacy, but not here. The four blend their gifts deftly into a sweet, intoxicating brew.

what's available: *Light and Shade* ♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1992, prod. Skylark) features a good blend of dance tunes and soulful songs. This is truly a treasure-trove of traditional tunes, all beautifully performed. The upbeat and exciting accordion lines bring this album to life. *All of It* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1989/Green Linnet, 1989, prod. P.J. Curtis) combines some beautifully arranged traditional material with several new tunes, and the listener is hard-pressed to tell which ones aren't traditional. Among the best tracks is a delightful lilting duel of fiddle and accordion, "The Contradiction Set," and a couple of heart-felt love songs, "Siúil a Rún" and the Irish version of a Scottish song, "The Braes of Balquhidder."

the rest:

Wildflower ♪♪♪½ (Collectables, 1996)

worth searching for: *Skylark* ♪♪♪½ (Claddagh, 1987/Shanachie 1989, prod. P.J. Curtis) (cassette only) and *Raining Bicycles* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1996, prod. Garry Ó Briain) are nice albums, if all

but impossible to find. *Skylark*, at least, was put out by Shanachie in the United States so you may find a copy in the cutout bins. It has a great version of "Molly Bán a Stóir" led by Sarah and Rita King, outstanding traditional singers from Caherlistrane, County Galway. *Raining Bicycles* is now out on CD so it may be a bit more accessible.

solo outings:
Len Graham:
Do Me Justice ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1984)
Ye Lovers All ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1984)

influences:
◀◀ Joe Holmes, Patsy Touhy, Dolores Keane
▶▶ Patrick Street, Altan, Chieftains

see also: *La Lúgh, De Danann, Dolores Keane, Boys of the Lough*

Jo Hughey Morrison and Neal Walters

Fred Small

Born November 6, 1952, in Plainfield, NJ.

Fred Small gave up a promising career as a staff attorney for the Conservation Law Foundation in Boston to concentrate on a career as a topical singer-songwriter. During the two decades since, he's yet to look back. Singing songs in the politically conscious tradition set by Woody Guthrie, Tom Paxton, and Phil Ochs, Small has continued to use folk-style music as the setting for his message. In addition to being featured on his six solo albums, his tunes have been covered by Pete and Peggy Seeger, Rosalie Sorrells, Steve Gillette, Priscilla Herdman, and the Flirtations. In 1992, his song "Everything Possible" was used as the finale of the nationally touring AIDS-benefit musical *Heart Strings*. The grandnephew of influential painter Thomas Hart Benton, Small graduated Phil Beta Kappa from Yale University and earned a degree in law and a master's in natural resources policy at the University of Michigan. Although he didn't write his first song until the morning of his first law school examination, he grew up listening to his parents' Kingston Trio records. Many of Small's earliest gigs were at anti-nuclear benefits, including the M.U.S.E. concerts in 1978. Encouraged by the response he received, he resigned from his job as an attorney and turned his full-time attention to music. After releasing a single of his parody "Walk on Supply Side," to the tune of Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side," he recorded his debut album, *Love Will Carry Us*, in 1981.

what to buy: Recorded during a concert at the Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on March 26, 1993, *Everything Possible* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1993, prod. Johnny Cunningham) reprises songs from throughout Small's career. While many of the songs, including "The Hug Song," "Friends First," and "Peace Is," are anthemic calls for human interaction, Small shows his sense of humor with songs like "Hot Frogs on the Loose," a humorous ballad about radioactive amphibians escaping from laboratories. "The Marine's Lament, or, the Pink Peril" satirizes military attitudes towards homosexuality.

what to buy next: Small offers a wide view of modern society on *Heart of the Appaloosa* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1983, prod. John Curtis, Fred Small). The title track is a dramatic look at the plight of Native Americans. "Talking Wheelchair Blues" looks at the difficulties of the physically handicapped, while "Annie" presents a heartfelt view of the struggles of a lesbian schoolteacher. "Death in Disguise" focuses on industrial poisoning. "Peace Is" is a modern anthem of world peace. Small's sense of humor is reflected during "Dig a Hole in the Ground, or, How to Prosper during the Coming Nuclear War" and "Larry the Polar Bear." His songs are set to acoustic-rooted arrangements featuring such stellar players as Alison Brown (banjo), Matt Glaser (fiddle), Howie Tarnower (mandolin), Leo Kretzner (dulcimer), Betsy Rose (piano), and a large vocal choir that includes Geoff Bartley, Martha Leader, Willie Sordill, Michelle Wilson, and Marcia Taylor.

the rest:
Love Will Carry Us ♪♪ (Aquifer, 1981)
No Limit ♪♪ (Rounder, 1985)
I Will Stand Fast ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Jaguar ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991)

worth searching for: Small released a humorous two-song CD single in 1992. "Hot Frogs on the Loose" is based on an article in the *Boston Globe* and tells the story of radioactive frogs, while "Sergei in the Milky Way" is a space-age saga set to the tune of the Kingston Trio's "The M.T.A. Song."

influences:
◀◀ Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs, Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Priscilla Herdman, Si Kahn, John McCutcheon

Craig Harris

Judy Small

Born in New South Wales, Australia.

Judy Small is an Australian singer who writes songs. Educated in psychology and the law, Small has chosen to spend the last

dozen or so years of her life traveling the world singing her songs and gathering material for her ever increasing repertoire. Any experience or event can end up in a song if Small is around. She grew up in the small northern seaside town of Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, and loved the popular music of the '50s and '60s. It wasn't long before she started writing her own songs about issues close to her heart, using the styles of the traditional Celtic, as well as contemporary folk, music. She has remained true to these styles, even though she has increasingly experimented with other genres, and many of her later songs show some rock, jazz, or country music influence. She began singing in the folk clubs of Sydney. In 1982, with her career starting to take off in Australia, Small left her full-time government job and took a world trip. At the Vancouver Folk Festival that year, fellow Australian Eric Bogle invited her up from the audience and asked her to sing a couple of her songs, and Small's North American career was born. She has never looked back. Judy's talent lies in her ability to capture experiences in her songs in a way that allows the listener to identify personally. "Sky of the Southern Cross," an "anti-patriotic song about love of country," leaves listeners all over the world feeling homesick for a country most have never seen; "Charlesworth Bay," a song about the environmental ravages caused by the "development" of a bay near Small's hometown, evokes images of places that are close to the heart of listeners everywhere. "I Thought I'd Be Much Older" and "No Tears for the Widow" touch personal themes that are common to many, and allow deeply felt but frequently unspoken emotions to be expressed as a prerequisite to grieving and healing. Her song about a disastrous vacation, "Apart from That," leaves audiences weak with laughter when they recall similar (but not as extreme) vacations they have had themselves. And of course, her classic ballad, "Mothers, Daughters, Wives," is still acclaimed as the definitive musical statement of women's experiences of war in the twentieth century. Over a decade later, with eight albums (one a compilation), hundreds of songs, and a songbook to her credit, Small continues to delight fans with her soaring voice, her powerful delivery, and her songs of peace, justice, love, hope, and fun. Her performances have been acclaimed by critics on three continents, and a Judy Small concert is occasion for laughing, crying, thinking, and going away with a warm feeling that lasts long after the concert is over. Well loved and respected in her homeland, Small was honored in 1993 at the Maleny Folk Festival in Queensland with a tribute concert, organized by other performers who sing her songs. Watched by an audience of over 1,000, performers from all over Australia sang their versions of favorite Judy Small songs. The local Aboriginal women presented her with a songstone, a sacred tradition among their people, and rarely given to non-Aboriginals. Small was also recognized by her industry with a 'Mo' Award for Folk Performer of the Year in 1990 and she holds these two honors as her most treasured.

what to buy: Most of Small's back catalog is out of print. Fortunately, there are two strong albums available to choose between. *Second Wind* ♪♪♪½ (Crafty Maid, 1993, prod. Judy Small) represents a new musical direction for Small. Working with pianist David Bates, her music takes on a new depth and sophistication without losing any of the power or humor which have become the hallmark of her songwriting. Her collaboration with Bates on this album brings out a new dimension to her work, which is sure to please even the most avid Small fans. *Global Village* ♪♪♪½ (Crafty Maid, 1995, prod. Sue Dyson) is a continuation of that new musical direction with more help from Bates and the rest of a strong supporting cast. She covers the information age in "Living in the Fast Lane," the importance of rain in "We Know It's Gonna Rain," the ways in which two people can live together as strangers in "No Love Lost," and pays tribute to other women who provide the music to keep the "movement" going strong.

what to buy next: All of Small's earlier work is not gone, though. *The Best of the '80s* ♪♪♪ (Crafty Maid, 1993, prod. Judy Small) preserves some of the highlights from her first four albums, all released between 1982 and 1988, including her anti-war anthem, "Mothers, Daughters, Wives."

influences:

◀◀ Ronnie Gilbert, Odetta, Holly Near

▶▶ Priscilla Herdman, Tret Fure, Cris Williamson

Neal Walters

Smith Sisters /Debi Smith

Formed 1981 in Falls Church, VA.

Debi Smith (born December 30, 1953, in Philadelphia, PA), guitar, bodhrán, vocals; Megan Smith (born December 29, 1958, in Arlington, VA), bass guitar, vocals.

What do the Bitchin' Babes, the Smith Sisters, and the Hags (an all-woman Irish group in the '80s) have in common? One answer is Debi Smith. Whether she's performing as a soloist, as one of Four Bitchin' Babes (with Camille West, Sally Fingerett, and Megon McDonough), or with sister Megan as the Smith

Sisters, Smith is one of the most promising new singer-songwriters on the contemporary American music scene. As a sister act, Debi and Megan Smith have been performing together professionally since 1981 (though they have, of course, been together a few years longer than that). They grew up in Falls Church, Virginia, and both now reside in the Washington, D.C. area. Their show embodies a blend of original, traditional, and country-folk tunes interspersed with warm, humorous interaction with each other and their audiences. Debi sings lead vocal, plays guitar and bodhrán (Irish hand drum), and generally plays straight man to Megan, who sings harmony vocals and plays the electric bass. The Smiths have four releases as a duo on the Flying Fish/Rounder label, and feature such instrumentalists as Doc and Merle Watson, Mark O'Connor, Sam Bush, T. Michael Coleman, and Al Petteway, among others. Their two children's albums, on the American Melody label, have received Parents' Choice and American Library Association awards. Debi now records and tours solo and with Christine Lavin, Sally Fingerett, and Megon McDonough in "Life According to Four Bitchin' Babes," while Megan, who is working on her master's degree in the environmental sciences, has a separate career in the renewable energy field. Debi's new solo album, *More Than Once*, was released in early 1998.

what to buy: *A Canary's Song* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1993, prod. Bill Wolf, Debi Smith, Megan Smith) is the most recent album by the Smiths as a duo and contains a nice mixture of Debi Smith originals combined with some great covers of Robin and Linda Williams's "Leavin' Train," Cheryl Wheeler's "Arrow," and a couple of songs, including the title cut, from Buddy Mondlock. It also contains their version of "The Bramble and the Rose" (which they first recorded on *Roadrunner* in 1989), a song that purportedly brought tears to Garrison Keillor's eyes. As the *Washington Post* put it, "Like the best sibling groups, the Smiths have been singing together for so long that their voices merge in effortless and graceful harmony."

what to buy next: *In My Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Amerisound, 1995, prod. John Jennings) is Debi Smith's first solo album. Her songwriting is top notch and this album gives her a chance to really stretch out. Her backup band includes John Jennings (of Mary Chapin Carpenter fame) and acoustic guitar master Al Petteway, and the album is a mixture of original songs that contain a full helping of her humorous material.

the rest:

Bluebird ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984) (cassette only)
Mockingbird ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986) (cassette only)
(With others) *One Wide River* ♪♪♪ (American Melody, 1988)
Roadrunner ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
I See the Moon ♪♪♪ (American Melody, 1991)

solo outings:

Debi Smith:

(With others) *The Juniper Tree* ♪♪♪ (American Melody, 1994)
(With others) *Laugh Tracks* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Burns Sisters, Doc & Merle Watson

▶▶ Four Bitchin' Babes, Anne Hills, Cindy Mangsen

see also: *Four Bitchin' Babes*

Neal Walters

Bessie Smith

Born April 15, 1894, in Chattanooga, TN. Died September 26, 1936, in Clarksdale, MS.

Bessie Smith is without question the greatest of all "classic blues" performers. She began her career as a vaudeville dancer while still in her teens, but her potential as a singer sparked Ma Rainey's interest early on. She established herself while touring with Rainey's Rabbit Foot Minstrels, and by the end of World War I was a bona fide star on the T.O.B.A. (Theatre Owners Booking Association) circuit. Her first record, the straight, round-toned "Down Hearted Blues," was made in 1923 and sold 780,000 copies in less than six months. A slew of hit records followed, each more remarkable than its predecessor in terms of intonation and inflection. Smith's voice has withstood the test of time. "Jailhouse Blues" is an early example of her mastery of slides, "drop-offs," and other melismatic embellishments, fully realized on later recordings such as "Careless Love" and "Whip It to a Jelly." Her judicious use of guttural inflections on tunes like "Cemetery Blues" and "Dirty No-Gooder's Blues" further illustrates her artistry. Through careful employment of these and other vocal devices, Smith convincingly conveyed many moods on record. In somber and wistful songs like "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out" or the amazing "St. Louis Blues," she brought an uncanny sense of loss and melancholy by a simple turn of phrase or lightening of tone. By contrast, the exuberance she created in tunes like "Alexander's Ragtime Band" frequently sent listeners into finger-popping, toe-tapping frenzies. In fact, just about everything she sang was warmly received by an admiring, record-buying public. Smith put her unique spin on popular songs ("I Ain't Got Nobody"), hokum pieces ("I Want Every Bit of It," "I Need a Little Sugar in My Bowl"), and even gospel

("On Revival Day"), in addition to straightforward blues numbers. She was an anomalous success, every bit deserving of the title "Empress of the Blues." No star shone brighter than Bessie's throughout the "classic blues" heyday. However, by the early 1930s, at the onset of the Depression, even Smith's popularity was waning. She died tragically in an automobile accident in 1937, just as she was beginning to make in-roads with a new, decidedly more contemporary, swing-oriented style.

what to buy: *The Complete Recordings, Volume II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1991, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains sides recorded between April 1924 and November 1925, in a well-suited, small-group setting. (Louis Armstrong is one of the most notable accompanists.) In contrast to earlier recordings, Smith's vocal delivery is markedly more authoritative at this juncture in her career, as evidenced by the plaintive numbers "Reckless Blues" and "Careless Love Blues." The highlight is "St. Louis Blues," a masterpiece of controlled tension. *The Complete Recordings, Volume III* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1992, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains more recordings from Smith's artistic zenith (late November 1925 to mid-February 1928). Highlights include the magnificent "Back Water Blues," "After You've Gone," "Muddy Water," "Trombone Cholly," "Lock and Key," and "A Good Man Is Hard to Find." For those wanting but one representative set.

what to buy next: *The Complete Recordings, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1991, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains Smith's first 38 recordings, among them the magnificent debut, "Down Hearted Blues," the blues-inflected pop tune "Baby Won't You Please Come Home," and her mesmerizing rendition of "T'ain't Nobody's Bizness If I Do." Most sides feature her with sparse and rather pedestrian piano accompaniment. *The Complete Recordings, Volume IV* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1993, prod. Lawrence Cohn) showcases Smith's late 1920s and early 1930s recordings. As the Depression hit America, vaudeville was on the decline and fewer people were listening to the blues. Sadly, by July of 1930 Smith could do no better than bottom billing at Harlem's Apollo Theater. Understandably, her voice had begun to show signs of wear by the time of these sessions, yet recordings like "Empty Bed Blues" and "Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out" are nevertheless powerful.

what to avoid: *The Complete Recordings, Volume V: The Final Chapter* ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1996, prod. Lawrence Cohn) contains the rest of Smith's 1931 recordings and a 1933 session for OKeh, along with alternate takes, the *St. Louis Blues* soundtrack, and a 72-minute interview with Smith's niece, Rudy Smith. The 1933 session is especially fine and hints at the new musical directions Smith was exploring at the time of her death. The rest of this set, however, will find more favor with collectors and serious fans.

the rest:
Bessie Smith 1925–33 ♪♪♪♪ (Nimbus, 1987)
The Collection ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1989)
Empress of the Blues ♪♪♪ (Charly, 1992)
Alexander's Ragtime Band ♪♪♪ (Four Star, 1994)
Bessie Smith 1923 ♪♪♪ (Classics, 1994)
Bessie Smith 1923–24 ♪♪♪ (Classics, 1994)
Mama's Got the Blues ♪♪♪ (Pearl, 1994)
Bessie Smith 1924–25 ♪♪♪ (Classics, 1995)
Bessie Smith 1927–28 ♪♪♪ (Classics, 1995)
Bessie Smith 1928–29 ♪♪♪ (Classics, 1995)
American Legends—Volume 14 ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1996)
Sings the Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Sony Music Special Products, 1996)

worth searching for: *Bessie Smith* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Time-Life, 1982, prod. Michael Brooks) is the best single-package overview of Smith's recorded legacy. The accompanying 46-page booklet, written by Smith biographer Chris Albertson, is packed with rare photos, anecdotes, and informed musical commentary.

influences:
◀◀ Ma Rainey

▶▶ Mahalia Jackson, Odetta, Jimmy Rushing, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday

D. Thomas Moon

Betty Smith

Born October 15, 1926 in Salisbury, NC.

Betty Smith didn't set out to be a folk singer, but she is certainly one of our finest. She loves to sing traditional ballads and she does it either unaccompanied or with the help of her exceptional ability on mountain dulcimer, guitar, psaltery, or autoharp. She has performed, taught, and shared the traditional music of the South for over 30 years in classrooms, concert halls, workshops, and festivals. Her singing touches children and adults of all ages who respond to the music that has been passed down by generations of singers. Smith says she knows about 300 songs, many learned aurally from her parents, covering Southern, Appalachian, and British ballads, folksongs, hymns, and children's songs and games. She has been a visiting artist in schools and colleges, done workshops, concerts, and festivals in the United States, Canada, and the British Isles, and carried her music to everyone from kinder-

garten students to Elderhostel participants. She has helped to organize festivals and workshops throughout the country and is just as active now as she has ever been. As an author, she recently completed a biography of singer Jane Hicks Gentry, which is being published by the University of Kentucky Press. In 1982 Smith was awarded the Bascom Lamar Lunsford award for significant contributions to the folk traditions of the Southern mountains.

what to buy: *Both Sides, Then and Now* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bluff Mountain Music, 1994, prod. Betty Smith) is Smith's only CD, but it provides an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with her music. She sings a selection of her best-loved traditional tunes as well as several newer songs. In addition to her own accompaniment on mountain dulcimer, autoharp, psaltery, guitar, and lap psaltery, she is ably assisted by Roger Howell on fiddle, banjo, and guitar, and by Carroll Best on banjo. There are 17 cuts in all, including several examples of her exquisite psaltery playing that alone are worth the price of the CD. "Seasons of Peace," by Bob Beers, is a Smith staple and is guaranteed to send chills up your spine. The first nine cuts are all traditional in keeping with Smith's commitment to traditional music, particularly the music of her native North Carolina, but she also performs more contemporary material by such writers as Billy Edd Wheeler, Elmer Beal Jr., Bob Beers, Barry Etris, Bettie Sellers, and her own son Bill. It's not difficult to understand why these are among her most requested.

what to buy next: *Psaltery Concert* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bluff Mountain Music, 1984, prod. Betty Smith) (cassette only) is Smith's all-psaltery album and is exquisite. The plucked psaltery is the perfect complement to Smith's pure soprano and she is unique in her ability to play it. Her playing is inspired and has to be heard to be believed. This album and those listed below are available only on cassette from Bluff Mountain Music, 1444 Bluff Road, Hot Springs, NC 28743.

the rest:

Betty Smith: Songs Traditionally Sung in North Carolina ♪♪♪♪ (Folk-Legacy, 1975) (cassette only)

For My Friends of Song ♪♪♪♪ (June Appal, 1977) (cassette only)

A Bluff Mountain Christmas ♪♪♪♪ (Bluff Mountain Music, 1988) (cassette only)

worth searching for: It's worth noting that Smith also makes an appearance on a very nice compilation album, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Susan Trump Music, 1997, prod. Susan Trump), which features some 19 dulcimer players in a generous program of dulcimer instrumentals.

editor's choice
5 bluegrass gospel albums

Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys, *Cry from the Cross* (Rebel)

Don Rigsby, *A Vision* (Sugar Hill)

Paul Williams, *Ain't God Good* (Rounder)

Chestnut Grove Quartet, *The Legendary Chestnut Grove Quartet* (County)

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, *Kept and Protected* (Sugar Hill)

Neal Walters

influences:

⏪ Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Beers Family

⏩ Sheila Barnhill, Lois Hornbostel, Elaine Purkey

Darden Smith

Born 1962, in Brenham, TX.

Darden Smith's music has grown by leaps and bounds since his first album in 1986. His sound has transformed itself from the country-folk of his debut release to country, country-rock, and, with his latest album—the stark *Deep Fantastic Blue*—to a more raw, almost hard folk sound. A farm boy who moved to the big city of Houston as a teenager, Smith soaked up country, folk, rock, and pop influences and developed a keen eye for observing the little details of life and love. He moved to Austin to attend the University of Texas and joined a burgeoning singer/songwriter scene, following in the footsteps of Lyle Lovett. He has worked with Lovett and fellow Texans Nanci Griffith and Chip Taylor, and he's found great inspiration in an ongoing partnership with English singer/songwriter Boo Hewerdine, with whom he released one album.

what to buy: Smith's most commercial record is also his most consistent. *Little Victories* ♪♪♪♪ (Chaos, 1993, prod. Richard Gottehrer, Jeffrey Lesser) reflects on life's ups and downs but never gives up hope.

what to avoid: Smith took an ill-advised left turn with the spare, monotonous *Deep Fantastic Blue* ♪♪ (Plump, 1996, prod.

740 debi smith

Stewart Lerman), with stripped-down production and Spartan arrangements that don't do his songs about transition and redemption much justice.

the rest:
Native Soil ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1986)
(With Boo Hewerdine) *Evidence* ♪♪♪ (Compass, 1989)
Trouble No More ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1990)

influences:
◀◀ Guy Clark, Rosanne Cash, Nanci Griffith
▶▶ Shawn Colvin, Lyle Lovett

Doug Pullen

Debi Smith

See: Smith Sisters, Four Bitchin' Babes

Jerry Read Smith

Born 1949, in Warsaw, NY.

Hammered dulcimer recording artist Jerry Read Smith is also one of America's premier craftsman, building hammered dulcimers and bowed psalteries in Black Mountain, North Carolina. His trilogy of recordings are an instrumental journey borne out of the life and work of a hammered dulcimer maker. Smith describes that it really all came about quite by surprise. Not only the music recordings, as it was never a vocation or an academic pursuit, but also the world of craftsmanship. It began with a chance encounter one winter's eve in 1970, seeing the hammered dulcimer for the first time in the gifted hands of John McCutcheon. An urge to construct, followed by a yearning to play, soon led to an unlikely and unplanned career. The music represented in the trilogy begins with a gift, moves on to a revelation, and finally settles upon a vision. The recordings are an instrumental "dream" that expresses a journey through time filled with flights of fancy, time for thought and reflection, and emotional confrontation.

what's available: *The Strayaway Child* ♪♪♪½ (Song of the Wood, 1981/Silent Planet, 1996, prod. Jerry Read Smith) is the first volume of the trilogy. It begins with "The Dream," then weaves its way through Celtic melodies, a New Orleans waltz, and Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." Smith is joined by Tom Fellenbaum (guitar, bouzouki, bass), Chris Abell (Irish flute, whistle, bodhrán), Don Jackson (fiddle, guitar), and Phil Johnson (slide dobro). *Heartdance* ♪♪♪½ (Song of the Wood, 1986/Silent Planet, 1996, prod. Jerry Read Smith) is the second volume, the middle of a three-part journey, and expresses the awakening from the dream, with melodies that dance through jigs and reels with fiddles, flutes, whistles, and lots of dancing strings. *Homecoming* ♪♪♪½ (Song of the Wood, 1992/Silent Planet, 1996, prod. Jerry Read Smith) is the trilogy's final volume and includes such selections as "Childgrove" and "Amazing Grace," following the theme of that still, small voice that beckons us home. Smith is joined by his wife, Lisa Maria Smith (flute, whistle), with some beautiful duets featuring the hammered dulcimer and flute. All three recordings are available from Song of the Wood, 203 West State Street, Black Mountain, NC 28711.

influences:
◀◀ Malcolm Dalglish, John McCutcheon, Bothy Band, De Danann
▶▶ Madeline MacNeil, Sam Rizzetta, Steve Schneider

Heidi Cerrigione

Lynn "Chirps" Smith

Born Lynn William Byron Smith, October 11, 1952, in Pekin, IL.

Lynn "Chirps" Smith was born and raised in Illinois. When he was 20 he heard some Ry Cooder recordings, plus a now-forgotten bluegrass musician, and was inspired to learn the mandolin. A few years later he heard a record by the Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters (featuring Ben Jarrell, Tommy Jarrell's father) and was instantly hooked on old-time music. It wasn't long after that that his first band, the Indian Creek Delta Boys, was formed. About that same time he started looking for evidence of Illinois fiddle players and the tunes that they played. During this time he also had picked up the fiddle and was starting to become proficient on that instrument. Today, Chirps is thought of mainly as a fiddler, although he still will lend some mandolin to a track now and then. He currently is in one of the best "Young Fogie" old-time bands around, the Volo Bogtrotters. All Volo Bogtrotter releases to date have been on cassette only on the Marimac label out of Crown Point, Indiana; however, in early 1998, Marimac released a new Volo Bogtrotter CD, *Old Time Stringband with Vocal Accompaniment*. Based on the previous Volo Bogtrotter releases, this should also be non-stop fun and well worth adding to your collection.

what to buy: *Midwestern Harvest* ♪♪♪½ (Marimac, 1994, prod. Larry MacBride, Lynn "Chirps" Smith) is Smith's only release that can be found on CD. The fiddling on this album is very "notey," yet smooth at the same time. He performs in a variety of arrangements from solo to a full band. There is one cut in particular that alone makes the CD a worthwhile addition to any

old-time collection: that is his solo take on the tune "Money in Both Pockets," which he learned from Toledo, Illinois, fiddler Jesse James Abbott. As you can guess by the title of the CD, many of the tunes on this album are from the Midwest.

the rest:

(With the Volo Bogtrotters) *Backside of Buncombe* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1989) (cassette only)
(With the Volo Bogtrotters) *The Volo Bogtrotters* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1990) (cassette only)
Prairie Dog and Other Fiddle Tunes from the Midwest ♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1991) (cassette only)
(With the Volo Bogtrotters) *Tough Luck* ♪♪♪♪ (Marimac, 1991) (cassette only)

influences:

◀◀ Noah Beavers, Garry Harrison, Mark Gunther

▶▶ Ill-Mo Boys, Geoff Seitz

Steve Gardner

Michael Smith

Born September 7, 1941.

Michael Smith began his musical career in the early 1960s, performing in a Kingston Trio–style folk combo. Although he worked steadily, in a pop-folk vein, throughout the '70s, he was first brought to wide public attention when Steve Goodman began recording his stunning songs like "The Dutchman" and "Spoon River." In the late '80s, Smith was tapped to serve as musical chorus and songwriter for Steppenwolf Theater Company's wildly successful adaptation of *The Grapes of Wrath*. In 1993 he debuted his own autobiographical musical play, *Michael, Margaret, Pat, and Kate*, in Chicago and later in San Francisco. Always a prolific songwriter, Smith tours steadily both as a soloist and in a duet act with Anne Hills. (Note that Smith is Michael P. Smith, not to be confused with Christian music superstar Michael W. Smith.)

what to buy: *Michael Smith/Love Stories* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992, prod. Anne Hills) is a reissue of Smith's two landmark Flying Fish albums, *Michael Smith* (1986) and *Love Stories* (1988). This generous CD offers as much evidence as one should need to prove that Smith is one of the finest songwriters working today—period. His own versions of "The Dutchman" and "Spoon River" hold a knowing irony that is absent in most of the many covers of these tunes. Less familiar treasures include his carnally passionate "Vampire," the close-focus humor of "Dead Egyptian Blues" and "Last Day of Pompeii," and the claustrophobic paranoia of "Three Monkeys."

what to buy next: *Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1994, prod. Anne Hills), is another finely crafted album of oblique, passionate musical novellas. This album finds Smith waxing nostalgic about his own past in the wistful "I Brought My Father with Me" and "Ballad of Elizabeth Dark." "Gamble's Guitar" melds a Floridian travelogue with reminiscences about the spell the late Gamble Rogers wove with his instrument. In "We Become Birds," Smith grafts some haiku-like quotes from children describing God onto an airy, delicate melody.

worth searching for: Smith privately released the soundtrack *Michael, Margaret, Pat, and Kate* ♪♪♪♪½ (self-released, 1993, prod. Anne Hills), and it is a gem that is in some ways superior to his contemporary "official" album, *Time*. Recorded with the quartet of musicians he worked with onstage, the disc offers compelling new versions of familiar Smith songs like "Vampire," along with fine new work.

influences:

◀◀ Roy Rogers, Bob Gibson, Beatles

▶▶ Dar Williams, Small Potatoes, Trout Fishing in America

see also: *Anne Hills, Steve Goodman*

Michael Parrish

Chris Smither

Born 1945, in New Orleans, LA.

Although perhaps best known for writing "Love Me like a Man" and "I Feel the Same," two of Bonnie Raitt's most enduring songs, Smither is a gifted folk-bluesman in his own right. His urgent vocals and fingerpicked guitar come across best with little or no accompaniment.

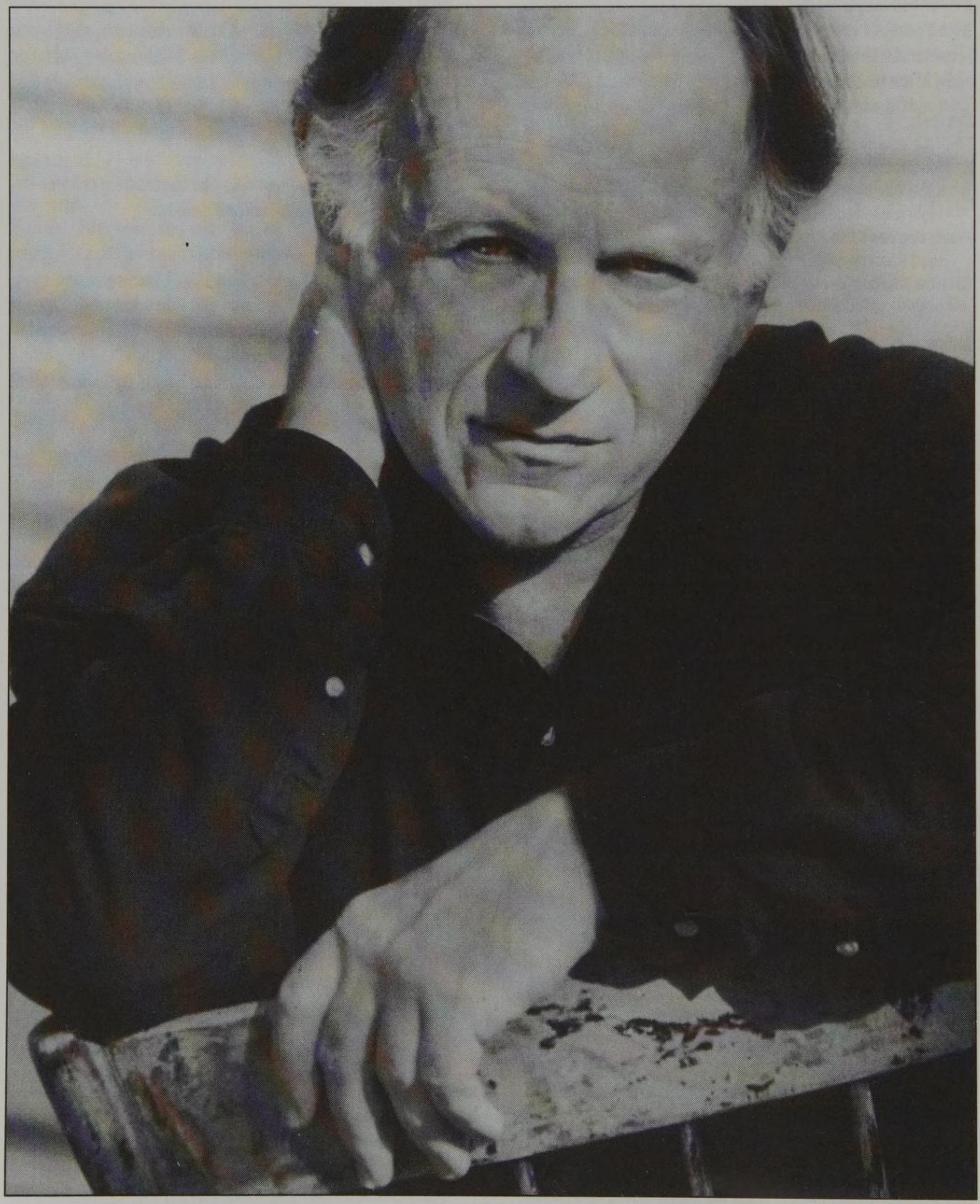
what to buy: *Another Way to Find You* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. John Nagy), an intimate solo acoustic album recorded live in the studio, is a career retrospective on which Smither reprises material from both of his excellent, long-out-of-print albums for Poppy.

what to buy next: *Up on the Lowdown* ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1995, prod. Stephen Bruton), recorded with a sympathetic backing band, is further proof of Smither's unassuming brilliance as a singer, songwriter, and guitarist.

the rest:

Happier Blue ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1993)
Small Revelations ♪♪♪½ (HighTone, 1997)

chris smither



worth searching for: Smither recorded two albums during the early 1970s—*I'm a Stranger Too* ♪♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1971, prod. Ronald Frangipane, Michael Cuscuna) and *Don't It Drag On* ♪♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1972, prod. Michael Cuscuna)—that eclipse virtually all of the rootsy singer/songwriter competition of the era. They were reissued as a single package on Collectables Records in 1997.

influences:

◀◀ Mississippi John Hurt, Eric Von Schmidt

Bill Friskics-Warren

Smothers Brothers /Pat Paulsen

Formed 1959.

Tom Smothers (born February 2, 1937), guitar; Dick Smothers (born November 20, 1939), bass; Pat Paulsen (born July 6, 1927 in South Bend, WA; died April 24, 1997).

The controversy surrounding the cancellation of the Smothers Brothers' CBS-TV variety hour in 1969 tends to obscure their history as recording artists. This is unfortunate because their finest, most enduring work resides on the LPs they recorded for Mercury during the 1960s. Under the guise of earnest, college-aged folk singers and historians, the Smothers' zany sibling bickering (riddled with pop culture vernacular and buzzword psychology) put a fresh face on the traditional comedy team formula. Besides possessing a tender, expressive tenor, Dick Smothers was an underrated straight man whose slow-burns and snappish reactions spurred brother Tom's "disruptive dumb-guy" pronouncements to greater heights of hilarity. Music was the backbone of their act; the brothers were genuinely fine musicians and singers whose instrumental mastery and full harmonies gave their efforts a surprisingly rich sound and provided distinctive and pleasing segues for their comedy. The Smothers began as part of the Casual Quintet until comedian Ronnie Schell, noting the glut of straight folk-music acts, advised them to strike out as a duo and emphasize their humor. By 1960 they were working hip coffeehouses and nightclubs such as the Hungry i, Mr. Kelly's, and the Troubadour, as well as charming TV audiences with guest shots on the Jack Benny, Steve Allen, Jack Paar, and Garry Moore shows. Most of their repartee was improvised and then refined over the course of many performances, but several funny songs and structured routines were contributed by their friends Mason Williams and Pat Paulsen. Between 1960 and 1968 the duo recorded 12 LPs for Mercury, their biggest sellers—*The Two Sides of the Smothers Brothers* and *The Songs and Comedy of the Smothers Brothers*—focusing as much on music as comedy. *Think Ethnic*, *Curb Your Tongue, Knave*, *Mom Always Liked You Best*, and others emphasized the comedy with only occasional musical interludes. The Smothers' success in television signaled the end of the their recording career. After a flop sitcom, the brothers debuted their variety show in 1967. They struck cultural pay dirt by enhancing the standard musical comedy format with irreverent, topical humor informed by folk music anger (something they never did on LP). Their last two LPs were a collection of vignettes from the TV show and brother Dick's lone solo outing, *Saturday Night at the World*.

A frequent segment of the *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* featured the droll, dead-pan wit of Pat Paulsen, whose satirical presidential candidacy was so effective it actually changed the way many Americans viewed politics. Paulsen continued his comedic "campaigns" under the aegis of the Straight Talking American Government (STAG) party until his death. The controversy stirred up by the show seems tame by today's standards, but during the late '60s, the inclusion of Pete Seeger singing "Waist Deep in Big Muddy" was seen as such a flagrant shot at President Johnson that CBS censored the show. After many subsequent battles with the network (under pressure from the Oval Office), the Smothers were "fired," their career effectively derailed. They took parts in films, returned to TV in several shows that never measured up to their hour on CBS, and toured extensively (eventually adding a yo-yo to their act), but they never recorded another LP. Still touring when they're not tending to their successful winery, the Smothers Brothers are the last of the great musical comedy teams.

what to buy: A fine sampler of material from their salad days as a top recording act, *Sibling Revelry* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino, 1994, compilation prod. Bill Inglot, Tom Smothers, Dick Smothers, David Carroll) features several of their greatest routines ("I Talk to the Trees," "Mom Always Liked You Best," "You Can Call Me Stupid," "The Saga of John Henry"), but still leaves one wanting more.

what to buy next: The daffy satire of their 1965 Grammy Award–winning children's album, *Aesop's Fables—The Smothers Brothers Way* ♪♪♪♪ (Music for Little People, 1992, prod. David Carroll), still plays well. The boys were at their peak here.

worth searching for: Paulsen's days as a coffeehouse comedian are well preserved in the hilarious *Pat Paulsen—Live at*

Michael Smith **(Photo by Irene Young)**

the Ice House ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1970, prod. David Carroll). Also, *Pat Paulsen for President* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1968, prod. Cecil Tuck, Gary Blair) is a wonderful compilation of Paulsen's deadpan comedic run for our country's highest elected office. Even funnier now than it was back then.

influences:

◀◀ Weavers, Kingston Trio, Martin & Lewis, Mort Sahl

▶▶ Mason Williams, David Frye, Will Durst

Ken Burke

Todd Snider

Born October 11, 1966, in Portland, OR.

One of the freshest voices on the alternative-country scene, Todd Snider successfully mixes Dylanesque wordplay, Springsteen and Mellencamp populism, and Steve Earle's renegade country rock. He's a bit of an uncomfortable fit for Nashville, since he has no trouble occasionally tweaking the Religious Right, but Snider is an adept storyteller, a moralist with a sense of humor, and a ragged-but-right vocalist. A talent to watch, for sure.

what's available: True to its title, Snider's debut, *Songs for the Daily Planet* ♪♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1994, prod. Tony Brown, Michael Utley) reads like dispatches from the newspaper of a modern Metropolis. The sardonic "My Generation (Part 2)" tweaks Generation X with a laundry list of its flash-in-the-pan iconography. "Easy Money" details a scam artist's dealings over a brassy R&B backing. On the serious side, the tempestuous rocker "This Land Is Our Land" offers the Native American spin on the white man's idea of progress. But lest he get too deep, Snider offers "Alright Guy," perhaps the ultimate "What? Me worry?" anthem. The album may be rough around the edges, but that's part and parcel of Snider's considerable charm.

what to buy next: Snider's sophomore effort, *Step Right Up* ♪♪♪½ (Margaritaville/MCA, 1996), takes him into even more rock-oriented territory than his debut, and it moves further afield ideologically as well. In the statement-of-purpose opener, "I Believe," Snider goes far beyond Garth Brooks's level of tolerance, declaring "I believe in gangster rap/Gays and geeks and ghosts." He offers plenty of wry observations in "Sideshow Blues" and "Moondawg's Tavern," but provides some necessary lyrical grit on "T.V. Guide" and "Prison Walls."

the rest:

Viva Satellite ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1997)

worth searching for: Snider portrays a naive hitchhiker in the radio-play-style audio version of Hunter Thompson's classic gonzo journalism screed, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* ♪♪♪½ (Margaritaville/Island, 1996, prod. Laila Nabulsi). He also wrote and performed incidental music for the production.

influences:

◀◀ Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, John Mellencamp, Steve Earle

Daniel Durchholz

Leo Soileau

Born January 19, 1904, in Ville Platte, LA. Died August 2, 1980, in Ville Platte, LA.

Leo Soileau was one of the most popular band leaders and recording artists in Cajun music from the late 1920s to the 1940s. He grew up learning fiddle from Dennis McGee and Sady Courville. He performed old-time fiddle duets with his cousin and made two records that show him in command of the traditional form. He was also a visitor at the home of master accordionist Adam Fontenot, father of Canray Fontenot and good friend of Amédée Ardoin. Soileau's recordings with accordionists Moise Robin and Mayuse LeFleur from this period are regarded as classics, and many of the songs continue to be performed. But Soileau is remembered for neither the old fiddle tunes nor the accordion duets. Instead, he began to follow the string-band style that was being popularized by the Hackberry Ramblers. His band, the Three Aces (later the Four Aces and finally the Rhythm Boys), played Cajun tunes in an almost hillbilly style, with Soileau's fiddle never quite escaping its roots in the countryside outside of Ville Platte. This music and the rolling quality of Soileau's fiddle bow strokes captivated younger fiddlers like Dewey Balfa.

what to buy: *Pioneer Cajun Fiddler (1929–37)* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1993, prod. Chris Strachwitz) includes a couple of the classic Soileau and Robin tunes, "La Valse de Josephine" and "Demain c'est pas dimanche," but the rest of this release is all the rough and smoking string-band sound of Soileau and his Rhythm Boys. What's amazing is the interplay between his guitar players and the drummer, which sounds at times more like a Caribbean or African band than a hillbilly group.

what to buy next: *Raise Yur Window—A Cajun Music Anthology, Volume II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (CMF, 1994, prod. Country Music Foundation) is a great compilation of early Cajun music. It shows

Solas (© Jack Vartoogian)

Soileau in three very different settings. First there is a cut of Soileau Couzens with Leo and Alius Soileau playing in the archaic style of which Dennis McGee and Sady Courville were masters. Then there's the infamous "Mama, Where You At" with accordionist Mayuse LaFleur, who was killed shortly after making the recording. Finally, there is Leo Soileau and His Three Aces playing Cajun string music with a driving beat.

worth searching for: *Cajun String Bands: Cajun Breakdown* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1997, prod. Chris Strachwitz), an anthology of great Cajun string bands, includes four great cuts by Leo and his musical Aces. This includes the definitive version of the "Port Arthur Blues."

influences:

- Dennis McGee, Hackberry Ramblers
- Wallace "Cheese" Reed, Michael Doucet, Dewey Balfa, Harry Choates

Jared Snyder

Solas

Formed 1995, in New York, NY.

Seamus Egan, flute, tres, nylon-string guitar, tin whistle, low whistle, uilleann pipes, bodhrán, background vocals (1995–present); Karan Casey, lead vocals (1995–present); John Doyle, acoustic guitar, background vocals (1995–present); Winifred Horan, fiddle, background vocals (1995–present); John Williams, accordion, concertina, background vocals (1995–present).

Solas has established itself as one of the top Irish-folk groups on either side of the Atlantic. Following the example of Washington's Celtic Thunder, Solas balances male and female contributions as well as instrumental and vocal traditions within the music. Providing the male influence in the New York–based quintet are two All-Ireland champions, accordionist John Williams and multi-instrumentalist Seamus Egan, as well as hard-driving rhythm guitarist John Doyle. Providing the female flavor are fiddler Winifred Horan from Cherish the Ladies and the Sharon Shannon Band and singer Karan Casey, born in Ire-

land's County Waterford. On the instrumental numbers, Egan and Horan lead the way, pushed through the uptempo jigs, reels, and hornpipes by Doyle and Williams. On the songs, Casey takes the foreground with her supple soprano, which is framed by her four bandmates, who play with such sympathy they might as well be harmony singers. The linchpin of Solas is Egan, who won All-Ireland Junior Championships on flute, tenor banjo, tin whistle, and uilleann pipes by the time he was a 16-year-old kid from Philadelphia. That was how old he was when his debut solo album was released in 1985. By the time he was 27, he had released four solo albums, contributed to four soundtrack albums, recorded with Eileen Ivers, John Whelan, and Living Colour's Vernon Reid, and co-founded Solas. In 1996 he became the youngest musician to ever win the Irish Echo's Traditionalist of the Year award.

what to buy: *Solas* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996, prod. Johnny Cunningham), guided through its paces by Silly Wizard's Johnny Cunningham, immediately established this new American quintet as a major force in Celtic music. The dance tunes combine rhythmic verve and melodic invention, and the songs give the instruments as much expressive room as the vocals. The group proved the best possible setting for Egan's special gifts. On the even better follow-up album, *Sunny Spells and Scattered Showers* ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Johnny Cunningham), Casey manages to make an ancient song, "The Wind That Shakes the Barley," sound as if it had been ripped from today's headlines, and to make a modern feminist anthem, "Vanished like the Snow," sound as if it had been handed down for generations. The instrumental medleys gallop along with the aggressive energy only a young band can muster.

what to buy next: Egan's debut solo album, *Traditional Music of Ireland* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985, prod. Mick Moloney), showcased the prodigious skills of the 16-year-old multi-instrumental whiz but lacked emotional heft. That would come with the second all-instrumental album, *A Week in January* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1990, prod. Mick Moloney, Seamus Egan), whose title track is one of the classics of modern Irish-American folk music. The co-producers achieved a chamber-folk intensity in their arrangements. *The Brothers McMullen: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* ♪♪♪♪ (Arista, 1995, prod. Mick Moloney, Seamus Egan) may be the best introduction to Egan's work, for it includes the half-dozen best tracks from *A Week in January* and the five best tracks from *When Juniper Sleeps*. It also includes "I Will Remember You," a song with lyrics and a vocal by Sarah McLachlan based on Egan's "Weep Not for the Memories." That tune can also be found on *When Juniper Sleeps* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996, prod. Michael Aharon, Seamus Egan), an album that found Egan, collaborating with Horan, Doyle, and Williams, and thus laying the groundwork for Solas. *Three Way Street* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Mick Moloney) is a trio album that matches Egan with his two Philadelphia mentors, Moloney and Eugene O'Donnell, in a lovely session of mutual admiration and affection. Egan also produced Karan Casey's debut solo album, *Songlines* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Seamus Egan). Though four-fifths of Solas are represented on *Songlines*, this is very much a solo album, for Casey sings in the spare, understated style of her hero, Dolores Keane. Both women deliver the lyrics' story with crisp articulation and genuine empathy and carry the melody in a flush tone with little embellishment. This puts the emphasis where it should be—on the song, not the singer.

influences:

◀◀ Cherish the Ladies, Irish Tradition, Celtic Thunder

▶▶ Trian, Eileen Ivers, Sharon Shannon

Geoffrey Himes

Solomon's Seal

See: Lorraine (Lee) Hammond

Jo-El Sonnier

Born October 2, 1946, in Rayne, LA.

Jo-El Sonnier is an internationally known French-Cajun accordionist. He started playing accordion at the age of three, and by the time he was 13, he had already cut his first record—"Tes Yeaux Blues" ("Your Blue Eyes"), which became a regional hit. Between 1972–80 Sonnier bounced between Nashville and Los Angeles, establishing himself as a songwriter and studio musician. In 1975 he signed with Mercury and scored a few minor hits with "I've Been around Enough to Know," "Always Late (With Your Kisses)," and "He's Still All over You." In 1980 he returned to his Cajun roots and recorded *Cajun Life*, which was sung entirely in Acadian French. Similar heritage-related projects were *Cajun Roots* (1994) and *Cajun Pride* (1997). During the 1980s he penned songs for George Strait, Johnny Cash, Conway Twitty, Loretta Lynn, Emmylou Harris, and John Anderson, and he backed new wave rock icon Elvis Costello on his critically acclaimed album *King of America*. In 1987 Sonnier signed with RCA and cracked the country Top 40 with "Come on Joe." The following year, his "No More One More Time" and the Cajun-inflected "Tear-Stained Letter" hit the country Top 10.

what to buy: On *Cajun Pride* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Jo-El Sonnier), Sonnier pays homage to his musical heritage, especially in the rollicking "Lake Arthur Special" and "Johnnie fais bien," a rockin' Cajun version of "Johnny B. Goode." *Cajun Roots* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Michael Doucet), which is sung entirely in Old World French, shows Sonnier covering the music of his native Louisiana with style, grace, and expert musicianship, as exhibited by the artist's intricate accordion playing and powerful tenor. Standout tracks include "Huppes Taiauts," "Amedee Two Step," and "La Chere Toute-Toute," which features dazzling guitar-fiddle interplay between Sonnier and Beausoleil's Michael Doucet.

what to buy next: *Cajun Life* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980, prod. Earl Ball, Alex Broussard) shows Sonnier reveling in the traditional Acadian sounds of Louisiana's bayou country.

the rest:
The Complete Mercury Sessions ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1992)
(With Eddy Raven) *Cookin' Cajun* ♪♪♪ (K-Tel, 1996)
Live in Canada ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1996)

worth searching for: *Come on Joe* ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1988, prod. Bill Halverson, Richard Bennett) and *Have a Little Faith* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1990, prod. Bill Halverson, Richard Bennett, Josh Leo) were Sonnier's two best major-label albums. *Come on Joe* contains his biggest hits, "No More One More Time" and "Tear-Stained Letter." The hits from *Have a Little Faith*, "Blue, Blue, Blue" and "If Your Heart Should Ever Roll This Way Again," didn't chart as high, but the album has excellent covers of John Hiatt's "Have a Little Faith in Me" and "I'll Never Get over You."

influences:
◀◀ Iry LeJeune, Amédée Ardoin, Joe Falcon, Lawrence Walker, Vorris "Shorty" LeBlanc
▶▶ Michael Doucet, Beausoleil, Wayne Toups, Zachary Richard

Rick Petreycik

Sons of the Never Wrong

Formed 1993, in Chicago, IL.

Sue Demel, vocals; Bruce Roper, guitar, vocals; Nancy Walker, vocals.

You might expect Sons of the Never Wrong to be Generation X misfits. Turns out they're not so young: they're from the fallout end of the baby boom—old enough to have processed a lot of music and have a really good sense of what they're doing. Bruce Roper, Nancy Walker, and Sue Demel specialize in quirky original songs delivered with soaring harmonies backed by music that mixes bluegrass with rock. The Sons are not for everyone; the approach can be maddeningly self-conscious. The voices (except Walker's classic, smooth alto) aren't particularly notable individually. But the group's sound is so joyous that if you like the Sons for five minutes, you'll like them for a whole CD.

what's available: The Sons' debut, *Three Good Reasons* ♪♪♪½ (Waterbug, 1995, prod. Sons of the Never Wrong, Victor Sanders), cements the group's sound, inasmuch as one can "cement" something so deliberately goofy. It's full of invention, odd sounds, and whimsy. "Tattoo" is a great Roper composition about finding his match in a "marked woman." Demel and Walker's voices blend beautifully on "Tiny Blue Flowers." *Consequence of Speech* ♪♪♪ (Waterbug, 1997), the follow-up, is more of the same, for good or ill.

influences:
◀◀ Roches, Timbuk 3, Grateful Dead, B-52's, Peter, Paul & Mary
▶▶ Nields

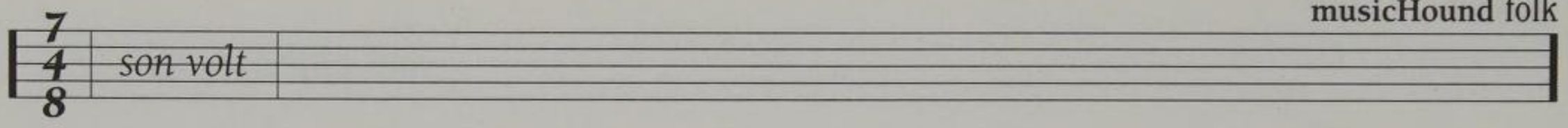
Pamela Murray Winters

Sons of the Pioneers

Formed as the Pioneer Trio, 1934, in Los Angeles, CA.

Bob Nolan (born April 1, 1908; died June 15, 1980); Leonard Slye, a.k.a. Roy Rogers (1934–37); Tim Spencer (died June 26, 1974), (1934–37, 1937–49); Karl Farr (died September 20, 1961), guitar (1936–61); Hugh Farr, fiddle (1934–58); Lloyd Perryman, vocals (1936–42, 1946–77); Pat Brady (1937–43, 1947–59, 1959–67); Ken Carson (1942–47); Shug Fisher (1943–46, 1949–53, 1955–59); Ken Curtis (1949–53); Tommy Doss (1949–63); Dale Warren (1953–present); Deuce Spriggins (1953–95); Roy Lanham (1961–present); Rusty Richards (1961–66, 1974–present); Billy Armstrong (1964–72); Bob Mensor (1967); Luther Nallie (1968–74, 1980–present); Billy Liebert (1974–81); Rome Johnson (1977–80); Dale Morris (1981–present).

The Sons of the Pioneers certainly kept the "western" in country & western music throughout their celebrated career. Original members Bob Nolan, Tim Spencer, and Roy Rogers created the group and soon added brothers Karl and Hugh Farr. Staff changes continued through the years, but the original trio was memorialized by induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1980. With a burgeoning film career during the 1940s and the advent of television a decade later, Rogers (also a solo Hall of Fame inductee in 1988) epitomized the dashing, heroic do-



gooder. His singing cowboy image brought millions of dollars into Hollywood, mostly through a tally of dimes from afternoon matinees in Anytown, USA. Still, somebody had to play harmonica and provide the indispensable harmonies. More importantly, the music had to sound fresh, had to capture a dreamy youth's imagination. For that reason, Nolan and Spencer proved vital as well to the initial Sons of the Pioneers lineup. Nolan wrote and arranged the ensemble's signature pieces "Cool, Cool Water" and "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" with clear, infectious harmonies. Spencer, who quit singing in the group but still managed it until 1955, penned more hits, such as "Careless Kisses," "Cigarettes, Whisky and Wild, Wild Women," and "Roomful of Roses."

what to buy: *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991, prod. Country Music Foundation) contains the group's classic performances, culled from more than 20 years' worth of recordings, including the original versions of "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" and "Cool, Cool Water."

what to buy next: The recordings on *Columbia Historic Edition* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982, prod. Art Satherly) were made in 1937 for the American Recordings Corporation. Spencer had left the group temporarily and been replaced by Lloyd Perryman, who sings on these recordings, notable for the emphasis on the fine instrumental work of the Farr brothers and for some of Rogers's exquisite, fluid yodeling on "The Devil's Great Grandson" and "Cowboy Night Herd Song."

what to avoid: *Country & Western Memories* ♪♪ (Pair, 1991) has only two cowboy tunes and a bunch of smoothed-out country-pop. Why would anybody want to listen to the Sons of the Pioneers sing anything but cowboy songs?

the rest:
Cool Water ♪♪♪ (RCA Nashville, 1960)
Songs of the Trails ♪♪♪ (Pair, 1990)
Sunset on the Range ♪♪♪♪ (Pair, 1990)
Tumbling Tumbleweeds ♪♪♪½ (MCA Special Products, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Carson Robison & the Pioneers, Jimmie Rodgers
▶▶ Gene Autry, Tex Ritter, Riders in the Sky

see also: *Roy Rogers*

Craig Shelburne and Brian Mansfield

Son Volt

See: Uncle Tupelo

Rosalie Sorrels

Born 1933, in ID.

A self-described "storyteller who uses music," Rosalie Sorrels embodies the free-spirited, feminine side of traditional and tradition-rooted folk songs. The inspiration for Nanci Griffith's song "Ford Econoline," Sorrels has spent more than four decades collecting and recording songs that voice the struggles and joys of America's rural population. Sorrels's love of storytelling was inherited from her mother, Nancy Stringfellow, who owned a book store. Although she listened to jazz as a teenager, she was lured to the oral tradition of folk music. With her then-husband, Jim Sorrels, she began collecting stories and songs in Idaho and Utah after taking a course, "An Introduction to American Folk Songs," taught by folklorist Wayland Hand. Sorrel's 1961 debut album, *Folk Songs of Idaho and Utah*, made her a leading proponent of traditional folk music. Although she's continued to interpret the songs she's collected, Sorrels has also composed many roots-based songs. When her marriage broke up in 1966, Sorrels and her two children loaded everything they owned into a van, later immortalized by Nanci Griffith's tribute, and moved to San Francisco. After meeting singer-songwriters Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips and Malvina Reynolds shortly after her arrival on the West Coast, she added their songs to her repertoire. Sorrels's musical success has been balanced by considerable sorrow. She had an illegal abortion at the age of 16, and gave up a baby for adoption a year later. In 1976 her oldest son, David, took his own life. Although a brain aneurysm in 1988 nearly halted her career, she continues to record, perform, and influence folk and acoustic music.

what to buy: Recorded with old friend and kindred musical spirit Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, *The Long Memory* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1996, prod. Samantha Wright) explores the musical traditions of the American working class. In a celebration of the Industrial Workers of the World, the Western Federation of Miners, and the Farm Workers of America, the two balladeers share lead vocals and harmonies on Aunt Molly Jackson's "I Am a Union Woman," Si Kahn's "Aragon Mill," and traditional folk songs, including "Bury Me in My Overalls" and "Dump the Bosses off Your Back."

what to buy next: With Sorrels singing her mother's favorite songs, *Report from Grimes Creek* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1991, prod. Rosalie Sorrels) pays homage to the rustic folk sounds and laid-back charm of her birthplace in Idaho. Accompanying herself on acoustic guitar and joined by Johnny "Shoes" Pisano (mandolin, bass), Charlie Burry (fiddle), and Father Jim Watkin-

son (piano), Sorrels sings and tells stories of lush gardens, fishing, forests, and romance. *Then Came the Children* ♪♪♪ (Aural Tradition, 1984/Green Linnet, 1992, prod. Rosalie Sorrels) was recorded during a performance at the Vancouver East Cultural Center in February, 1984.

the rest:
Folk Songs of Utah and Idaho ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1961)
Always a Lady ♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1976/1993)
Traveling Lady Rides Again ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1978/1992)
Miscellaneous Abstract Record No.1 ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1982/1992)
Be Careful, There's a Baby in the House ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1990)
Lonesome Roving Wolf ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992)
What Does It Mean to Love? ♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1994)
Borderline Heart ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1995)

influences:
Hank Williams, John Jacob Niles, Jean Ritchie
Bruch U. "Utah" Phillips, Nanci Griffith, Carolyn Hester

Craig Harris

Larry Sparks

Born September 15, 1947, in Lebanon, IN.

Larry Sparks is one of the most distinctive and compelling lead singers in bluegrass music. Probably the best of the traditional-style lead guitarists, he and his band the Lonesome Ramblers have been in the forefront of traditional bluegrass for many years. Sparks filled in with the Stanley Brothers as lead guitarist while still in his teens, and after Carter Stanley's death he joined the Clinch Mountain Boys as lead vocalist and lead guitarist, his fierce, percussive flatpicking style much in evidence even then. In 1969 he left to lead his own band and has been a favorite of traditional bluegrass lovers ever since, cutting many songs that have become much identified with him. His rich, deep vocals and fiery guitar work, along with his penchant for bluesy material set to bluegrass, have made him a festival favorite for years, and he has cut many fine recordings, a handful of which ("A Face in the Crowd," "Blue Virginia Blues," "John Deere Tractor") have achieved modern classic status in bluegrass circles.

what to buy: *Classic Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1989, prod. Gary B. Reid) contains the three songs mentioned above, plus "Tennessee 1949," "Kentucky Girl," and "Great High Mountain," all wonderful, and Sparks's guitar workout on "Cannonball Blues" is mind-boggling. *Silver Reflections* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1988, prod. Larry Sparks) has "The Girl of My Dreams" and "The Natural Thing to Do," two of Sparks's cooler songs.

what to buy next: On *Sings Hank Williams* ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1977, prod. Larry Sparks), Williams's lyrics and Sparks's voice and bluegrass arrangements go together very nicely. *The Rock I Stand On* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1994, prod. Larry Sparks) is a nice gospel set.

the rest:
(With the Lonesome Ramblers) *Thank You Lord* ♪♪♪ (Old Homestead, 1975)
Travelin' ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1992)
Blue Mountain Memories ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1996)

influences:
Carter Stanley, George Shuffler
James King, David Parmley

Randy Pitts

Special Consensus

Formed 1975, in Chicago, IL.

Greg Cahill, banjo; Colby Maddox, mandolin; Diana Phillips, bass; Bobby Burns, guitar. Previous members include Don Stiernberg, mandolin; Drew Carson, mandolin; Al Murphy, fiddle; Dallas Wayne, bass; Robbie Fulks, guitar; Marty Marrone, guitar; others.

Banjo virtuoso Greg Cahill has spearheaded the Special Consensus since 1975, through a long series of personnel changes and forays into different flavors of bluegrass. The band has always featured strong instrumental lineups, in keeping with Cahill's own flashy, inventive picking style.

what to buy: Featuring one of the strongest lineups in the group's history, *Strong Enough to Bend* ♪♪♪♪½ (Pinecastle, 1996, prod. Mark Schatz) features intriguing covers like Nanci Griffith's "Outbound Plane" and Kathy Kallick's "Call Me a Taxi," original songs by the new vocal front line of Bobby Burns and Diana Phillips, and instrumentals by mandolin player Colby Maddox ("Third Coast Breakdown") and Cahill ("Money Creek").

what to buy next: Another high point in Special Consensus history was the four-piece lineup with Cahill, guitarist Marty Marrone, fiddler Al Murphy, and bassist/vocalist Dallas Wayne. The upbeat *Hey Y'All* ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1991, prod. Greg Cahill) emphasizes Wayne's appealing vocal performances on the title tune and a winning bluegrass cover of "Viva Las Vegas."

the rest:
A Hole In My Heart ♪♪½ (Turquoise, 1989)
Green Rolling Hills ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1993)
Roads and Rails ♪♪½ (Shy Town, 1995)

bowed psaltery

The bowed psaltery (pronounced salt-ree) is a narrow triangular two-octave chromatic instrument. The 24 strings are perpendicular to the narrow end and the instrument is played by drawing a bow across the ends of the strings on either side. On one side are the steps of a major scale and on the other side are additional sharps and flats, similar to a standard keyboard layout. Typically one melody note is played at a time, unless you use multiple bows, which is an advanced technique. The instrument is played cradled in the crook of one arm with the other hand wielding the bow. When playing with two bows, you lay the instrument on your lap or a table. The bowed psaltery is not a true holdover from the past but was invented in the twentieth century, probably in Germany. In addition to the bowed psaltery, there is also a plucked psaltery. This instrument was somewhat popular in Europe prior to the fifteenth century, but it dates back at least two thousand years and is one of the instruments mentioned in the Bible: "the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer" (Daniel 3:5). Although it has now all but died out in Europe, the Finnish *kantele* and the Russian *gusli* are both descendants, while the Turkish *qanun* is considered to be its direct ancestor. In turn, this type of psaltery is possibly the hammered dulcimer's immediate ancestor. In the United States, the plucked psaltery is closely associated with musician Bob Beers. The instrument he plays is actually thought to be a nineteenth-century hammered dulcimer that he chose to pluck instead; it is a much larger instrument resembling a harpsichord and enclosed in a wooden, free-standing case. The plucked psaltery is typically played by plucking with both hands. Traditional folk musician Betty Smith, who plays both types of psaltery, is perhaps the best plucked psaltery player around.

Heidi Cerrigione and Neal Walters

worth searching for: Both *Special Consensus Bluegrass* ♪♪♪ (Tin Ear, 1979) and *Blue Northern* ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Revival, 1983) appeared on vinyl but are now out of print.

solo outings:

Greg Cahill:
Lone Star ♪♪♪ (Independent, 1980)

Greg Cahill and Don Steirnberg:
Blue Skies ♪♪♪ (Turquoise, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ Flatt & Scruggs, Bill Monroe

▶▶ Radio Flyer, Alison Krauss & Union Station, Suzy Bogguss

Michael Parrish

Bill Spence

Born August 1940, in Iowa City, IA.

Bill Spence is the master hammered dulcimer player of contra dance music in New England. His interest in the dulcimer began in 1969; the following year he formed a string band named Fennig's All-Stars with musicians living in the Albany, New York, area. The group's first album, 1973's *The Hammered Dulcimer,* was one of the first recordings of hammered dulcimer available, and this lively "feel good" recording captured the fancy of a new generation of musicians and inspired hundreds of new hammered-dulcimer enthusiasts. Spence and his wife, Andy, are the founding members of Old Songs, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to present folk and traditional music and dance to the general public through concerts and group instruction. The Spences also founded Front Hall Records, which recorded many popular folk artists from 1973 to 1993, and Andy's Front Hall, a mail-order catalog company for books and music of selected instruments, specializing in folk, traditional, and acoustic music.

what's available: If you own only one hammered dulcimer recording of contra dance music, *The Hammered Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1990, prod. Bill Spence) is the definitive one to own. This CD is a select combination of Fennig's All-Star String Band's first two LPs, with 14 cuts from the 1973 release *The Hammered Dulcimer*, and six cuts from 1975's *Saturday Night in the Provinces*. The group's infectious tunes and great energy—joining Spence are Tom McCreesh on fiddle, Jon Pederson on banjo, and Joan Pelton and Toby Fink Stover trading off on piano—make it hard to keep your foot from tapping. The album was chosen as a Recording of Special Merit in *Stereo Review* magazine and its version of "Gaspe Reel" was used for the

theme music of the PBS series *Crockett's Victory Garden. The Hammered Dulcimer Returns!* ♪♪♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1993, prod. Fennig's All-Stars) is a second recording available on CD, featuring a line-up that includes George Wilson (fiddle, banjo) and Toby Stover (piano, keyboard). The dance tune selections range from a medley of English jigs ("Glacky Hornpipe/The Quickstep/Young Scotty") to a pair of French Canadian reels, ("Reel de Chantier," "Pont au Pic") to a beautiful Irish waltz ("Bridgett O'Malley"). These recordings are available from Andy's Front Hall, P.O. Box 307, Voorheesville, New York 12186-0307.

worth searching for: *The Hammered Dulcimer Strikes Again* ♪♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1977, prod. Bill Spence) is an instrumental recording with many French Canadian tunes, and *Fennigmania* ♪♪♪½ (Front Hall, 1980, prod. Bill Spence, Fennig's All-Stars) is a collection of Irish tunes, Cape Breton melodies, and some wonderful Uncle Dave Macon songs.

influences:

◀◀ Howie Mitchell

▶▶ Cathy Barton, Walt Michael, Rick Thum, Scott Jackson

Heidi Cerrigione

Joseph Spence

Born August 3, 1910, in Small Hope, Andros, Bahamas. Died March 18, 1984, Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas.

One's first response to the music of Bahamian singer/guitarist Joseph Spence may be amusement. But, very quickly, any smirking brought on by Spence's spontaneous growls and eccentric phrasing will likely be replaced with delighted smiles. His music may be an acquired taste, but, given time, its savory qualities are inescapable. Spence grew up on Andros, the largest island in the Bahamas. He took up the guitar as a teen and was soon playing dances around his Small Hope home. His distinctive two-finger picking technique so impressed locals that when folklorist Sam Charters came to the Bahamas in 1958 and asked to meet the best guitarist around, he was repeatedly directed to Spence. Charters came upon the Nassau-based, 48-year-old stone mason in Small Hope, where he happened to be visiting family. Charters recorded an hour of music, which was released by Folkways under the title *Music of the Bahamas, Volume One*. Inspired by that pivotal recording, Fritz Richmond of the Kweskin Jug Band and producer Paul Rothchild (who'd go on to work with the Doors, among others) ventured south to find and record Spence in 1964. Spence continued recording and performing until his death, adopting everything from dance tunes to Christmas carols, pop songs to hymns, to fit his inimitable style.

what to buy: Joseph Spence and the Pinder Family are featured on *The Spring of Sixty-Five* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Peter K. Siegel, Jody Stecher), culled from sessions conducted in Nassau as well as a New York City performance from the same year. Spence is in top form, working in tandem with vocalists Edith, Raymond, and Geneva Pinder.

what to buy next: *Happy All the Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal/Rykodisc, 1985) was recorded in 1964 by Fritz Richmond and Paul Rothchild. A relaxed collection, it's highlighted by a nearly 13-minute-long version of "Hallelujah Side."

the rest:

Complete Folkways Recordings ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1958)
Good Morning Mr. Walker ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1972/1990)

worth searching for: *Kneelin' down inside the Gate: The Great Rhyming Singers of the Bahamas* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994, prod. Peter K. Siegel) was recorded in 1965. This 15-track field recording documents the spiritual music of Spence and other rhyming islanders. (Rhyming is a distant relative of rapping). Spence is the best known of the featured performers, who include Bruce Green, Clifton Green, Tweedie Gibson, the Pinder Family, Stanley Thompson, Clifford Ellis, Frederick McQueen, the Rev. W.G. McPhee, and Shelton Swain.

influences:

◀◀ Blind Blake

▶▶ Ry Cooder, Leo Kottke, John Fahey

Steven Stolder

Davy Spillane

See: Moving Hearts

Spirit of the West

Formed 1983, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Geoffrey Kelly, vocals, flute, harmonica, guitar, bodhrán; John Mann, vocals, guitar; Vince Ditrich, drums, vocals; Hugh McMillan, guitar, bass, mandolin, keyboards, vocals; Linda McRae, vocals, accordion, bass (left band 1996).

Spirit of the West is a venerable Canadian folk-based band with a strong pop sensibility. The band began in 1983 as a trio that included John Mann and Geoffrey Kelly. Other members have come and gone, most notably Linda McRae, whose departure in 1996 led some to fear the end of the band. Earlier albums

show their folk roots most strongly, while later offerings have more of an alternative-radio sound, but all feature powerful vocals, innovative instrumental arrangements, and a lyrical emphasis on questioning authority.

what to buy: *Save This House* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner, 1990, prod. Danny Greenspoon) is captivatingly odd, with powerful, rock-schooled vocals and strong folk elements.

best of the rest:
Labour Day ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988)
Two Headed ♪♪♪♪ (Warner, 1995)
Open Heart Symphony ♪♪♪½ (Warner, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Fairport Convention
▶▶ The Proclaimers, Moxy Früvous, Counting Crows

Pamela Murray Winters

Jeanie Stahl /Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring

Born 1951, in Geneva, Switzerland.

The jazz and pop songs of the 1920s and '30s are linked to the singer-songwriter tradition by Switzerland-born and Marblehead, Massachusetts-based vocalist and acoustic guitarist, Jeanie Stahl. Her recordings, both as a soloist and as a member of a popular folk duo with producer and multi-instrumentalist Mason Daring, have spanned heartfelt interpretations of everything from Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin, and Edith Piaf tunes to covers of modern folk classics by Bill Staines and Robin Batteau. Stahl is equally strong as a songwriter and has written, alone or with lyricist Harriet Reisen, sensitive and reflective ballads ("Sweet Melodies in the Night" and "Jersey Shore") and playful ditties ("Chocolate Is It!"). After meeting in a folk music coffeehouse in 1974, Stahl and Daring performed as a duo for more than a decade. They also performed, along with Staines, Guy Van Duser, and Billy Novick, in a folk supergroup, the Passim All-Stars. Daring and Stahl continue to work together. Daring has produced Stahl's solo recordings and several of their songs have been used in the soundtracks of John Sayles–produced films including *Lianna, Brother from Another Planet, Matewan,* and *Passion Fish.* Shortly after the release of Stahl's 1983 debut album, *I'm Just Fooling Myself*, she was seriously injured while wind surfing and was unable to perform for two years.

what to buy: *The Early Years* ♪♪♪♪ (Daring, 1992, prod. Mason Daring, Jeanie Stahl, Robin Batteau) assembles cuts from Daring and Stahl's first decade of recordings and includes harmonious interpretations of Staines's "River" and "The Boats They Come and the Boats They Go," and Batteau's "Take This Heart" and "The Eyes of the Beholder." While Stahl's roots in 1940s jazz vocals are reflected in her expressive rendition of the Bert Kalmer and Harry Ruby–penned "Nevertheless" and in her own swinging compositions, "I Do for You, You Do for Me" and "Chocolate Is It!," Daring hits the mark with his folk classic, "Marblehead Morning."

what to buy next: *Mysteries* ♪♪♪½ (Daring, 1995, prod. Mason Daring), the follow-up to Stahl's 1987 solo album, *All Grown Up*, wasn't released until 1995, but its mix of original tunes, Old English ballads, and covers of Randy Newman and Bill Staines songs show that Stahl had lost nothing during the absence.

the rest:
(With Mason Daring) *Sweet Melodies in the Night* ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1978)
(With Mason Daring) *Heartbreak* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1980)
All Grown Up ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1987)

influences:
◀◀ Simon & Garfunkel, Gordon Lightfoot, Fats Waller, Aztec Two-Step
▶▶ Bill Staines, Guy Van Duser & Billy Novick

see also: *Mason Daring*

Craig Harris

Bill Staines

For over 25 years, Bill Staines has traveled North America, singing and accompanying his original songs at folk festivals, concerts, clubs and coffeehouses. Getting his start in the Boston-Cambridge folk scene in the early 1960s, Staines built his international popularity with a blend of simple but elegant melodies, witty lyrics, and a warm baritone voice. Staines's songs present slices of Americana, ranging from the Midwest to the Yukon, where lush landscapes and ordinary people have sparked his muse. A bespectacled, flannel-shirted man with an unassuming demeanor, Staines has made a host of local PBS and network television appearances, as well as regular showings on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. In addition to his 14 recorded albums, his songs have been covered by Nanci Griffith, Mason Williams, Grandpa Jones, Priscilla Herdman, Jerry Jeff Walker, and others. Now in his fourth decade of performing, Staines still tours the continent by car, doing what he loves best: writing about the people he sings for.

what to buy: As an itinerant balladeer, Staines logs more than 60,000 miles per year on his car—and appropriately he dedicated a greatest-hits collection to his crossing the six-digit threshold: *The First Million Miles* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Mason Daring, others). This CD is a great opportunity to sample the artist's varied repertoire (18 tracks in all) without spending a bundle. The opener, "Place in the Choir," is a singalong with a gaggle of critters that "clap their hands, paws, or anything they got." "Bridges" waxes eloquently of spanning the "foreboding canyons" that separate people. And Staines's classic "Roseville Fair" warms the heart with fiddles, dancing, and falling in love. If CDs can wear out, this one could be the first to go. *Looking for the Wind* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1995, prod. Brian Wood) opens with a dose of simple wisdom: "Every long journey is made of small steps." And this collection is certainly an enjoyable step along the way. Showcasing Staines's later writing styles, "Every Long Journey," "Men of the Fields," and "Only Remembered" will likely endure as classics. And Staines's sentimental rendition of Gordon Lightfoot's "Early Morning Rain" is rich and warm. *Going to the West* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1993, prod. John Hill, Laurie Hill) is another fine collection of soon-to-be classics. Nancy Griffith says: "This album is so fresh. It's dusk in summer of fireflies in the yard, and it's dark of winter in comfort and warmth. A masterpiece for us to treasure that will never grow tiresome or dated." One listen will verify Griffith's sincerity. Most notably, "River," one of the most popular folk songs of all time, paints life's grand picture: "Someday when the flowers are blooming still,/someday when the grass is still green,/my rolling water will round the bend,/and flow into the open sea."

what to buy next: *Tracks and Trails* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1991, prod. Mason Daring) is a fine collection of heartfelt ballads. "The Streets of Old Quebec" and "Gold Dust in Our Eyes" showcase Staines's gift for turning lyrical phrases that conjure up unforgettable images. And just when you think the folk process has depleted its potential supply of interesting new train songs, the lonesome whistle blows again with "Winter on the Railroad" and "The Long Trains." *Just Play One More Tune* ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1994, prod. Brian Wood) features some good guitar work by Guy Van Duser and vocal harmonies by folks from Hartford, Connecticut's Sounding Board coffeehouse—a more than decent blending of talents. "White Mountain Goodbye" is characteristically rich with nature images, while "The Boats They Come and the Boats They Go" presents a not-so-common opportunity to read metaphor into Staines's writing. And where would folk music be if old men didn't tip the bottle once in a while? Without "Rye Whiskey Joe," and that would be a shame. *Redbird's Wing* ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1988, prod. Mason Daring) includes the playful "Place in the Choir" and sentimental "Yellowstone Winds" before their re-release on *The First Million Miles*. The avid collector will want to hear these in their original context. The title song and "Bird in the Wind" are more than uplifting. Staines's concert charisma is nicely preserved in *Bridges* ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1992, prod. Steve Smulian). The title song justifies the purchase. And for the young at heart, the children's number "The Porcupine Talks to Itself" is bound to tickle the funny bone.

the rest:
Miles ♪♪♪ (Mineral River, 1976)
The Whistle of the Jay ♪♪♪½ (Folk-Legacy, 1981)
Sandstone Cathedrals ♪♪♪½ (Mineral River, 1982)
Wild, Wild Heart ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1985)
Rodeo Rose ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1989)
The Happy Wanderer ♪♪♪♪ (Red House, 1993)
Alaska Suite ♪♪♪½ (Mineral River, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Pete Seeger, Nanci Griffith, Roger Miller, Gordon Lightfoot
▶▶ Peter Keane, David Wilcox, Greg Brown

Art Wojtowicz

The Stanley Brothers

Formed 1946, in VA.

Carter Stanley (born August 27, 1925, in McClure, VA; died December 1, 1966), guitar, vocals; Ralph Stanley (born February 25, 1927, in Stratton, VA), banjo, vocals.

Combining their true Appalachian mountain upbringing with the increasingly popular "bluegrass" sound emerging during the 1950s, Carter and Ralph Stanley became and remain one of the most influential duos in old-time, bluegrass, country, and indeed in American music in general. At 14 Carter got his first guitar, and formed the Lazy Ramblers, with Ralph playing banjo. In 1946, following high school and stints in the service, the brothers began recording as a duo, working on various radio stations, including WCYB in the Tennessee/Virginia border city of Bristol. Forming the Clinch Mountain Boys, the Stanley Brothers began recording for the Rich-R-Tone label in nearby Johnson City, Tennessee, in 1947. They signed to Columbia in 1948, where they recorded 22 tracks. During this time Carter briefly left to sing lead for Bill Monroe. The brothers reunited in 1952 and resumed recording for Columbia until the next year when they signed to Mercury, recording there for the

next five years. The bulk of their recordings, however, were done for King and Starday, beginning in 1958, when they also relocated to Florida. Although they had few genuine hits, this era yielded some of their most highly regarded recordings. In 1966 the Stanley Brothers came to an abrupt end with the death of Carter, at age 41. While Ralph carried on, the magic of their harmony singing was clearly gone. The Stanley Brothers are an American treasure, however, and clearly influenced many musicians with their impressive body of work.

what to buy: *Angel Band: The Classic Mercury Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1995, comp. prod. Colin Escott) is one scary record! This is such beautiful, even ghostly music, that it may take some getting used to, but the Stanleys didn't get much better.

what to buy next: *The Complete Columbia Stanley Brothers* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1996) collects all sides recorded for Columbia from 1949 to 1952, including classic performances like "Little Glass of Wine." Quintessential bluegrass for sure.

the rest:

Stanley Series, Volume III, No. 3—May 4, 1958 ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1990)
On Radio ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1991)
The Early Starday/King Years ♪♪♪♪ (Starday/King, 1993)
Stanley Series, Volume II, No. 1—June 3, 1956 ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1993)
20 Bluegrass Originals ♪♪♪½ (Deluxe, 1994)
Clinch Mountain Bluegrass ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1994)
Gospel Songs from Cabin Creek ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1994) (cassette only)
Hymns and Sacred Songs ♪♪♪½ (King, 1994)
The Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys ♪♪♪½ (King, 1994)
Sacred Songs from the Hills ♪♪♪ (Starday, 1994)
On WCYB Bristol ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1994)
On Radio: Volume I ♪♪♪ (County, 1995) (cassette only)
Shadows of the Past ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1996)
Stanley Series, Volume IV, No. 1—July 29, 1956 ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1996)
Little Old Country Church: Volume I ♪♪♪ (County)
Long Journey Home: Volume II ♪♪♪ (County)
Uncloudy Day: Volume III ♪♪♪ (County)
Stanley Brothers of Virginia: Volume IV ♪♪♪½ (County)
16 Greatest Gospel Hits ♪♪♪½ (Hollywood, 1997)
16 Greatest Hits ♪♪♪½ (Hollywood, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe

▶▶ Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys

Stephen L. Betts

Ralph Stanley /Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys

Born February 25, 1927, in Stratton, VA.

Although he continued to grieve his brother, Carter's death in 1966 at age 41, Ralph Stanley decided within weeks to return to performing with the popular bluegrass duo's band, the Clinch Mountain Boys. With former Lonesome Pine Fiddler Curly Ray Cline, Melvin Goins on guitar, and George Shuffler, Stanley re-formed the Boys, adding lead vocalist Larry Sparks. Through the years some impressive talent moved through the ranks of the Clinch Mountain Boys, including vocalists Roy Lee Centers, Keith Whitley, Charlie Sizemore, Sammy Adkins, Ernie Thacker, and Ralph Stanley II. Mandolin players for the group have included Ricky Skaggs and Ron Thomason (later of Dry Branch Fire Squad). The basic premise for the Clinch Mountain Boys never changed, and Stanley has remained incredibly active as a touring act, and recording artist. In 1980 he was honored with a National Heritage fellowship by President Ronald Reagan and earned an honorary doctorate from Lincoln Memorial University, becoming "Dr. Ralph Stanley." While a great many of his recordings remain in print, many are available only on cassette. But the many CD reissues, and new recordings available attest to Stanley's pure staying power. Keeping old-time bluegrass music alive and vibrant has been a lifelong quest, and he has more than contributed to the preservation of the style he and brother Carter (along with Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, and others) helped define.

what to buy: *Bound to Ride* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1991, prod. various) is a sterling 20-song collection dating mostly from the early '70s and featuring various band configurations.

what to buy next: *Ralph Stanley: Classic Bluegrass* ♪♪♪♪½ (1990, Rebel, prod. various) covers even more ground, focusing on the group's 15 years and 20 albums with Rebel.

the rest:

Hills of Home ♪♪♪½ (King, 1969/1996)
Live in Japan ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1971/1997)
Stanley Sound Today ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1981/1994)
I Can Tell You the Time ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1985/1994)
Lonesome & Blue ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1986/1994)
I'll Answer the Call ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1987/1994)
(With Raymond Fairchild) *Ralph Stanley & Raymond Fairchild* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1989/1994)
Pray for the Boys ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1991)
Saturday Night, Sunday Morning ♪♪♪♪ (Freeland, 1992)
Almost Home ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1992)

The Memory of Your Smile ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1994/1997)
50th Anniversary Collection ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1995)
16 Years ♪♪♪♪ (Copper Creek, 1995)
Short Life of Trouble: Songs of Grayson and Whitter ♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1996)
My All and All ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs
▶▶ Keith Whitley, Ricky Skaggs, Bob Dylan

Stephen L. Betts

Pops Staples

Born December 2, 1915, in Winona, MS.

Roebuck "Pops" Staples made his name while transforming his clan of siblings from southern-bred gospel singers (reflecting his own church-reared youth) to soul-pop hit makers that rose to prominence with Stax in the late 1960s. Pops himself didn't go the solo route until late in life.

what's available: Released at age 77, *Peace to the Neighborhood* ♪♪♪½ (Pointblank, 1992, prod. Roebuck Staples), is a startlingly vibrant and seer-like distillation of blues and gospel. Portraits of a troubled homeland fraught with violence, addiction and spiritual decay drift across the album as if seeking Staples's own visions of peace and healing. Staples's firm but ultimately gentle stance and delivery win out (no doubt assisted by a crack guest list and daughter Mavis's able pipes). Staples followed up with the equally strong *Father Father* ♪♪♪♪ (Pointblank, 1994), which earned him a Grammy for Best Contemporary Blues Album.

influences:
◀◀ Charley Patton, Howlin' Wolf, Sam Cooke
▶▶ The Staple Singers

Allan Orski

Andy Statman

One of the most versatile of contemporary traditional musicians, Andy Statman is a world-class bluegrass mandolin player and an equally gifted clarinet player who is both a jazz cat and one of the shining lights of contemporary Hasidic music. New Yorker Statman's explorations of klezmer music led him into the spiritual reaches of the Bill Monroe sound.

what to buy: *Between Heaven and Earth: Music of the Jewish Mystics* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997) is a spectacular recording on which Statman and his quartet (pianist Kenny Werner, bassist Harvie Swartz, and drummer Bob Weiner) use Niggunim (eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Chassidic liturgical vocal pieces) as springboards for soaring, free-jazz improvisations in the spirit of the transcendent work of '60s players like John Coltrane and Albert Ayler. Always an expressive musician, this work brings out new emotional depths in Statman's extraordinary clarinet playing; his note bending on the opener "Maggid" is particularly noteworthy.

what to buy next: *Songs for Our Fathers* ♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1996, prod. David Grisman, Andy Statman), a wonderfully reverent, sentimental exploration of traditional Jewish melodies by two masters of contemporary acoustic music, features a splendid supporting cast including bassists Edgar Meyer and Jim Kerwin, percussionist Hal Blaine, tuba player Zachariah Spellman, and guitarist Enrique Coria.

the rest:
Flatbush Waltz ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980)
(With David Grisman) *Mandolin Abstractions* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
(With David Grisman) *Nashville Mornings, New York Nights* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986)
(With Andy Statman Klezmer Orchestra) *Klezmer Music* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1992)
(With Andy Statman Klezmer Orchestra) *Jewish Klezmer* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994)
Andy's Ramble ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bill Monroe, Dave Tarras
▶▶ Klezmatics, New Orleans Klezmer Allstars

see also: *David Grisman*

Michael Parrish

Red Steagall

Born Russell Steagall, December 22, 1937, in Gainesville, TX.

Red Steagall grew up in the ranching community of Sanford, Texas, north of Amarillo. He wanted to be a bull rider, but those dreams were dashed when he contracted polio as a teen. Instead, he began playing guitar and also learned mandolin, eventually graduating from West Texas State University with a degree in animal science and agronomy. Steagall wrote Ray Charles's hit "Here We Go Again," and he first recorded in 1969. He had many moderate hits for Capitol, ABC/Dot, and Elektra between 1972 and 1980, the biggest being "Lone Star Beer and Bob Wills Music," which reached Number 11 in 1976. Steagall has also worked as a rodeo rider, a breeder of quarter horses,

and an actor (his credits include *Benji*, *The Hunted* and *Dark before Dawn*). He began his own syndicated radio show, *Cowboy Corner*, in 1984 and once served as chairman of the board of the Academy of Country Music. He also once encountered a petite redhead belting out the national anthem at a rodeo in 1974 and introduced her to some of his music-industry contacts. Reba McEntire has been grateful to him ever since.

what to buy: *Born to This Land* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western, 1993, prod. Steve Gibson) is a sentimental mix of stories, poems, and songs that won the National Cowboy Hall of Fame Western Heritage Award for original music.

what to buy next: *The Cowboy Code* ♪♪♪ (Eagle, 1996) is a two-disc collection of poems and songs that features many Steagall originals, plus familiar songs like Jimmy Driftwood's "Tennessee Stud," Gene Autry's "Ridin' down the Canyon" and the traditional "I'd Like to Be in Texas for the Roundup in the Spring."

the rest:
For All Our Cowboy Friends ♪♪♪ (MCA)
Faith and Values ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1995)
Dear Mam, I'm a Cowboy ♪♪♪ (Warner Western, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Gene Autry, Rex Allen
▶▶ Don Edwards, Waddie Mitchell

Brian Mansfield and Craig Shelburne

Stealers Wheel /Gerry Rafferty

Formed 1972 in London, England. Disbanded 1975.

Gerry Rafferty (born April 16, 1947, in Paisley, Scotland), guitar, vocals (1973–75); Joe Egan, keyboards, vocals (1973–75); Paul Pilnick, guitar (1973); Tony Williams, bass (1973); Rod Coombes, drums, vocals (1973); Joe Jammer, guitar (1974–75); Gary Taylor, bass (1974–75); Andrew Steele, drums (1974–75); Bernie Holland, guitar (1975); Dave Wintour, bass (1975).

A couple of Scottish guys (Joe Egan and Gerry Rafferty) with a penchant for writing plaintive folk/pop songs somehow wound up in the studio with Leiber and Stoller (the team behind the Coasters) producing. The result was *Stealers Wheel*, one of the great debut albums of the '70s, with its hit single, "Stuck in the Middle with You." The combination of Beatles-esque harmonies, slightly off-kilter production, and heartfelt melodies served the band well artistically and critically, but it wasn't quite enough to enable Egan and Rafferty to weather personality and management problems. All three Stealers Wheel albums are worth seeking out; along with Badfinger, Big Star, the Hollies and others, the band kept a certain style of British pop songwriting alive at a time when most others (most notably the Beatles) had abandoned the form.

what to buy: Start with *Stealers Wheel* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1974, prod. Jerry Leiber, Mike Stoller) and Rafferty's *City to City* ♪♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1974, prod. Hugh Murphy, Gerry Rafferty), which includes the huge hit "Baker Street."

what to buy next: Rafferty's *Can I Have My Money Back* ♪♪♪½ (Blue Thumb, 1971, prod. Hugh Murphy, Gerry Rafferty) reveals his considerable talents as a songwriter and singer. The title song in particular is lots of fun.

what to avoid: *Gerry Rafferty* ♪♪ (Visa, 1974, prod. Bill Leader) is a compilation of tracks recorded when Rafferty was in the Humblebums with Billy Conolly. Some good songs, but not as sure-footed as his later work.

the rest:
Stealer's Wheel:
Right or Wrong ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1975)

Gerry Rafferty:
Night Owl ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1979)
Snakes and Ladders ♪♪♪½ (United Artists, 1980)
Right down the Line: The Best of Gerry Rafferty ♪♪♪♪ (EMI, 1989/Gold Rush, 1997)
North and South ♪♪ (Avalanche, 1995)
On a Wing and a Prayer (Avalanche, 1995)
Over My Head (Avalanche, 1995)

worth searching for: The single version of Stealers Wheel's "Everyone's Agreed That Everything Will Turn out Fine" was originally recorded with an arrangement reminiscent of "Stuck in the Middle" and is far superior to the version recorded for the *Ferguslie Park* album.

influences:
◀◀ The Everly Brothers, the Beatles, the Hollies
▶▶ The Proclaimers

Shane Faubert

Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin

Formed 1974, in Spokane, WA.

Jody Stecher (born 1946); Kate Brislin, vocals.

Jody Stecher was raised in Brooklyn in a family that always had music around the house. He started playing guitar at age

11 and spent a lot of time listening to Brunswick reissues of Uncle Dave Macon, Woody Guthrie, and Bradley Kincaid. The first banjo player he heard on record was Dock Boggs. He then picked up a fretless banjo at age 12. At 14 he was playing mandolin in a bluegrass band at his high school. Add fiddle and the Indian sarod to that mixture and you are just getting to the tip of Stecher's musical iceberg. Kate Brislin, Jody's wife, played in the Blue Flame String Band, a pioneering all-woman old-time band. She is well known as the person that can lend beautiful harmony singing to anyone. Together Jody and Kate are a wonder. You can drop the needle (or laser) on any of their records together and you will find an amazing song, instrumentally and vocally. They seemingly can take any song and make it their own. It wouldn't surprise me a bit if they could take a Guns 'n Roses song and not only make it their own, but make it sound brilliant. Thankfully though, Stecher and Brislin are great song hunters who don't necessarily need to rely on the most popular of popular music. From traditional music to Iris DeMent, they continue to record one fine CD after another.

what to buy: Deciding which Stecher and Brislin CD is the best is pretty much a coin toss. They are all amazing. If you like your music acoustic, your arrangements sparse, and your harmonies lonesome, then anything from the duo will do. *A Song That Will Linger* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989, prod. Jody Stecher) is a personal favorite due to their fabulous renditions of "Red Rocking Chair," "Hard Times/Dusty Miller," and "Paul and Silas." *Heart Songs: The Old Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder 1997, prod. Jody Stecher) is a collection of songs penned by Utah Phillips, recorded for the most part with just two guitars for accompaniment.

what to buy next: *Our Town* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Jody Stecher) is a CD based mainly on traditional songs. A few modern cuts from such writers as Iris DeMent ("Our Town") and Barbara Keith ("The Bramble and the Rose"), however, are fashioned to fit right into the mix of the rest of the album. *Blue Lightning* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1991, prod. Jody Stecher) leans a little more toward the blues than other recordings. A slow, bluesy take on "Sittin' on Top of the World" is especially good, as well as their version of the old-time classic "Elkhorn Ridge." *Stay Awhile* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder 1995, prod. Jody Stecher) contains many great songs including "Blue Mountain," "Willie Moore," and Seven Year Blues."

worth searching for: Stecher recorded the now-out-of-print solo album *Going up on the Mountain* ♪♪♪♪ (Bay, 1977, prod. Jody Stecher) and included one song, "The Hills of Isle Au Haut" on it twice because he loved it so much. One of those renditions contains one of the earliest pairings with his future wife Brislin. To those who heard this song the first time around, this cut must have been an exciting foreshadowing of the wonderful music these two would create in the future.

influences:

◀◀ The Carter Family, Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

▶▶ Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Steve Gardner

Davy Steele

See: Ceolbeg

Steeleye Span

Formed 1969, in England.

Maddy Prior, vocals (1969–97); Tim Hart, vocals, guitar, dulcimer, harmonium, five-string banjo, fiddle, (1969–82); Ashley Hutchings, electric bass, vocals (1969–71); Terry Woods, electric guitar, five-string banjo, mandola (1969–70); Gay Woods, vocals, bodhrán (1969–70, 1994–present); Peter Knight, violin, vocals (1971–76, 1980–present); Martin Carthy, vocals, guitar, banjo, organ (1971–72, 1977–78); Bob Johnson, vocals, guitar (1972–76; 1980–present); Rick Kemp, bass, vocals (1972–87); Nigel Pegrum, drums, (1974–89); John Kirkpatrick, vocals, accordion (1977–78); Tim Harries, bass, keyboards, vocals (1989–present); Ham Genocky, drums (1989–present).

Steeleye Span was (and is) one of the most important and influential British folk-rock bands. Ashley Hutchings developed a serious interest in traditional music after having worked on the seminal *Liege and Lief* as a member of Fairport Convention. He wanted to form a group devoted exclusively to creating new interpretations of traditional ballads and tunes, and Steeleye Span was born. Their first line-up: Hutchings, Prior, Hart, Gay Woods and Terry Woods was short lived. They recorded one album: *Hark! The Village Wait* and then the Woods duo left. They were replaced by Martin Carthy, already a "star" on the British folk scene, and Peter Knight. With this incarnation, the famous Steeleye Span sound characterized by Maddy Prior's crystal clear soprano and the ensemble's precise choral-like harmonies over electric instrumentals (led by fiddle and electric guitar) began to develop. This second incarnation did play live and recorded two remarkable albums: *Please to See the King* and *Ten Man Mop or Mr. Reservoir Butler Rides Again*. After those projects, Carthy and Hutchings departed. Hutchings began his lifelong career of producing English-rooted contemporary music, which has included

steeleye span

leading all the various permutations of the Albion Country Band (the Albion Band, the Albion Dance Band and being involved with many special one-time-only projects). Carthy returned to solo work, but his career has also included membership in the Albion Country Band, the Watersons, Brass Monkey, and Waterson, Carthy. Stepping in for Hutchings and Carthy were Bob Johnson and Rick Kemp. With these new members, Steeleye Span was in for its headiest period yet, which included hit singles in Great Britain and regular concert tours of North America, Britain, and continental Europe. The group's sound became definitive with this incarnation; the vocal harmonies even tighter and the rhythms rocked up courtly dances. Drummer Nigel Pegrum came on board in time to record *Now We Are Six*, which cemented the group's "medieval Jefferson Airplane" sound. The next big changes came when Johnson and Knight left in 1977 after producing an outside recording, *The King of Elfland's Daughter*. Carthy rejoined the band, bringing with him accordionist/vocalist John Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick's accordion brought a different color to Steeleye Span's music, and on *Storm Force Ten*, the group's only studio recording in this incarnation, they presented distinctive arrangements of "The Black Freighter" (from *The Threepenny Opera*) and "The Wife of the Soldier." For several years after that, Steeleye Span rested until re-forming in 1979 with its mid-1970s membership: Prior, Hart, Johnson, Knight, Kemp, and Pegrum. In 1976 Prior had taken some time off to record an acoustic album with June Tabor—*Silly Sisters*—and, in 1978 she used the break from Steeleye Span to release two albums of contemporary songs: *Woman in the Wings* and *Changing Winds*, both of which are in 1980 Steeleye Span-released *Sails of Silver*. After that, Hart left for good; he worked as a producer and issued one solo album. The next Steeleye studio album, *Back in Line*, appeared in 1986 and then came another "Silly Sisters" set (produced by avant garde folkie, Andrew Cronshaw), *No More to the Dance*, in 1988. Steeleye Span's 20th anniversary album, *Tempted and Tried*, appeared the following year, and was followed by the live collection *Tonight's the Night* in 1992. In addition to all this Steeleye activity, Prior teamed with "early music" folk ensemble the Carnival Band for a series of tours and recordings that continues to this day. Gay Woods returned to the Steeleye fold in 1994, and her distinctive vocals (just a little rougher and lower than Ms. Prior's) can be heard on Steeleye Span's 1995 release *Time*. In late 1997 Prior officially left Steeleye Span to pursue other projects. In fact, her latest solo album, *Flesh and Blood*, was released earlier in 1997.

what to buy: Some of Steeleye Span's best loved songs ("Boys of Bedlam," "False Knight on the Road,") along with fiery instrumentals featuring Martin Carthy on electric guitar (a rare sight now!) and Peter Knight on fiddle appear on *Please to See the King* ♪♪♪♪♪ (B&C, 1971/Shanachie, prod. Sandy Roberton). *Below the Salt* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1972/Shanachie, 1988, prod Steeleye Span, Jerry Boys) includes a number of songs that have also become Steeleye classics: the grim supernatural ballad "King Henry," the more pastoral "Spotted Cow" and "Rosebud in June," and their unforgettable interpretation of "Gaudete," a sixteenth-century religious piece sung entirely in Latin. The line-up that recorded *Storm Force Ten* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1977/BGO, 1996, prod. Steeleye Span, Mike Thompson) only lasted a short time but produced remarkable music. They never toured North America, which makes this album essential for U.S. and Canadian fans. However, one of the special treats for those who attended "Steeleye Span: The Journey," an eight hour mega-concert held September 2, 1995 at the Forum in London, England, that featured almost everyone who'd ever been a member of Steeleye Span, was the short set by a reunited *Storm Force Ten* line-up. *Spanning the Years* ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1995, prod. various) is a compilation featuring tracks from all periods of Steeleye Span's 25-plus year history. The CD booklet includes an informal, informative essay by Prior with John Tobier and Lynda Morrison.

best of the rest:
Hark! The Village Wait ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1970/Shanachie, 1991)
Parcel of Rogues ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1973/Shanachie, 1987)
Live at Last ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1978/BGO, 1997)
Tempted and Tried ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1989)
Time ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995)

worth searching for: There are two Steeleye Span concert videos released in the United States: *A 20th Anniversary Celebration* (Shanachie, 1989) and *Steeleye Span 25 Live* ♪♪♪♪½ (Teal Entertainment/Wienerworld Limited/Anchor Bay Entertainment, 1995)

solo outings:

Maddy Prior:
Woman in the Wings ♪♪♪♪½ (Chrysalis, 1978/BGO)
Changing Winds ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1978)
Year ♪♪♪♪½ (Park, 1993)
Memento: The Best of Maddy Prior ♪♪♪♪ (Park, 1995)
Flesh and Blood N/A (Park, 1997)

Tim Hart:
Tim Hart ♪♪♪ (Chrysalis 1979/BGO 1997)

Peter Knight:
Ancient Cause ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1991)

Maddy Prior & Tim Hart:
Folk Songs of Old England Volume I ♪♪♪♪½ (Mooncrest, 1968)
Folk Songs of Old England Volume II ♪♪♪♪½ (Mooncrest, 1968)
Summer Solstice ♪♪♪♪ (Mooncrest, 1971/Shanachie, 1991)

Maddy Prior & June Tabor:
Silly Sisters ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1976/Shanachie, 1988)
No More to the Dance ♪♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1988)

Maddy Prior and the Carnival Band:
A Tapestry of Carols ♪♪♪♪½ (Saydisc, 1987)
Sing Lustily and with Good Courage ♪♪♪♪ (Saydisc, 1990)
Carols and Capers ♪♪♪♪½ (Park, 1991)
Hang up Sorrow and Care ♪♪♪♪½ (Park, 1995)

Rick Kemp:
Escape ♪♪♪½ (Fellside, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ The Copper Family, Young Tradition, Jefferson Airplane, Fairport Convention, the Watersons, Mr. Fox

▶▶ Connie Dover, Clarion, Garmarna, Varttina, Blyth Power, Pyewackett, the Spriguns, Hedgehog Pie, New St. George, the Klezmatics, Polly Bolton, Iron Horse

see also: *Sweeney's Men, Martin Carthy, June Tabor*

Ken Roseman

Rafe Stefanini

Born November 29, 1954, in Bologna, Italy.

Rafe Stefanini grew up in Italy, but that didn't stop him from becoming one of America's finest old-time musicians of the younger generation. Stefanini got his first taste of traditional American music from recordings of the New Lost City Ramblers and Doc Watson. Eventually, his interests turned to the older musicians. He began playing fiddle during the late 1970s and the banjo during the early 1980s, influenced by the playing of Uncle Bunt Stephens, Kyle Creed, and others. Stefanini's first band, the Moonshine Brothers, consisted of him and his brothers. After coming to the United States, he played and recorded with the Wildcats and the L7s. Stefanini currently lives near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and makes a living repairing and restoring stringed instruments. He plays and records with the old-time band Big Hoedown and teaches at dance and music camps around the country.

what's available: *Old Paint* ♪♪♪½ (Yodel-Ay-Hee, 1995, prod. Rafe Stefanini, Bob Herring) isn't really a Stefanini recording. He teams up with Indiana musician Bob Herring for a variety of fiddle/banjo and fiddle/guitar duets, with the lead fiddle role changing hands often. These two fiddlers have different styles that complement each other well, and they are equally skilled at backing each other up. Stefanini plays several archaic tunes, such as "Old Time Train 45," in an almost spooky style that does justice to tunes like this. Bob's fiddling has more of the midwestern smoothness to it, as in "John Robinson." Many of this disc's tunes are not heard or recorded often enough, such as Wilson Douglas's "Little Rose" and Allan Sisson's "Rocky Road to Dublin." It also contains a number of unusual versions of common tunes, such as "Brown's Dream." Also included are a vocal by Lydia Herring (with the boys backing her up on harmony vocal and guitar) and a banjo/guitar version of "Sally Ann." This disc goes way beyond the standard fare of old-time music, presenting a couple of different styles and a wide geographic range of source material. Sources for the tunes are given, as are the fiddle tunings. All in all, it's a fine recording from two of the finest of the current generation of old-time musicians, and it represents a wide cross-section of the genre.

influences:
◀◀ Bunt Stephens, Marcus Martin, Kyle Creed, Fred Cockerham

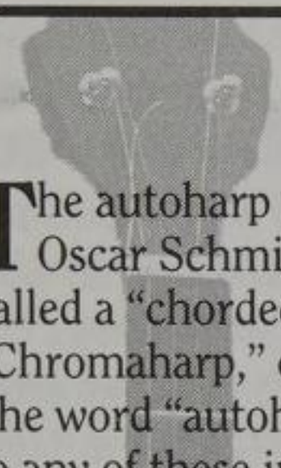
▶▶ Big Hoedown, Bruce Molsky, Dirk Powell

Dave Shombert

Cat Stevens

Born Steven Demetri Georgiou, July 21, 1947, in London, England.

Despite immensely popular folk-rock songs that have become international standards, Cat Stevens is the pop star who didn't want to be a pop star. In 1966, just a year after he started performing professionally, he had his first hit; by 1968 he was semi-retired with tuberculosis. Stevens was turned off by the pop star life, and when he resurfaced in 1970 with *Mona Bone Jakon*, the music was more developed and the lyrics more mature and sensitive. Stevens's fame grew during the next few years, as the music became more orchestrated and spiritually concerned. By 1973 he was even more reclusive; he moved to Brazil as a tax exile and donated the savings to charities. This pattern followed through the '70s as his record sales eventually flagged. A devout Muslim by 1979, Stevens changed his name to Yusef Islam and retired from music; he stirred controversy in 1989 by endorsing the Ayatolla Khomeini's decree that *The Satanic Verses* author Salman Rushdie deserved to die for alleged blasphemies in the book. He has since reversed that position.



autoharp

The autoharp (a registered trademark of Oscar Schmidt-International) is sometimes called a "chorded zither," a "dulciharp," a "Chromaharp," or any of a dozen other names. The word "autoharp" is commonly used to refer to any of these instruments, much like the word "dobro" is used to refer to any kind of resophonic guitar, and is played by many folk musicians today. A typical autoharp has 36 or 37 strings and is played by depressing felted chord bars (with the left hand) against the open strings while strumming (or plucking) the strings, usually with thumb and finger picks on the right hand. Many elementary school music teachers strum the autoharp to accompany their singing students, but an increasing number of musicians have discovered the autoharp's melody-playing potential. The invention of this instrument is attributed to Karl Gutter of Germany in the late 1800s and was soon after manufactured by Charles F. Zimmermann of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and sold widely in the rural south through catalog sales. Initially the instrument was played flat on a table or sound box (as done by Ernest "Pop" Stoneman and Sara Carter), and played rhythmically as accompaniment to singing. After the breakup of the Carter Family, Mother Maybelle Carter popularized holding the instrument in her arms and playing melodies. The Oscar Schmidt-International Company continues to manufacture autoharps today, and there are many fine custom luthiers building autoharps, including George Orthey, Tom Fladmark, and Mark Fackeldey. Many styles of folk music can be played on the autoharp and there are dozens of fine players. Bryan Bowers, Mike Fenton, and Mike Seeger are three of the best and all are members of the Autoharp Hall of Fame.

Heidi Cerrigione

what to buy: Even though he'd had a few hits, *Tea for the Tillerman* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1971, prod. Paul Samwell-Smith) blasted Stevens into international superstardom. "Wild World," "Father and Son," "Where Do the Children Play," "Hard Headed Woman," and others made Stevens an album-rock radio staple. The album's cartoon cover art and the innocence expressed in the songs were perfect for the flower-child ethos. *Teaser and the Firecat* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1971, prod. Paul Samwell-Smith) is almost as good, particularly the (then) side-two combination of "Morning Has Broken," "Bitterblue," "Moonshadow," and "Peace Train."

what to buy next: *Foreigner* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1973, prod. Cat Stevens) offers a taste of the more orchestral side of Stevens's music. The composition "Foreigner Suite" is a complex long form that veers away from lyrics and displays his talent as a musician. *Classics—Volume 24* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1987, prod. various) is an aptly titled hits collection, including songs he recorded for the dark cult comedy *Harold and Maude*.

what to avoid: *Izitso* ♪♪ (A&M, 1977, prod. Cat Stevens, Dave Kershenbaum) delves into electronics to little avail, though there are some revealing personal tales on a couple of songs.

the rest:
New Masters ♪♪♪ (Deram, 1967)
Mona Bone Jakon ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1970)
Very Young and Early Songs ♪♪♪ (Deram, 1972)
Catch Bull at Four ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1973)
Buddah and the Chocolate Box ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1974)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1975)
Numbers ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1976)
Back to Earth ♪♪ (A&M, 1979)
Greatest Hits Volume II (A&M, 1987)

worth searching for: *Matthew and Son* ♪♪♪ (Deram, 1967) provides an early earful of the straight folk sound of one guy with a guitar and a song to sing.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Paul Simon
▶▶ Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Joe Henry, 10,000 Maniacs

Lawrence Gabriel

Al Stewart

Born September 5, 1946, in Glasgow, Scotland.

With his cerebral lyrics, light vocal delivery, and understated guitar work, Al Stewart was something of an antidote for the disco-crazed '70s. His recordings were pleasant-sounding excursions that delved into such unusual topics as Nostradamus. With roots in folk and arid vocals, Stewart needed somebody to push him over the top. Who better than the over-the-top producer himself, Alan Parsons? Each complemented the other:

Stewart sang with greater confidence and had lush multi-tracked layers of sound backing him, while Parsons was limited to the amount of sound he could produce lest he squash Stewart's sensitive sensibilities. Despite a few hits—"Year of the Cat," "Song on the Radio," "Time Passages"—Stewart's older material doesn't time-travel well. But he continues to make new music that's gripping and forward looking.

what to buy: *Between the Wars* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Messa/Bluemoon, 1995, prod. Al Stewart, Laurence Juber) is a terrific album that doesn't sound much like the older Stewart. He and guitarist Juber fashion 13 songs that conjure up musical memories of '30s swing-time Paris, with looser arrangements and a full backing band that includes bass, drums, strings, reeds, and percussion.

what to buy next: *The Best of Al Stewart* ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1988, prod. various) is a 13-track thumbnail sketch of his work with Parsons and others. It includes material from *Year of the Cat*, *Time Passages*, *24 Carrots*, and the rest of his most well-known, if not best, periods.

what to avoid: The thematic bent of *Russians and Americans* ♪♪ (Passport, 1984/Mesa-Bluemoon, 1994) is a noble concept, but it ends up interfering with the album's musical flow.

the rest:
Past, Present, and Future ♪ (Columbia, 1974/Rhino, 1992)
Modern Times ♪♪ (Janus, 1975/Rhino, 1992)
Year of the Cat ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1976)
Time Passages ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1978)
24 Carrots ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1980/Razor & Tie, 1993)
Rhymes in Rooms ♪♪♪♪ (Messa/Blue Moon, 1992)
Famous Last Words ♪♪♪ (Mesa/Bluemoon, 1994)

worth searching for: Stewart was more of a lovelorn folkie when he recorded *Orange* ♪♪♪, (Columbia, 1972/Beat Goes On, 1993), but guests Rick Wakeman and Brinsley Schwarz brought some muscle to his muse.

influences:
◀◀ Donovan, Bob Dylan, King Crimson, Alan Parson Project
▶▶ Sting, Rupert Holmes, Nick Gilder

Patrick McCarty and Gary Graff

Andy M. Stewart

Born 1952, in Perthshire, Scotland.

Andy M. Stewart is one of the greatest living interpreters of traditional Scottish and Irish songs. As a member of the historically crucial band Silly Wizard, and later as a solo singer and as part of several duos, Stewart has taken his rich, sweet voice and produced definitive versions of some of the gems of the song tradition. He has also been an important interpreter of the works of poet Robert Burns, a singer of songs by other revival songwriters, and the author/composer of some of his own that have become folk revival standards. Although Stewart comes from a well-known extended family of singers, his experiences as a professional musician began in high school, in Blairgowrie, the town where he was raised. He and several schoolmates, including Dougie MacLean and Martin Hadden, formed a folk band called Puddock's Well. They gigged around the Scottish Highlands and served as house band at their local folk club. They were happy to be playing music, and when they finished school they all got day jobs and kept at the band in the evenings. One of the gigs Puddock's Well landed in the early 1970s was as the opening act for a trio called Silly Wizard. The two groups hit it off, and when the chaps in Silly Wizard found themselves short a few members, they called Stewart and Hadden to fill their ranks. After a few more reorganizations, the lineup stabilized with Stewart on voice and tenor banjo, Hadden on bass, Gordon Jones on voice and guitar, Phil Cunningham on accordion and keyboards, and Johnny Cunningham on fiddle. They were a powerhouse band, one of the most successful acts the Scottish folk scene ever produced. In addition to packing as much fun as he could into his years with the legendary band, Stewart made use of his association with Silly Wizard to cement his reputation as a consummate performer and songwriter. As frontman for one of the most brilliant bands on the scene, he entertained thousands of listeners all over the world. The songs he wrote with the band, including "The Queen of Argyll," "The Ramblin' Rover," "The Blackbird," "Golden, Golden," and "A Lover's Heart" became staples of Silly Wizard's repertoire and standards within the folk scene. In 1985, during a break from Silly Wizard, Stewart was slated to go on tour with Phil Cunningham when Cunningham got into a bad car accident. Stewart called Irish guitarist and bouzouki player Manus Lunny. Lunny agreed to fill in, and a new partnership emerged that lasted six years and carried Stewart beyond the breakup of Silly Wizard in 1988. The two toured many times and released four albums, one as a trio with Phil Cunningham, one credited as a Stewart solo disc, and the other two as Andy M. Stewart and Manus Lunny. By 1991 Lunny's main gig was with Scottish folk-pop band Capercaillie, and he was no longer able to be Stewart's touring partner. Another Irish guitarist, Gerry O'Beirne, stepped in to fill Lunny's shoes. Today Stewart regularly tours with O'Beirne. The pair have released two CDs, credited as Stewart solo discs but arranged and produced largely by O'Beirne.

what to buy: *Dublin Lady* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987, prod. Manus Lunny, Andy M. Stewart), recorded with Lunny, is a classic of the genre on which Stewart interprets some fine old songs. Tracks include Stewart's lovely version of "Bogie's Bonnie Belle" as well as the hilarious Irish drinking song "The Humours of Whiskey," both of which are definitive performances. "Dinny the Piper," a great ballad from the 1798 rebellion in Ireland, tells of a misunderstanding involving a soldier, a bagpipe player, and an apparently carnivorous cow; perhaps the first recorded case of Mad Cow Disease? Two of the original songs on this album, "Take Her in Your Arms" and "Where Are You (Tonight I Wonder)" have become favorites on the folk revival circuit, with numerous cover versions on the market. In addition to the fine singing by Stewart, Lunny contributes vocals to one song and guitar and bouzouki accompaniment throughout the disc. Other accompanists include Phil Cunningham (accordion, keyboards), Aly Bain (fiddle), and Sean Og Potts (uilleann pipes and whistles).

what to buy next: *Donegal Rain* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997, prod. Gerry O'Beirne) is another refreshing album of folk standards and new treasures. Some of the traditional ballads recorded here will stand as definitive versions of magnificent songs; Stewart's version of "Matt Hyland," a rare Scottish ballad with a happy ending, hasn't been outdone on record, and his treatment of "The Banks of Sweet Dundee" is absolutely beautiful. "The Irish Stranger" is given an appropriately solemn treatment, as is "Ramblin' Irishman"; both are sad songs of emigration, but with glimmers of hope and perseverance. More lighthearted material is here as well, mostly songs of sexual dalliance like "Tibbie Fowler o' the Glen" and "Queen amangst the Heather." Three Stewart originals fill out the album's 11 selections. The arrangements are a nice blend of the Celtic and acoustic with a touch of rock and roll here and there. Another very fine showing from Stewart and friends. *Man in the Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Gerry O'Beirne) features accompaniments by O'Beirne as well as other top names in Irish and Scottish music, but the focus is on Stewart's resonant voice. Several well-known traditional songs are given the Stewart treatment, including "The Echo Mocks the Corncrake," "The Gaberlunzie Man," and "The Lakes of Ponchartrain." In addition, he has adapted words by Thomas Moore, Sir Walter Scott, and others. There are two songs in particular that will stand out in the memories of Stewart's fans. "The Errant Apprentice" was written by Bill Watkins and set to music by Stewart and O'Beirne. It's a clever, if somewhat bizarre, ballad about a failed love affair, and its hilarious words and simple tune will remind fans of "The Ramblin' Rover," one of Stewart's best-loved songs from Wizard days. "The Land of the Leal" appeared on Silly Wizard's very first (and now very hard to find) LP. Like that album, *Man in the Moon* ends with this sweet and moving song about heaven. *By the Hush* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1983, prod. Phil Cunningham), released at the height of Silly Wizard's popularity, was Stewart's first album without the band. It features two songs, "The Ramblin' Rover" and "The Parish of Dunkeld," that were highlights of the Wizard's early repertoire, and these versions suffer a bit by comparison with the band's arrangements. The other songs, mostly slow sad ballads, are lovingly arranged and performed. The painful ballads of Patrick Sheehan's enlistment and of an unnamed Irishman's immigration to a Civil War-torn America get a silk-smooth treatment by Stewart rather than the usual, harder-edged arrangements of angrier singers. Stewart's originals deal with unhealed wounds, both personal and political. In all, this is Stewart's darkest and most melancholy album, with unfulfilled longings haunting almost all the songs. His honeyed voice is the perfect vehicle for them. As a testament to its quality, this album was named Melody Maker's folk album of the year in 1983.

the rest:

(With Manus Lunny and Phil Cunningham) *Fire in the Glen* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1985)
(With Manus Lunny) *At It Again* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1990)
Songs of Robert Burns ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1991)

influences:

◀◀ Archie Fisher, Lucy Stewart, Silly Wizard

▶▶ Ed Miller, Tony Cuffe

see also: *Silly Wizard*

Steve Winick

John Stewart

Born September 5, 1939, in San Diego, CA.

John Stewart took a giant step upon leaving the Kingston Trio in 1967. His first album, *California Bloodlines*, recorded at the same time as Bob Dylan's *Nashville Skyline* with some of the same musicians, became a classic and set the foundation for a lengthy solo career. Working from the enthusiasm of the Kennedy years (with the Trio, he wrote "New Frontier" for John F. Kennedy, and the songs he wrote while traveling with the 1968 Robert Kennedy presidential campaign are a continuing thread through his albums for the next decade), Stewart wrote with a liberal's unabashed love of country, good humor, and compassion and sang with a deep voice that seemed older

than its years. He bounced from label to label through 1980, with only the strangely ironic "Gold," recorded for RSO—a label that marketed him alongside the Bee Gees and *Saturday Night Fever*—as his only real hit. Many of his songs have been recorded by others, the most famous being the Monkees' 1967 smash "Daydream Believer." Stewart's later albums, on small labels and often for his own Homecoming imprint, continue in the same vein, and he stays busy as a live and recording act. Though his optimism has been shaken and his images have turned darker and more impressionistic over the decades, Stewart remains a durable and formidable songwriter.

what to buy: Stewart's early albums are available on compact disc mostly in European import configurations. The best is still *California Bloodlines/Willard Minus 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1989, prod. Nick Venet), written in 1968 while Stewart traveled with the Robert Kennedy campaign. It captures the yin and yang of that period as well as anything. Now packaged with its equally charismatic 1970 follow-up *Willard* on one CD, it's an incredible bargain even at import prices. *The Phoenix Concerts—Live* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1974/One Way, 1997, prod. Nick Venet) is a superb live recording with one of Stewart's best ensembles, and the new reissue adds two songs to the original album. *Bullets in the Hourglass* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1992, prod. John Hoke, John Stewart) shows the ever-widening direction and more subjective imagery of his recent songwriting.

what to buy next: *Airdream Believer* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1995, prod. John Stewart) includes several new songs and a retrospective that even reaches back into his Trio days, including the pre-rap "The Rev. Mr. Black." *Secret Tapes '86* ♪♪♪♪ (Homecoming, 1986, prod. John Stewart) includes medleys of some old favorites and strong songs such as "Justiceville" and "Unchained Beast." *Lonesome Picker Rides Again* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1971, prod. Michael Stewart) and *Sunstorm* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972, prod. Michael Stewart) are Americana song collections in the manner of *California Bloodlines* that got lost in the shuffle.

what to avoid: On the heels of "Gold," RSO pushed for another *Bombs Away Dream Babies*, and Stewart came up with *Dream Babies Go Hollywood* ♪ (RSO, 1980, prod. John Stewart), an attempt to retain some dignity while going Hollywood. That he failed was perhaps best for the label and Stewart.

the rest:

(With Buffy Ford) *Signals through the Glass* ♪♪ (Capitol, 1968)
Cannons in the Rain/Wingless Angels ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1973, 1975/Bear Family, 1990)
Fire in the Wind ♪♪♪♪ (RSO, 1977)
Bombs Away Dream Babies ♪♪♪ (RSO, 1979/Razor & Tie, 1994)
Blondes ♪♪♪½ (Allegiance, 1982)
(With Nick Reynolds) *Revenge of the Budgie* ♪♪♪ (Takoma, 1983)
Trancas ♪♪♪½ (Affordable Dreams, 1984)
The Gathering ♪♪ (Homecoming, 1984)
Centennial ♪♪ (Homecoming, 1984)
Trio Years ♪♪♪ (Homecoming, 1986/Laserlight, 1996)
Punch the Big Guy ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1987)
Secret Tapes II ♪♪♪ (Homecoming, 1987)
American Sketches ♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1991)
(With the Cumberland Three) *Songs of the Civil War* ♪♪ (Rhino, 1991)
American Originals ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1992)
Chilly Winds ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1994)
(With Buffy Ford) *The Essential John and Buffy* ♪♪♪ (Feegie, 1994)
American Folk Song Anthology ♪♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1996)
(With Buffy Ford) *Live at the Turf Inn Scotland* ♪♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1996)
Rough Sketches ♪♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997)
Bandera ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997)

worth searching for: *The Last Campaign* ♪♪♪♪½ (Homecoming, 1985/Laserlight, 1996, prod. John Stewart) gathers together some songs written during the late '60s, specifically about the Robert Kennedy campaign, most of which had ended up as pieces of other albums. It's now packaged with *American Folk Song Anthology* and *Trio Years* as a low-priced three-disc set, *American Journey* ♪♪♪♪ (Laserlight, 1996). *Neon Beach* ♪♪♪♪ (Line, 1992, prod. John Stewart) is a ragged, exciting live tape with a rock band that includes some classic '80s songs and weird, yet affecting, covers—"Lady Came from Baltimore," "Shake, Rattle, and Roll," even Paul Simon's "The Boy in the Bubble," but it's only available as an import.

influences:

◀◀ Cumberland Three, Kingston Trio, Dave Guard

▶▶ Lindsey Buckingham, Beat Farmers

Leland Rucker

Wendy Stewart

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Combining more than 30 years of harp-playing experience with the influences of a variety of traditions has made Wendy Stewart into a unique voice in the folk harp world. Born and raised in Scotland, she moved to Northern England for 15 years just when she seemed to be emerging as a fully developed talent in Scottish harping. These years in Lancaster allowed her to absorb the sounds of many types of music, including Scandinavian, Irish, and Paraguayan, which have blended with her traditional Scot-

tish background to create a deeper, more diverse music than others with similar Scottish heritage are bringing to the harp scene. Her touch on the strings varies, from gentle, evocative caresses on her airs to a firm, rhythmic grasp on dance tunes. Her original works are particularly eclectic, defying category, but unquestionably effective. When she was young, Stewart regularly won competitions on the harp, competing with other shining harpers such as Alison Kinnaird and Patsy Seddon. She was a contributor to Kinnaird's ground-breaking album *The Harp Key*, and seemed about to emerge as a recording artist herself, when she disappeared from the music scene for a while. Following her reemergence, she joined the band Ceolbeg and soon recorded her first album, titled *About Time*, for it seemed about time for her to begin recording. Her talent and ear for good music are unmistakable, and her teaching abilities are a highly sought commodity. She is currently at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, where she teaches as part of a degree course on traditional Scottish music.

what's available: *About Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1992) displays Stewart's harping gift through stirring dance tunes and lulling airs. Although mostly solo harp, she is joined on a few tracks by Alan James on clarinets, Jim Walker on percussion, and Colin Matheson on keyboards, as well as accompanying herself on concertina, and singing a couple of delightful songs. Stewart's voice is an elegant surprise, for so many singing harpers are either really singers who play a little harp, or really harpers who sing a little, while Stewart excels at both. Stewart's voice, though seldom used, is strong and delightful, and can sound earthy or ethereal, as best fits each particular piece. Among the delights on this album are a rousing march, strathspey, reel set "Bonawe Highlanders, Stirling Castle, Rachel Rae," an ethereal lullaby "St. Bride's Coracle," and an evocative snapshot through music, the Stewart original "Silent Rain." *About Time 2* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1997, prod. Jack Evans) continues where she left off on the first album. Excellent harping and choice music make this another stand-out recording for Stewart. Calling on the talents of fellow-Ceolbeg members Colin Matheson on guitar, Gary West on pipes and whistles, and Jim Walker on percussion, Stewart brings energy and a modern twist to traditional tunes, as well as presenting several more contemporary works, including three of her own. This album contains more songs displaying Stewart's versatile voice. Among other exciting tunes, there is a moving cover of the Sandy Denny song "Fotheringay," a delightful arrangement of the pipe tune "The Little Cascade," and a wonderfully melancholy version of "Rachel Rae."

influences:

◀◀ Jean Campbell, Alison Kinnaird

▶▶ Sileas, Sue Richards, Knodel & Valencia

see also: *Ceolbeg*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Stephen Stills

See: Crosby, Stills & Nash

Alan Stivell

Born Alan Cochevelou, in January 1944, in Riom, Auvergne, France.

Alan Cochevelou (who later took the pseudonym Stivell) made his public debut playing the Breton harp in 1953, at age nine. The harp had been built by Jord Cochevelou, his father, based on the plans of the famous medieval Irish "Brian Boru" harp, and was the first of this ancient type in Brittany. Stivell can justifiably claim to have been the first person to play the "Breton Harp," but only with the qualifying explanation that it was built from Irish plans. Later, Stivell learned to play the bombarde, a double-reeded shawm or oboe, and then the Scottish bagpipes. He joined the bagad Bleimor, or Bleimor pipe band, in 1954, became the band's pen-sonneur, or head piper, in 1961, and won the 1966 pipe-band championships. He also won championships for his duo piping with his friend Youenn Sicard. During the same period, he recorded the first-ever records of Breton harp music, beginning with a few singles and EPs in 1959. Finally, after proving himself in all these ways, he set out to innovate in the fields of Breton folk, Celtic rock, and world music. Stivell's innovative albums of the early 1970s chronicle his explorations of Breton music for ensembles. These albums, including *Reflets* (1970), *Renaissance de la Harpe Celtique* (1971), *à L'Olympia* (1972), *Chemins de Terre* (1973), and *E Langonned* (1974), revolutionized Breton music. They introduced the Celtic harp to the Breton recording scene, and admitted influences from the folk music of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the United States, as well as from classical, pop, and rock 'n' roll. The resultant catalog resembled, in Stivell's words, "an inventory of the possibilities for untried marriages of instruments." As the years progressed Stivell tried everything from orchestral arrangements to new-age soundscapes to rock 'n' roll, all in the context of the Celtic melodies of Brittany. He is undoubtedly the single most influential musician on the Breton music scene; his ideas about arranging Breton music for ensembles have affected every band since his own during the early '70s, and his introduction of the harp to Brittany influenced a whole generation of performers on that instrument.

what to buy: *70/95 ZOOM* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1997, prod. Alan Stivell) is a two-CD compilation of Stivell's most influential recordings from 1970 (when he recorded his first full-length album) to 1995. It features all the styles in which Stivell has played, from simple harp arrangements of traditional dance tunes through compositions evoking Breton folk stories, acoustic ensemble playing, gentle new-age music, fiery folk-rock, and beyond to quasi-symphonic compositions. In accordance with Stivell's pan-Celtic idealism, there is a lot of Irish and Scottish music here alongside the more purely Breton pieces and newer compositions. This set can serve not only as an introduction to Stivell's music, but also as a road map to his many albums; he has played in so many styles it is hard for any one reviewer to guide listeners to CDs they will enjoy.

what to buy next: *Renaissance of the Celtic Harp* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1972, prod. Franck Giboni) stands up remarkably well after 25 years, and shows the seeds of many of Stivell's future ideas: orchestral arrangements, New Age flourishes, and rock 'n' roll influences are beginning to make their way into his music. The second side of the original LP—the last track on the CD—is a 19-minute foray into Gaelic music from Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, ingeniously compiled and boldly arranged. *Live in Dublin* ♪♪♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1975, prod. Alan Stivell, Peter Rice) captures an important Stivell folk-rock band. A couple of years after electric guitarist Gabriel Yacoub went off to form the group Malicorne, this line-up still packed a great deal of punch when it was captured live in '75. Featuring several excellent bagpipe and bombarde players, fiddle, flute, and organ as well as bass, drums, and harp, they are capable of a wide variety of textures and a rich, full sound, and they deliver all they promise, from gentle harp airs to bouncy Irish dance tunes and on to fairly heavy electric arrangements. Electric guitarist Dan ar Braz (who played briefly with the English band Fairport Convention) and piper Patrick Molard have gone on to careers in some of Brittany's most important bands. *Again* ♪♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1993, prod. Alan Stivell, Kate Bush) includes new renditions of some of Stivell's influential mid-'70s hits, with more of a world-music/pop flavor this time around. Guests include Shane MacGowan and Kate Bush. Although this album was not a revelation to Stivell's fans, it is valuable in that many of the original albums on which the earlier arrangements of these songs appeared are out of print. *Harpes du Nouvel Age* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985) is an album of harp music arranged by Stivell's father, the harpmaker Jord Cochevelou. It's got a lot of Irish and Scottish music on it, as well as the many Breton tunes. Mostly low-key, it would be appropriate for new-age fans, as its title suggests. For those who share Stivell's love of Celtic mythology, new age, choral arrangements, and symphonic music, the CD *Celtic Symphony* ♪♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1979) should fit the bill. It's impressive for its scope and atmosphere rather than for electrifying performances. Finally, for an album poised between new-age and world music, with a few nods to dance club beats, *Brian Boru* ♪♪♪ (Dreyfus 1995, prod. Martin Meissonnier) is Stivell's latest new release. It features as guests many younger faces on the Celtic music scenes in Ireland and Scotland, and they all give good performances.

what to avoid: *The Mist of Avalon* ♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1991, prod. Alan Stivell)

the rest:
Journée à la Maison ♪♪♪ (Dreyfus, 1978)
Legende ♪♪ (Celtic Music, 1983)

worth searching for: A number of Stivell's groundbreaking LPs are out of print or unavailable in the United States. *Chemins de Terre* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1973) was one of Stivell's first forays into Celtic rock with an all-star band. It's a brilliant album, which was released in the United Kingdom as *From Celtic Roots*. The live album *A l'Olympia* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1972, prod. Franck Giboni) features many of the same players as *Chemins de Terre*, but a different set of songs. It's also brilliant, and it's a pity we can't get our hands on it on CD. *E Langonned* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1974, prod. Philippe Lerichomme) was a sort of antidote to the previous two albums, a completely acoustic affair on which Stivell paid homage to Celtic roots with renditions of Breton, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh folk music. The sleeve notes to this album, a manifesto explaining Stivell's ideas about music and life, are as interesting as the music. This is one of Stivell's most underrated LPs. There are still more LPs by Stivell that remain unissued on CD, including *Reflets* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1970), *Trema'n Inis* (Keltia III, 1976), *Before Landing* (Keltia III, 1977), and *Terre des Vivants* (Keltia III, 1981). As a rule of thumb, practically all of Stivell's LPs are worth hearing.

influences:
◀◀ Sean O' Riada, Chieftains, Bagad Bleimor, Goadec Sisters
▶▶ Malicorne, Gabriel Yacoub, Dan Ar Braz, Kornog, Gwerz

Steve Winick

Fred Stoneking

Born 1933, in Johnson County, MO.

Missouri native Fred Stoneking was raised in a musical

household, son of a champion fiddler, yet strangely enough did not take up the fiddle seriously until he found himself a homesick young soldier in the middle of the Korean War and his father sent him a fiddle to help pass the time. His early playing was received with something less than universal acclaim—he returned to the barracks one evening and found the instrument smashed to pieces by an unknown critic—but he persevered, and by the time he returned from military service he was an accomplished fiddler. Once back in the states, however, he found himself preoccupied with the duties of raising his own family and making a living, with little time left over for music. After several years of playing little, or not at all, he was playing guitar for his father in a 1960s contest which his father, Lee Stoneking, won. Impressed with how easy it seemed, it occurred to him that with a little practice, he might actually make a little money at this fiddling thing, and within a couple of years he was winning consistently in contests all over Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska. He is currently regarded as one of the leading players of the Ozark-Missouri style of dance fiddling, renowned for his ability to maintain a strong, steady rhythm while exploring melodic variations. In 1996 the Rounder-released *Saddle Old Spike*, an extensive collection of newly recorded tunes by Stoneking in this distinctive style. Stoneking now lives in Springfield, Missouri.

what's available: *Saddle Old Spike: Fiddle Music from Missouri* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Mark Wilson, Gordon McCann) is a fine sampler of the particular brand of Missouri square dance music Stoneking is known for. Entirely instrumental, no vocals—it's terrific fiddle music, but it helps if you're prepared to sit and listen to it an hour or so at a time. Contrary to the notion that "all fiddle tunes sound alike," though, there's a lot of variety in this collection.

worth searching for: Although they're difficult to find, Stoneking appears as a guitarist backing up Missouri fiddler Pete McMahan on at least one privately produced LP. In addition, he's a supporting musician on a couple of father Lee Stoneking's albums. Record vendor stalls at old-time music festivals and fiddlers conventions may be the best places to look for these rare LPs.

influences:

⏪ Lonnie Robertson, Lyman Enloe

⏩ Charlie Walden, Chirps Smith, Ill-Mo Boys

John Lupton

Ernest Stoneman /The Stoneman Family

Born May 25, 1893, in Carroll County, VA. Died June 14, 1968.

Ernest "Pop" Stoneman, along with his wife Hattie and his progeny, bestrode the first 40 years of the history of recorded country music; he made more than 200 recordings before 1930, suffered a severe decline along with the country during the Depression, and re-emerged as a force in country music during the 1950s and 1960s. Ernest and Hattie recorded together during the 1920s, he as a singer, autoharpist, harmonica player, guitarist, and clawhammer banjo stylist, she as fiddle accompanist, for many labels and took part in the famed Bristol Sessions. They had 15 children who lived to adulthood, and most of them played music at least semi-professionally. Patsy, Scott, Donna, Jimmy, Roni, and Van all grew to be skilled multi-instrumentalists and members of the Stoneman Family for varying lengths of time. Scott is one of the most influential bluegrass fiddle stylists ever; his influence far outreaches any personal commercial success he ever had. Donna is a very good bluegrass mandolin player, and Roni, who has gained some measure of notoriety as a comic on television's *Hee Haw*, is a first-rate bluegrass banjo picker. Patsy, Jimmy, and Van are all skilled professionals as well, although none of them ever attained the level of virtuosity of Scott, Donna, and Roni. Of them all, Scott, who died in 1973, was the true genius, and he is sadly underrepresented on recordings today—as is the whole family, although Ernest recorded for virtually every available label during his good years in the 1930s, and the Stonemans as a family band have a long recording history with everyone from MGM to RCA to Starday during the 1960s and 1970s, when they were a unique part of the folk revival going at the time. They never really successfully integrated themselves into either the folk or country mainstream, but they made some very odd records in the attempt, most of them out of print today.

what's available: Ernest V. Stoneman's *Edison Recordings—28* ♪♪♪♪ (County, 1996, reissue prod. Gary B. Reid) contains 22 samples of the songs that made Pop Stoneman a star—the first time. From fiddle tunes to gospel favorites to sentimental parlor songs of the day to transplanted English ballads, these are the types of songs that made up the repertoire of early country music recording stars.

worth searching for: *Ernest V. Stoneman and the Blue Ridge Corn Shuckers* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1975) includes more of Stoneman's commercial recordings from the 1920s.

the story 7 6 7

solo outings:
Scott Stoneman:
(With Bill Emerson) *Fiddle and Banjo Bluegrass* a.k.a. *20 Fiddle and Banjo Hits* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arion, 1967/1990)
With the Kentucky Colonels ♪♪♪♪½ (Sierra, 1976)

influences:
Freighthoppers

Randy Pitts

Stoney Lonesome

Formed 1980, in Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN.

Kevin Barnes, vocals, banjo, Dobro; Kate MacKenzie, vocals, guitar (1980–95); Chris Kaiser (Chris Silver), vocals, mandolin, guitar (1980–93); Brian Wicklund, vocals, fiddle; Patty Shove, bass (1980–93); John Niemann, fiddle, mandolin, vocals (1980–87, 1993–present); Brian Barnes, guitar, mandolin (1980–87, 1993–present); Bill Liners, guitar (1995–present); Kathleen Liners, bass (1995–present); Andy Olsen, bass (1995–97).

Since Minnesota is not generally thought of as "bluegrass country," it's something of a paradox that Stoney Lonesome is one of the most widely known bluegrass bands in the United States and Canada, by virtue of their numerous appearances over the years on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion.* The band had barely formed in 1980 before they found themselves on stage in front of Keillor's radio audience of more than two million—for lead singer Kate MacKenzie, it was only her third or fourth time in front of an audience, having not begun her singing career until her late 20s—but there's little question that they've acquitted themselves well since that auspicious debut and shown bluegrass in a very favorable light to an audience that's not generally viewed as "bluegrass-friendly." Featuring the husky, bluesy lead vocals of MacKenzie, the instrumental talents of the band are rock solid as well, firmly rooted in the classic styles of Bill Monroe and the Stanley Brothers. The same can be said of the harmony vocals; the trios are especially noteworthy. The various band members have contributed a substantial amount of fine original material to their recordings, but their treatments of traditional and classic bluegrass and old country material make them one of the more versatile bands in bluegrass. Although MacKenzie left the band in 1995 to pursue a solo career, Stoney Lonesome is still active and much in demand in its Twin Cities stomping grounds under the leadership of Kevin Barnes. Don't be surprised to hear Stoney Lonesome coming over the airwaves from Lake Wobegon and into your living room some Saturday evening in the not-too-distant future.

what to buy: *Blue Heartache* ♪♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1992, prod. Stoney Lonesome) is a recording made just prior to MacKenzie's departure, but as if to emphasize the fact that Stoney Lonesome is much more than just a backup band for MacKenzie, the album opens with a Barnes-penned instrumental, "Mason Harris." While Kate does indeed shine on two of her own songs, as well as on such others as Utah Phillips's "Goin' Away" and Greg Brown's "The Train Carrying Jimmie Rodgers Home," if your taste in bluegrass leans toward solid, hard drivin' pickin' and down-and-bluesy vocals, you'll likely find *Blue Heartache* very satisfying.

what to buy next: *Lonesome Tonight* ♪♪♪½ (Red House, 1991, prod. Stoney Lonesome) is not quite as solid an effort as *Blue Heartache*, but there's much to be savored here as well, with standout versions of Ola Belle Reed's "I've Endured" and Bill Monroe's "Highway Of Sorrow" worthy of special note.

the rest:
Meet Me at Midnight ♪♪♪ (Train on the Island, 1988) (cassette only)
Stoney Lonesome Christmas ♪♪♪ (SLP, 1988) (cassette only)
Walking with My Lord ♪♪♪ (SLP, 1989) (cassette only)

influences:
Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers
Laurie Lewis & Grant Street, Claire Lynch & the Front Porch String Band, Good Ol' Persons

see also: *Kate MacKenzie*

John Lupton

Noel Paul Stookey

See: Peter, Paul and Mary

The Story

Formed 1990, in Boston.

Jennifer Kimball (born August 14, 1962) vocals; Jonatha Brooke (born January 23, 1964, in IL) guitar, piano, vocals.

Forged out of a friendship beginning at Massachusetts-based Amherst College in 1981, the Story's story began when Jennifer Kimball and Jonatha Brooke first began singing together as the folk duo Jonatha and Jennifer. With their unique blend of vocal jazzy-pop harmonies and bouncy, quirky songs and rhythms, they were an immediate success at coffeehouse concerts. Finishing college, they went their separate ways—Brooke to a dance company and Kimball to a publishing firm—but they con-

tinued to stay in touch and play music together. After a wildly successful concert date in Boston, Brooke's husband convinced the two of them to submit a demo of their song "Over Oceans" to Green Linnet in 1989, and they were promptly signed by the label. Changing their name to the Story, auditioning a band, gigging constantly, and working on the songs for *Grace in Gravity* took up most of 1991. The album met with widespread critical acclaim upon its release, and the duo embarked on a non-stop touring schedule to promote it. Their second release, *Angel in the House*, was delivered in 1993, supported by a video and another round of breakneck touring across America in 1994. In October of that year, Kimball and Brooke decided to end their partnership after 10 years, citing personal and creative differences. Brooke went on to release two solo albums, while Kimball still performs around the country as a singer-songwriter and does sessions as a back-up vocalist.

what's available: *Grace in Gravity* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1991/Elektra, 1992, prod. Ben Wittman) is a swooping, creative exercise in jazz rhythms and folk-rock with flashes of brilliance and charm. Backed by a stellar cast of musicians consisting of Alain Mallet (keyboards) Ben Wittman (percussion), Mike Rivard (bass), and Duke Levine (guitar), *Grace in Gravity* floats effortlessly across the musical horizon, delivering lyrical punches of wit and wisdom with a feminine edge. Notable album cuts that dig deep into emotional minefields include "The Perfect Crime," "Easier than Sorry," and "Just One Word." *The Angel in the House* ♪♪♪½ (Elektra, 1993, prod. Ben Wittman, Alain Mallet) was released to glowing praises from fans and the media. Carrying on the Story tradition of tight harmonies, flickering tempos, and sparkling acoustic guitar fingerpicking, *The Angel in the House* is an earthshake of moods, ranging from the Latin-tinged "Fatso" to the new age overtures of "So Much Mine." Brooke, a descendant of Virginia Woolf, writes poetry set to music that carries you up and over the plains of ho-hum experience and into a dreamworld of ambiguity and paradox. Characters and situations she fashions in her songs are dangerously detached and illusive.

solo outings:
Jonatha Brooke:
Plumb ♪♪♪ (Blue Thumb, 1995)
10-Cent Wings ♪♪♪♪ (Refuge/MCA, 1997)

influences:

⏪ Joni Mitchell, Chaka Khan, Nanci Griffith, Bruce Cockburn

⏩ Shawn Colvin, John Gorka, Paula Cole, Patty Larkin, Carrie Newcomer

TJ McGrath

Don Stover

Born in WV.

Don Stover learned how to play clawhammer banjo from his mother, Norma Stover, when he was young. In 1945 he heard Earl Scruggs playing for Bill Monroe on the Grand Ole Opry and tried to emulate his three-finger style of playing. At first he wasn't quite getting it right, the reason being that he was using two fingers instead of three. A traveling salesman that came through his home town of White Oak, West Virginia, set him straight, and after Stover fashioned some metal finger picks out of an old Prince Albert Tobacco can ("there wasn't no music stores around where I grew up") he was on his way to becoming one of the best banjo pickers in bluegrass music. He ended up playing with legendary bluegrass musicians such as Bill Monroe, Doc Watson, Bill Harrell, Frank Wakefield, Buzz Buzby, Tex Logan, and the Lilly Brothers.

what to buy: *Things in Life* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Don Stover) is Stover's crowning moment. On this, his first solo album, he shows his expertise on some of the bluegrass standards such as "Done Gone," "Lonesome Pine Breakdown," and "Ole Liza Jane," and shines on his own originals. "Things in Life" is probably the song for which he is most well known. This album is a bluegrass classic from start to finish.

what to buy next: *Lilly Brothers and Don Stover: Early Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1991, prod. David Freeman) present recordings that were made in 1956 and 1957 for the Event label and are compiled here on one CD. This compilation, although short, is an exciting look at the beginning of this musical pairing of the Lilly Brothers with Stover. *The Lilly Brothers and Don Stover: Live at Hillbilly Ranch* ♪♪♪♪ (Hay Holler, 1996, prod. Fred Pement, Kerry Hay) was recorded by a fan, Fred Pement, on July 4, 1967. He captured one of the group's gigs at the Boston club. This CD is a good one specifically for capturing the spontaneous nature of this group in a live performance. Stover stands out on many tunes including "Flint Hill Special" and "Shenandoah Breakdown."

influences:

⏪ Norma Stover, Earl Scruggs

⏩ Bill Keith, Sammy Shelor

Steve Gardner

Strange Creek Singers

Formed 1968, in Washington, DC.

Mike Seeger, vocals, mandolin, fiddle, banjo, guitar, autoharp, harmonica; Alice Gerrard, vocals, guitar; Tracy Schwarz, vocals, fiddle, guitar, Dobro; Hazel Dickens, vocals, bass; Lamar Grier, banjo.

By the time the late '60s rolled around, four of the five members of the Strange Creek Singers were well-established figures in the revival of old country and bluegrass music that came out of the "Great Folk Scare" of the early '60s. Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard had made a number of landmark recordings together, while Mike Seeger, half-brother of folk icon Pete Seeger, was a well-regarded musician, musicologist, and folklorist in his own right, and a founding member (with John Cohen and Tom Paley) of the New Lost City Ramblers. By 1962 Tracy Schwarz had replaced Paley in the Ramblers, and all four had become good friends—Seeger and Gerrard, in fact, were married in 1970. They met the fifth Strange Creek Singer, banjo player Lamar Grier (who actually does not sing on the record) through their friend Dick Spottswood, a longtime country and bluegrass DJ in the Washington area, who was emceeing a radio show that featured the band Grier was playing in at the time. Spottswood (who is still on the air in D.C.) would eventually write the liner notes for the album. Although relatively unknown at the time, Grier would later achieve renown through a long stint with Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. While the music on their one recording is a wonderful sampler of the soulful side of old country music and bluegrass, it's interesting to note that West Virginia native Dickens is the only one of the five to have been raised in the country, the daughter and sister of coal miners. Californian Gerrard came east as a student at Antioch College and was introduced to bluegrass and old-time music by fellow student Jerry Foster. Schwarz is a New York native who took up fiddling as a teenager. Seeger, of course, grew up in a family steeped in folk music, his father Charles was a pre-eminent scholar in the field. By the time the sole Strange Creek album was recorded, Seeger and Gerrard were living near Schwarz in York County, Pennsylvania. Dickens was living in Washington, D.C., not all that far away. Gerrard recalls that it was Seeger who, after many informal sessions together, suggested they record and tour. Most of the album was recorded in early 1969, and the finished product gave each of the five band members a chance to display their individual talents, while at the same time doing some masterful ensemble work. As might be expected, the powerful vocal combination of Hazel and Alice provides some of the most arresting passages, many have tried to emulate their mountain harmonies over the years, but few have come at all close. Nearly 30 years later, all five of the Strange Creek Singers are still going strong. Seeger continues to perform and record as a solo performer, as well as with good friends like North Carolina fiddler Paul Brown. Schwarz performs often with his wife Ginny Hawker, who also sings beautiful old-time duets with her partner, Kay Justice, in the best tradition of Hazel and Alice. Gerrard now lives in Durham, North Carolina, where she is the editor of the *Old Time Herald*, a quarterly magazine devoted to old-time music. She continues to perform and in recent years has played and sung often with Matokie Slaughter as the Back Creek Buddies. Dickens still lives in Washington, D.C., and has collaborated often with Dudley Connell of the Johnson Mountain Boys. Although still a fine banjo player, over the last decade or so, Grier has perhaps become better known as the father of the superlative guitarist David Grier.

what to buy: *Get Acquainted Waltz* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1997, prod. Mike Seeger, Chris Strachwitz), originally released on LP as *Strange Creek Singers* in 1972, is the only recording of these five people in this configuration, although they have performed and recorded with each other in numerous other settings. This album comprises 14 songs drawn from sources that span a virtual encyclopedia of early country music, from the familiar (Carter Family, Blue Sky Boys, Louvin Brothers) to the relatively obscure (rockabilly Terry Fell, George "Shortbuckle" Roark). Some of the material is traditional ("In the Pines," "Sally Ann," "New River Train," "Will the Circle Be Unbroken"), but two original songs also are included: Schwarz's "Poor Old Dirt Farmer," and the track that is easily the album's standout, Dickens's stark, mournful, a cappella rendition of her song "Black Lung."

worth searching for: As noted above, since the '60s "glory days" of the folk boom these five people have been responsible, individually and collectively, for enough great recorded music to fill several pages here. Let's just say that if you enjoy what they've done as the Strange Creek Singers, then keep your eyes peeled for any of the recordings of the New Lost City Ramblers or Hazel and Alice.

influences:

◀◀ New Lost City Ramblers, Hazel & Alice, Carter Family

▶▶ Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, Kay Justice & Ginny Hawker, Ann & Phil Case, Lynn Morris, Johnson Mountain Boys

see also: *Mike Seeger, Hazel & Alice, Tracy Schwarz*

John Lupton

Syd Straw

A gifted singer, Syd Straw honed her chops on the New York alternative rock scene during the '80s, guesting on recordings by Golden Palominos, the dBs and many others. Her voice is powerful and mellifluous, but it can also be soft and vulnerable, with a pronounced drawl that isn't traceable to her geographic origins. Though Straw's songwriting has been somewhat uneven, her best compositions, which tend toward folky jangle-pop, have both depth and quirk.

what to buy: Her debut album *Surprise* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1989, prod. Syd Straw) features guest appearances by a large roster of friends and collaborators, notably Richard Thompson, Michael Stipe, Bernie Worrell, dB Peter Holsapple, Van Dyke Parks, and Peter Blegvad. After this album tanked, Straw continued singing on other people's records and even rented out her pipes for a beer commercial—it was one of the most strangely emotional jingles ever to air on radio—but ultimately landed another deal.

what to buy next: Her sophomore release, *War and Peace* ♪♪♪ (Capricorn, 1996, prod. Syd Straw) was recorded with the sturdy accompaniment of the Skeletons.

influences:

◀◀ Michael Stipe, Richard Thompson, Matthew Sweet

Simon Glickman

Chic Street Man

Born Charles Edward Streetman on July 31, 1946, in Augusta, GA.

Talent and purpose combine to give Chic Street Man's music a special vitality. An artist of great integrity, he is a role model whose life choices are documented in his song writing. "I have no illusions about changing the world," he says, "but I have hope." Like many musicians, Street Man's entry into music was not direct. After receiving a B.A. in psychology from the University of California at Santa Cruz, he directed the department of psychodrama at the community hospital of the Monterey Peninsula in Carmel, California. He served a stint as the executive director of a fair housing program in Hayward, California and then instructed a course titled "Creative Response" at Occidental College in Los Angeles. However, the music was always calling to him. After spending more than a decade in and out of the business, things finally came together in 1975 when he traveled to France and recorded his first album, *Growing Up*. In it he relates some of the complexities of life facing young people growing up in America. After the release of *Growing Up*, he toured throughout Europe and finally landed in Santa Barbara, where he founded Chic Street Man's School of Performing Arts. During the summer of 1987 he was invited to be the artistic director for the Boston production of the international play *Peace Child*. After the play's successful run in Boston, he toured with the company in Russia and Poland. In 1988 Street Man starred in the Mark Taper Forum production of *Lost Highway,* the story of Hank Williams. Then, in 1989, his career took a new and exciting turn when he composed the music and starred in the acclaimed off-Broadway show *SPUNK!* adapted by George C. Wolfe from the works of Zora Neale Hurston. *SPUNK!* enjoyed successful runs at the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Crossroads Theater, the Royal Court in London, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, and the Seattle Repertory Theater. Street Man received an AUDELCO Award in 1990, and in 1992 an NAACP Theater Arts Award for his music and performance in *SPUNK!* In 1994 he composed the music and starred in Bertolt Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* for the Berkeley Repertory Theater, and in 1995 he starred in *Aint Nothin' but the Blues* at the Denver Center Theater, the Cleveland Playhouse, and the Arena Theater in Washington, D.C. He has been a featured performer at the Paleo Festival, the Montreux Jazz Festival, and the Berne Festival in Switzerland. Among his many memorable experiences is being the featured performer at the General Assembly of the United Nations for the International Day of Peace. In 1991 and 1992 he gave benefit concerts for the United Nations Human Rights Center in Geneva, Switzerland and, in 1992, a benefit concert for relief to Somalia. Street Man has appeared in two films: *Triple Bogey* and *Hangin' with the Homeboys*. He released two albums in 1994, *Guns Away* and *Everybody Be Yo'self*, and, in 1996, the album *Beau-ti-ful*.

what to buy: *Beau-ti-ful* ♪♪♪ (Mo' Street Music, 1996, prod. Chic Street Man, Karen Sorensen) is Street Man's latest and it succeeds in demonstrating how he successfully manages to mix his jazz, funk, and blues approach with a growing social consciousness. The groove is certainly there with both Street and Keb Mo' doing some sparkling guitar playing. The blues are there too but there's a lot more. From reminding us that there is beauty in everyone to beseeching us to have a little mercy on Mother Earth, Street Man is out front with his politics and his message is effective.

what to buy next: Either of Street Man's earlier CD releases, *Guns Away* ♪♪♪ (Mo' Street Music, 1994, prod. Chic Street Man, Karen Sorensen) or *Everybody Be Yo'self* ♪♪♪ (Backyard

Audio/Mo' Street Music, 1994, prod. Chic Street Man, Karen Sorensen) are worth picking up. Street Man's music is both entertaining and educational. He uses his guitar as a percussive tool to support his "rap recitations" and proves that he is indeed "a nice guy with serious things on his mind."

the rest:
Make It thru the Night ♪♪ (Right Soul Productions, 1987)

worth searching for: *Growing Up* ♪♪♪ (Saravah, 1975) was released in France and is out of print. It's worth searching for, certainly if you happen to be in Paris anyway.

influences:

◀◀ Big Bill Broonzy, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, John Lee Hooker

▶▶ Taj Mahal, Keb Mo', Charles Bevel

Neal Walters

Strength in Numbers

Formed mid-1980s.

Sam Bush, mandolin; Mark O'Connor, fiddle; Béla Fleck, banjo; Jerry Douglas, Dobro; Edgar Meyer, bass violin.

A bluegrass supergroup where each member is considered a master of his instrument, Strength in Numbers has played in various combinations on each others' projects and appears regularly at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival.

what's available: While not as flashy as their live shows, the group's one studio album, *The Telluride Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1989, prod. Strength in Numbers), could be described as chamber bluegrass, stressing precise ensemble work over individual soloing.

worth searching for: O'Connor and Meyer team up with cellist Yo-Yo Ma on *Appalachia Waltz* ♪♪♪♪ (Sony Classical, 1996), a collection that combines bluegrass and classical in a truly original way. Sort of Copland-goes-country.

influences:

◀◀ David Grisman, New Grass Revival, Béla Fleck & the Flecktones

▶▶ Alison Brown, Russ Barenberg

see also: *Béla Fleck, Jerry Douglas, Sam Bush*

Bob Cannon

Stringbean

Born David Akeman, June 17, 1915, in Annville, KY. Died November 11, 1973, in Nashville, TN.

David Akeman—lovingly known as "Stringbean"—was raised on a Kentucky farm and taught to play banjo by his father, who gave him his first instrument at age 14. Soon Stringbean was playing on local radio shows and touring or performing with the likes of Bill Monroe, Ernest Tubb, Red Foley, and Uncle Dave Macon. Macon particularly became a mentor to Stringbean, who picked up much of his picking style. Stringbean joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1942 and essentially took over Macon's role after his death in 1952. The 6-foot 2-inch Stringbean combined elements of vaudevillian comedy and old-time banjo playing in his shows, and he flip-flopped his proportions by wearing long shirts and small pants that made his torso appear to comprise three-fourths of his body. He was an audience favorite for his comedy, but he was also a fine banjo player, and he was an original member of the *Hee Haw* cast upon its TV debut in 1969. In one of the most shocking crimes in Nashville's history, Stringbean and his wife were murdered by burglars upon returning to their home after his Opry appearance November 11, 1973.

what's available: There's a lot of overlap, at least in song titles, on the three Stringbean albums currently in print. All of them, for instance, contain "I'm the Man That Rode the Mule around the World," one of his most popular numbers. On *A Salute to Uncle Dave Macon* ♪♪♪ (Hollywood/IMG, 1963/1986, prod. various), Stringbean makes a nod to his mentor with an album of vaudevillian proportions: it includes humorous songs ("There'll Be Moonshine in the Old Kentucky Hills"), folk songs ("John Henry") and gospel ("Take My Hand, Precious Lord"). *Hee Haw Corn Shucker* ♪♪♪ (Country Road, 1976) plays off his association with the syndicated TV series *Hee Haw* and features Stringbean's novelty songs, as does *Front Porch Funnies* ♪♪♪ (King Special, 1993), which is the only one of the three albums available on CD.

influences:

◀◀ Uncle Dave Macon

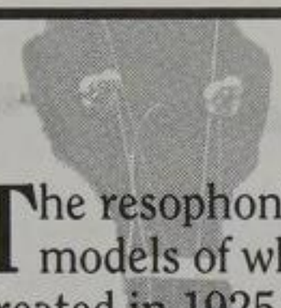
▶▶ Grandpa Jones

Brian Mansfield

Strings & Things

See: Tina Bergmann

772 *the subdudes*



dobro

The resophonic guitar, the most familiar models of which bear the name Dobro, was created in 1925 by John Dopyera, who sought to manufacture a louder version of the Hawaiian style slide guitar. Dopyera rigged an aluminum resonator plate where the soundhole sits on a regular guitar, amplifying the instrument and giving it a distinctly sweet, metallic sound, particularly when played with a slide bar. Although Dopyera originally built his guitars of steel, he later set the resonator plate into a wooden body, which remains the most common configuration today (as opposed to the steel-bodied guitars that National and other companies continued to produce). Through the next 50 years or so, Dopyera and two brothers manufactured various styles of these guitars for several different companies, often in competition with each other. Generally played in the lap or held horizontally with a strap, the dobro is most often tuned to an open G chord. The dobro's plaintive sound was a mainstay of country music during its formative years, and became an integral part of bluegrass music, with Josh Graves the first recognized master of the instrument. With its sweetly booming tone and expressive voicings, the dobro proved to be a perfect foil to the equally loud banjo. From the '70s to the present, it became less a textural instrument and more of a lead voice in the hands of virtuosos like Mike Auldridge, Jerry Douglas, and Sally Van Meter. Douglas, in particular, has also made the instrument a familiar sound on contemporary country radio.

Michael Parrish

The subdudes

Formed 1987, in New Orleans, LA. Disbanded 1997.

John Magnie, keyboards, accordion, vocals; Tommy Malone, guitar, vocals; Johnny Ray Allen, bass, vocals; Steve Amedee, percussion.

The subdudes played music that was both simple and pure in its roots, but also hybridized with a pragmatic, non-purist's sense of style. Like the group's percussive gimmick—Amedee pounded his funky multi-rhythms on a tambourine, not a full drum set—the group was willing to try, and use, whatever works. But the music's essential purity came from its deep base in New Orleans funk and R&B; Malone's understated, bluesy guitar playing, and the soulful vocal interplay between Malone and Magnie, which recall nothing if not the Band in its glory days. Like the Band, the 'dudes knew each other so well they played almost intuitively together. Malone, Allen, and Amedee all grew up together in the upriver town of Edgard, Louisiana, before running off to New Orleans, eventually playing in a group called the Continental Drifters (now headed by Peter Holsapple). Magnie, a Colorado native, relocated to New Orleans during the '70s, attracted by the city's indigenous funky piano-playing. The subdudes formed out of necessity: Magnie played a regular Tuesday solo gig at Tipitina's, and the only way the rest of the group could sit in was as an acoustic outfit. Hence Amedee's tambourine and Malone's acoustic guitar, which he played more often than not in the early days. To escape the then-oppressive Crescent City music scene, which required cover material from bands instead of original songs, the band moved as a unit, families and all, to northern Colorado in late '87 and began tearing up the Denver area club scene with its acoustic-based grooves and original songs that already sounded like timeless R&B classics. Every album still includes a couple of these classic-sounding songs, but the group's live show is what makes converts out of skeptics, partly because producers have found it hard to capture the enormous live sound of the tambourine on tape. The band added touring member and studio session guitarist Willie Williams in 1994 as an unofficial member. Magnie still lives and plays in Colorado, but the other three have since formed a new group, Tony Town, with Nashville-based singer-songwriter Pat McLaughlin.

what to buy: *the subdudes* ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic, 1989, prod. Don Gehman), the group's debut, includes some of its best songs to date and staples of its live shows: "Light in Your Eyes," "Got You on His Mind," and "Need Somebody." *Annunciation* ♪♪♪♪ (High Street, 1994, prod. subdudes, Keith Keller, Glyn Johns) is the best-produced of the 'dudes' albums, featuring strong songs and passionate, churchy performances.

what to buy next: *Primitive Streak* ♪♪♪½ (1996, High Street, prod. Clark Vreeland) found the band finding its feet as a recording group, with balanced studio performances but some weaker songs. Malone's "Carved in Stone" is a beautiful tribute to a deceased friend.

the rest:
Lucky ♪♪♪ (EastWest, 1991)
Live: At Last ♪♪♪♪ (High Street, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Band, Eric Clapton, Neville Brothers, Wild Tchoupitoulas, Earl King, Bonnie Raitt
▶▶ Continental Drifters

Gil Asakawa

Sundown Playboys /Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Formed 1948, in Elton, LA.

Janet Mott Aguillard, violin; Murnell Babineaux, violin; Danny Cormier, steel guitar, vocals; Jacob Cormier, triangle; Lesa Cormier, drums; Raymond Cormier, violin; Don Faul, bass guitar; Darrell Higginbotham, guitar, vocals; Homer LeJeune, accordion, vocals; Wallace Touchet, fiddle. Past members include: Pat Savant, accordion; Lionel Cormier, accordion.

Like many Cajun bands, the Sundown Playboys are more an institution than a band. They were originally led by accordionist Lionel Cormier, who died on the bandstand in 1971 while playing "Church Point Breakdown." The band was taken over by his son Lesa Cormier, but it was the ambitious young accordion player Pat Savant that launched the Sundown Playboys into history by submitting a 45 to Apple Records. The Beatles licensed the record from Ville Platte's Swallow Records and *Saturday Night Special* became the most widely distributed Cajun record of the 1970s. The band couldn't maintain that height, but it continues to be led by Lesa Cormier with longtime members Danny Cormier, Darrel Higginbotham, and Wallace Touchet playing a tight dancehall style of music that evokes names like Lawrence Walker and Aldus Roger.

what to buy: *Saturday Night Cajun Music* ♪♪♪♪ (La Louisiane, c. 1994, prod. Carol Rachou) finds the Sundown Playboys playing solid Cajun dance music. Lesa Cormier's drumming sets a standard for the dance-band format. The tunes run the gamut from instrumentals like "Hathaway Two-Step" that show off Homer LeJeune's chops to the zydeco standard "Hey Hey Lucille."

what to buy next: *Hier et Aujourd'hui* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1993, prod. Floyd Soileau) shows how Cajun music just absorbs and adapts from itself. There are a couple of Aldus Roger chestnuts here, including "Creole Stomp," but there is also Paul Daigle's "If I Could Forget." In between, the band kicks in a bunch of originals and adaptations including a rare polka from the repertoire of the late Lionel Cormier.

the rest:
Cajun Spirit ♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1994)

worth searching for: If you find *Saturday Night Special/Valse de Soleil Coucher* ♪♪♪♪ (Apple, 1972, prod. Floyd Soileau), you have a true collectors item. Keep it away from the Beatlemaniac in the house.

influences:
◀◀ Aldus Roger, Lawrence Walker
▶▶ California Cajun Orchestra, Sheryl Cormier

Jared Snyder

Sunshine Skiffle Band

Formed 1979, in Washington, DC.

Wes Butts, washtub bass; Don Rouse, clarinet; Gil Carter, leader, rhumba box; Dan Cassidy, fiddle; Tom Layton, washboard, kazoo; Bill Pitt, musical saw; Marv Reitz, jug, clarinet, bass clarinet; Dave Robinson, cornet, comb, kazoo, alto valve, trombone, tambourine, slide whistle; Dick Sackett, tenor banjo, kazoo; Harvey Stewart, washboard; Henry Stinson, harmonica, kazoo, slide whistle, fake trumpet, whistling; others.

What do you do if you want to play music and you don't have enough money to buy an instrument? You grab whatever's lying around the house–jugs, saws, washtubs, washboards, bones, combs, wax paper, screen wire, and cigar boxes–and make music with that. During the first part of this century a lot of people in the poverty-stricken South and Appalachia did precisely that, forming aggregations that were alternately known as jug bands or skiffle bands. Some of them became quite popular and even made some wonderful recordings. The Washington area's Sunshine Skiffle Band is a tribute to that delightful tradition. The troupe's fluctuating membership hovers around 11, and they play a lot of store-bought instruments–fiddle, clarinet, cornet, trombone, banjo, and harmonica–in addition to homemade instruments like kazoo, washtub bass, saw, washboard, and rhumba box. They got started at the Washington Folk Festival in 1979 and kept going by playing both the local Dixieland jazz circuit as well as folk festivals.

what to buy: *Beat It, Blow It, Strum It, Hum It* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1992, prod. Gil Carter) is the Sunshine Skiffle Band's one and

susquehanna string band

only album. It includes such items as Tampa Red's 1928 blues, "Tight like That"; the California Ramblers' 1920 Charleston-dance tune, "Crazy Words, Crazy Tune"; the Dixieland Jug Blowers' 1926 novelty number, "Boodle am Shake"; George Lewis's Dixieland march, "Walking with the King"; and the Rouse Brothers' 1939 hillbilly classic, "Orange Blossom Special." A combination of all the above influences can be heard in the group's sweet jazz solos, gutbucket blues attitude, and very danceable rhythms.

influences:

Gus Cannon's Stompers, Mound City Blue Blowers

John Sebastian's J-Band

Geoffrey Himes

Susquehanna String Band

See: Dan Duggan

Pete Sutherland

Born 1951, in Burlington, VT.

Pete Sutherland is a Vermont native who grew up listening to opera and show tunes, played rock 'n' roll as a teenager, went on to popularized folk music and bluegrass, and eventually found his niche in traditional folk music. Best known as a fiddler, Sutherland also plays banjo and guitar and is self-taught on all three instruments. His fiddle playing spans Celtic, Appalachian, and Quebecois styles. He was influenced by local fiddler Louie Beaudoin, and by the playing of Tommy Jarrell and Ed Haley. His original compositions have been recorded by him and by numerous other artists. Sutherland lived in Bloomington, Indiana, for several years and was also influenced by the late fiddler/poet/philosopher Lotus Dickey. He has performed since 1973, first with the Arm & Hammer String Band, later as part of the trio Metamora, and currently plays with Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars and Vermont's Clayfoot Strutters. He also performs with his wife and music partner Karen Billings. They make their home in Monkton, Vermont.

what to buy: Sutherland's only CD at present is *Mountain Hornpipe* ♪♪♪♪½ (Epact Music, 1994, prod. Pete Sutherland). The opening selection on this disc is well chosen, as it typifies his creative approach to presenting traditional music. He sings (a cappella) an uncommon schoolhouse rhyme that fits perfectly to the tune of the well-known "Old Dan Tucker," then jumps into a smooth version of the fiddle tune "Old Natchez." There's lots of variety on this disc, both in the selections and the instrumentation. Sutherland plays fiddle, banjo, guitar, mandolin, bass, and keyboards. Grey Larsen (also of Metamora) plays flute, piccolo, tin whistle, and concertina. Martin Simpson plays bottleneck guitar and bass, and piper Timothy Britton puts in an appearance on uilleann pipes. If that's not enough variety for you, there's also the hammered dulcimer (Malcolm Dalglish) and the tabla, dumbek, and mrdang (Willy Schwarz). Billings lends her superb voice on a couple of numbers. There's mountain music here, all right, but a lot more besides. One high point is "A Psalm of Life," three verses from Longfellow's poem by the same name, sung to a tune written by Lotus Dickey. On "Old Smokey," Sutherland and Billings sing the familiar words in the style of the Kentucky singer Roscoe Holcomb, intertwined with the fiddle tune "Pretty Little Girl" to produce a haunting effect. Sutherland's clean banjo playing stands out on "Jenny Get Around," and the fiddle, whistle, and pipes combine beautifully with his voice on "Highlands of Heaven." This is an imaginative presentation of traditional music by a group of imaginative musicians. It might be hard to find in stores but can be obtained from Epact Music, P.O. Box 123, Monkton, Vermont 05469.

what to buy next: Sutherland has also recorded an LP titled *Poor Man's Dream* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984, prod. Grey Larsen, Pete Sutherland). This is a more conventional presentation of some traditional tunes and some of his own compositions. One of the latter is the well-known "Shacks and Chalets," a song about the disparities of life that he observed in Kentucky. It's followed by the Scottish pipe tune "Coleman's March," played on the Hardanger fiddle, that is by itself worth the price of the recording. Other musicians on this recording are Bob Carlin, Grey Larsen, Tina Liza Jones, Mark Graham, and Billings.

worth searching for: Also available is a cassette titled *Eight Miles from Town* ♪♪♪♪ (Epact Music, 1982, prod. Pete Sutherland). This leans more towards Sutherland's Appalachian side and consists only of him on fiddle, banjo, and guitar. "Coleman's March" is also on this recording, as are three of his fiddle compositions and one by Larry Becker. The rest are Southern tunes, mostly well known with a few unusual ones thrown in. The tune by Becker, "New England Sleigh Ride," highlights Sutherland's sterling banjo playing.

influences:

Tommy Jarrell, Ed Haley

Metamora

Dave Shombert

Kirk Sutphin

Born April 25, 1968, in FL.

North Carolina's Kirk Sutphin is one of the best young musicians in the world of old-time music. An outstanding performer on both banjo and fiddle, Sutphin has a deep love and understanding of traditional mountain music. In addition to his own performing and recording, he has worked hard to expose people to the music of older local musicians such as Dick Freeman and Bert Edwards. Sutphin's father and grandfather were both musicians who taught him the basics and introduced him to the great music of banjoist Charlie Poole, fiddler Tommy Jarrell (under whom Sutphin studied), and other great North Carolina musicians. Though not often seen outside of the South, Sutphin was featured on the "Masters of the Banjo" tour that traveled the country in 1993 and 1994.

what's available: *Old Roots and New Branches* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1994, prod. Joe Wilson), Sutphin's only CD release, is a treasure for old-time music fans as he explores the Southern mountain music with which he was raised. Ably assisted by his wife, Lisa, and stalwarts Paul Brown, Greg Hooven, and Wayne Henderson, Sutphin plays rare fiddle tunes he learned from neighbors and some sweet fingerstyle banjo pieces in the style of Poole. Two fine songs sung by Sutphin's longtime musical partner Greg Hooven round out the program. It's good to know that the music of front-porch jam sessions and grange hall dances is still alive and vibrant and, in the hands of master young musicians like Sutphin, will be for a long time to come.

worth searching for: Sutphin has recorded several projects that are somewhat difficult to find, including a solo cassette, *Fiddlin' Around* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Cloud, 1992, prod. Kirk Sutphin) and an album with the Old Hollow Stringband, *Old Hollow String Band* ♪♪♪ (Flying Cloud, 1991, prod. Kirk Sutphin), that nicely capture his sound. He has also recorded with several of western North Carolina's legendary older musicians, including banjo player Dick Freeman and fiddler Bert Edwards.

influences:

◀◀ Tommy Jarrell, Charlie Poole

▶▶ Greg Hooven, Bruce Molsky

Tony Ziselberger

Dave Swarbrick

Born April 5, 1941, in New Malden, Surrey, England.

Dave Swarbrick's friend Beryl Marriott deserves the thanks of music fans everywhere. She is believed to have persuaded the young Swarb to switch instruments from piano to fiddle. Swarbrick made the fiddle his lover: he made it sing and groan, he danced and crooned with it, he wore out his instruments and, in turn, let them nearly wear him out. Swarbrick began as a folk artist with the Ian Campbell Folk Group. After guesting on Fairport Convention's *Unhalfbricking*, he joined the group for its seminal *Liege and Lief*. The lovely machine called Fairport, which transformed so many who passed through it, changed Swarbrick into a singer and composer as well as a fiddler. He remained with the group until 1979, and his departure ended the band, however briefly. Years of electrified fiddling had left him nearly deaf. He continued working, mostly in acoustic settings, with fellow Fairport alum Simon Nicol, with Martin Carthy (with whom he had first worked in 1968), and in the group Whippersnapper with Chris Leslie (who joined Fairport in 1996). He was also in the Keith Hancock Band with Ruari MacFarlane and Carthy. Still performing, though diminished by health problems, Swarbrick shows up at Fairport's reunion festivals from time to time. His imprint on the group as both a performer and a personality has been its most consistent characteristic. As a solo performer and in his other projects, Swarb is likewise full of fire and passion, romanticism and rough-hewn minstrelsy.

what to buy: *Smiddyburn/Flittin'* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Raven, 1981/1996) is the essential Swarb starter kit. Swarbrick says in the liner notes that both albums were recorded within a two-week period in July 1981. Joining Swarbrick are Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg, Dave Mattacks, Richard Thompson, Beryl Marriott, Bruce Rowland, John McCormick, and Roger Marriott in various configurations. Aside from the marvelous instrumentals, Swarb sings Sandy Denny's "It Suits Me Well"—and it does indeed. *Folk on 2* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1996), recorded in 1991 as a commemoration of Swarb's 50th birthday made for the BBC, is an excellent collection of solo and group recordings, including several with Fairport Convention.

what to buy next: *Swarbrick/Swarbrick II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1976–77/Castle, 1996, prod. Bruce Rowland), a re-release of Swarbrick's first two solo albums on one CD, features many of his cronies, including Carthy. His 1991 live performance, released as *Live at Jackson's Lane* ♪♪♪♪ (Gadfly, 1996), is rather spare—just voice and fiddle—but it's a rare chance to hear Swarb in concert, droll comments and all.

influences:

◀◀ Beryl Marriott, Ian Campbell, Martin Carthy

sweeney's men

Sandy Denny, Ric Sanders, Eliza Carthy, Ashley MacIsaac

see also: *Fairport Convention, Martin Carthy*

Pamela Murray Winters

Sweeney's Men

Formed 1966, in Galway, Ireland. Disbanded 1969, in London, England.

Andy Irvine, mandolin, harmonica guitar; Johnny Moynihan, bouzouki, tin whistle; Terry Woods, six- and 12-string guitar. Other members included Joe Dolan, guitar; Henry McCullough, guitar.

During the late 1960s in Ireland, a new kind of folk group began to emerge. Influenced by the head-on ballad-singing style of the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, by the urban grit of the Dubliners, by the English folk club scene, and by Sean O' Riada's ideas as expressed by the Chieftains, young people began to blend sensitive singing, basic accompaniment, and arranged instrumental passages in a totally new way. Among the first of these groups to make recordings were Sweeney's Men. Usually remembered as the great Irish folk group of the 1960s, Sweeney's Men was formed in Galway in 1966, but spent much of its time on the Dublin and London folk scenes in the late 1960s. The group consisted on its recordings of Andy Irvine (later of Planxty and Patrick Street), Johnny Moynihan (later of Planxty and De Danann), and Terry Woods (later of Steeleye Span and the Pogues), who replaced original member Joe Dolan. Rock guitarist Henry McCullough, later of the Grease Band, was a member in between their two LPs and greatly influenced the later one. Indeed, many have contended that McCullough's period in Sweeney's Men was one of the earliest manifestations of folk/rock in Britain or Ireland.

what's available: The compilation *Time Was Never Here 1968–69* ♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic/Demon, prod. Bill Leader) features almost all of the music from the Sweeney's two LPs, *Sweeney's Men 1968* and 1969's *The Tracks of Sweeney*. It echoes with historic moments. You'll hear, among other firsts, the first time that most beloved of Greek imports, the bouzouki, was used in Irish music. It was Moynihan who started that trend. There's also the first time "Willy O' Winsbury" was sung to its now-familiar tune, as popularized by Ann Briggs, Pentangle, and other singers; Irvine erred when cross-referencing a ballad collection with its tune index, and connected the wrong tune to these words. It's a fabulous combination, and Irvine's sweet voice never sounded better than it does on this simple solo track. Still, this disc isn't a history lesson, but a vibrant recording of contemporary Irish folk. Listened to as such, it has many pleasures to offer. Woods's banjo and singing sound remarkably Appalachian, while Irvine's guitar, mandolin, and harmonica and Moynihan's bouzouki and whistle clearly foreshadow the Planxty/De Danann style of playing that was yet to develop. The traditional material holds up better over time than the Sweeney's originals, (heck, they were already a century old in 1968, so how's a few more years going to matter?) but most of the goods are wonderfully played, if quirkily sung, and still quite fresh. Another bonus here is the sleeve notes, which contain a lot of information taken from interviews with band members and friends. It adds up to a rare and wonderful glimpse of a remarkable band and a remarkable moment in history, and an absolute must for serious Irish music fans.

worth searching for: *Sweeney's Men 1968* ♪♪♪♪ (Translatlantic, 1969), now out of print, contained mostly traditional material which stands the test of time.

influences:

Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, Dubliners, Chieftains

Planxty, De Dannan, Patrick Street, East Wind, Steeleye Span, Pogues, Horslips

Steve Winick

Sweet Honey in the Rock

Formed November 1973, in Washington, DC.

Bernice Johnson Reagon, vocals; Nitanju Bolade Casel, vocals; Aisha Kahlil, vocals; Ysaye Maria Barnwell, vocals; Shirley Childress Johnson, vocals; Evelyn Maria Harris, vocals.

Arising from a theater workshop that Bernice Johnson Reagon hosted at the Black Repertory Company in Washington, D.C. in the early 1970s, Sweet Honey in the Rock has surpassed even their founder's vision. Accompanying themselves solely with rhythm instruments and using tradition-rooted harmonies, the women sing out against racism, economic struggle, and sexual oppression. From their inception, Sweet Honey in the Rock's mixture of spirituals, gospel, jazz, blues, rap, and traditional African songs have made them one of the top-ranked contemporary folk groups. Their song, "Emergency," was nominated for a Grammy award in 1990 and the group received a Grammy the following year for their interpretations of two Leadbelly songs—"Sylvie" and "Gray Goose"—on the album *Vision Shared*. One of the first groups to feature a full-time ASL lan-

guage interpreter (Shirley Childress Johnson), Sweet Honey in the Rock celebrated their 20th anniversary with a book, *We Who Believe in Freedom*, published by Anchor/Doubleday in 1993. Sweet Honey in the Rock has been heard in numerous films and television documentaries. Their performance at a concert to observe the first national holiday celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 60th birthday in 1989 was broadcast by PBS. Their version of Sojourner Truth's tribute to the Colored Michigan regiment, set to the music of "John Brown's Body," was heard in Jim Brown and Ken Burns's series, *The Civil War*, in 1991.

what to buy: With 34 tracks covering Sweet Honey in the Rock's first dozen years, the double CD, *Selections 1976–88* ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1997, comp. Bernice Johnson Reagon) is a masterpiece of inspiring harmonies, African American hand percussion, and politically conscious lyricism.

what to buy next: Recorded during a November 1987 performance, *At Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988) captures the group's dynamic energies and ability to raise awareness during their concerts.

the rest:

Sweet Honey in the Rock ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1976)
B'lieve I'll Run on . . . See What the End's Gonna Be ♪♪♪ (Redwood, 1978)
The Other Side ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
Good News ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1982)
Feel Something Drawing Me On ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1989)
Breaths ♪♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1989)
All for Freedom ♪♪♪♪½ (Music for Little People, 1989)
In This Land ♪♪♪ (Earth Beat, 1992)
I Got Shoes ♪♪♪ (Music for Little People, 1992)
We Who Believe in Freedom ♪♪♪ (Earthbeat!, 1993)
Still on the Journey ♪♪♪♪½ (Earthbeat!, 1993)
Sacred Ground ♪♪♪ (Earthbeat!, 1995)

worth searching for: A live version by Sweet Honey in the Rock of "Crying for Freedom" is included on *Ben and Jerry's Newport Folk Festival: Turn of the Decade* ♪♪♪ (Red House, 1991, prod. Bob Feldman).

influences:

◀◀ Odetta, Paul Robeson, Freedom Singers, Pete Seeger

▶▶ Tracy Chapman, Toshi Reagon, Casselberry-Dupree, Kim & Reggie Harris

see also: *Bernice Johnson Reagon, Toshi Reagon*

Craig Harris

Sweethearts of the Rodeo

Formed 1974, in southern CA.

Janis Gill, vocals; Kristine Oliver, vocals.

One of country's great disappointments, this talented vocal duo has been around a long time but seldom lived up to the potential of its first few records. Sisters Janis and Kristine Oliver formed the duo in southern California during the early 1970s, when country-rock's popularity surged thanks to such artists as Linda Ronstadt and the Eagles. The Sweethearts stopped to raise families during the early 1980s but returned anew by the middle of the decade, securing a deal with Columbia just before they won the Wrangler Country Showdown in 1985. The Sweethearts' glittering harmonies and sparse, sweetly sung arrangements draw not only from their obvious traditional and new wave country roots, but also from 1960s folk, pop, rock, and bluegrass. The duo scored such hits as "Since I Found You" (written by Foster & Lloyd, another overlooked duo) and "Chains of Gold," and *Buffalo Zone* (complete with a Byrds-inspired cover) was a solid album. Sadly, their first four albums are no longer in print. North Carolina's Sugar Hill Label, home to many an iconoclastic singer and writer, signed the duo and has released a pair of albums that seemed to resuscitate them.

what's available: *Rodeo Waltz* ♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1993, prod. Janis Gill) found them covering an array of rootsy songs, but not always as impressively. *Beautiful Lies* ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Janis Gill) is a more focused improvement.

worth searching for: No album showcased the sisters' natural harmonies, adroit song selection, and effortless ability to blend traditional country with modern touches better than *Buffalo Zone* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1990).

influences:

◀◀ Byrds, Poco, Everly Brothers, Bob Seger

▶▶ Alison Krauss, Suzy Bogguss

Doug Pullen

June Tabor

Born December 31, 1947, in Warwick, England.

June Tabor says that she wasn't allowed to sing in her girls'

school choir because her voice was too low. Little did they know that she would grow up to wield one of the finest vocal instruments in folk music—a rich, smoky contralto capable both of great power and of subtle nuance. Throughout her career, she has avoided all musical compromise; to this day, she refuses to use overdubs, recording her voice and all instruments live in the studio, or in the case of *Aleyn*, in front of an inaudible audience. Perhaps as a result, she didn't earn her living from music until quite recently, supporting herself instead as a librarian and restaurateur. From her early days in the folk clubs singing a cappella ballads to her current work as an interpreter of contemporary songs, her style has remained immediately recognizable, and her mastery of dramatic understatement unrivaled.

what to buy: The album that first brought Tabor to the attention of the world was her duet with Maddy Prior, *Silly Sisters* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1976, prod. Maddy Prior, Robin Black). Featuring an all-star cast of musicians (including Martin Carthy, Nic Jones, and Danny Thompson), and spotlighting the stunning harmonies of Tabor and Prior, this album remains a touchstone of 1970s British folk. Following this auspicious debut, Tabor made several excellent solo records, characterized by stark arrangements and production, and mostly traditional material. The best of these is *Abyssinians* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1983, prod. Andrew Cronshaw), an almost unbearably intense set of meditations on loss, longing, and death. Although Tabor is largely unaccompanied, the occasional instrumental backing by Martin Simpson (guitar), Dave Bristow (piano and synthesizer), and Ric Sanders (violin) augments the melancholy mood perfectly, especially on Mike and Lal Waterson's "The Scarecrow."

what to buy next: The same crew returned on Tabor's next record, the somewhat more congenial *Aqaba* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1988, prod. Andrew Cronshaw), which includes a surprisingly jazzy version of the 10,000 Maniacs song "Verdi Cries." During the '90s, Tabor changed her band, producer, and record company, and she embraced the role of chanteuse, concentrating more on contemporary songs than traditional ones. Her three albums in this style benefit from the inventive piano playing of Huw Warren, but are slightly marred by excessive reverberation and the occasional weak song. The best of the bunch is *Angel Tiger* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1992/Cooking Vinyl, 1997, prod. John Ravenhall).

what to avoid: Tabor's attempt at jazz standards, *Some Other Time* ♪♪ (Hannibal, 1989, prod. Joe Boyd), is an interesting failure, but a failure nevertheless; she seems uncomfortable and stiff in this new milieu. Her collaboration with the Oyster Band, *Freedom and Rain* ♪♪♪½ (Rykodisc, 1990, prod. Oyster Band), aside from a couple of outstanding tracks, is perfunctory, and a serious disappointment considering the assembled talent. *Aspects* ♪♪♪ (Conifer, 1990) and *Anthology* ♪♪♪♪½ (Music Club, 1993), collections of songs drawn from across her career, contain no new material and are therefore superfluous to anyone who purchased the original albums.

the rest:
Airs and Graces ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1976)
Ashes and Diamonds ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1977)
(With Martin Simpson) *A Cut Above* ♪♪♪♪ (Topic, 1980)
(With Maddy Prior) *No More to the Dance* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1988)
Against the Streams ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994)
(With Savourna Stevenson and Danny Thompson) *Singing the Storm* ♪♪♪ (Cooking Vinyl, 1996)
Aleyn ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997)

worth searching for: *June Tabor: The Peel Sessions* ♪♪♪½ (Strange Fruit, 1986, prod. Pete Ritzema) is an EP of four unaccompanied songs, three of which are unavailable elsewhere, and contains one of her finest performances in "Donal Og." Despite the 1986 release date, it was recorded in 1977.

influences:
◀◀ Anne Briggs, Lal Waterson
▶▶ Heidi Berry, Polly Bolton, Christine Collister

Tim Walters

James Talley

Born November 9, 1944, in Mehan, OK.

James Talley is a songwriter/singer whose thoughtful, compelling lyrics and folk/country/blues music documents and champions the lives and struggles of working-class people. Talley's family moved to the state of Washington before settling in Albuquerque, New Mexico. After graduating from the University of New Mexico, he began writing songs about the hopes, dreams, ambitions, and fears of the working class. He traded his carpentry skills for studio time and recorded *Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, but We Sure Got a Lot of Love* in 1975, which led to a contract with Capitol for three more critically acclaimed albums. He has lived in Nashville for many years, where he is in the real estate business and releases the occasional album.

what to buy: You simply can't go wrong with *Got No Bread/Tryin' like the Devil* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1989, prod. James Talley, Steve Mendell) or *Blackjack Choir/Ain't It Some-*

thin' ♪♪♪♪½ (Bear Family, 1989, prod. James Talley), the four Capitol albums repackaged on two CDs. All are understated song treasure chests, with production touches that perfectly emphasize the country/blues amalgam for which Talley's expressive voice and lyrics are so well suited.

the rest:
American Originals ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1985)
Love Songs and the Blues ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1989)
Live ♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994)

worth searching for: *"The Road to Torreon: Photographs of New Mexico Villages" by Cavalliere Ketchum, songs by James Talley* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1992, prod. James Talley), a song cycle written after a period Talley spent as a welfare worker among Chicanos in New Mexico, includes a 107-page book of photos.

influences:
Lee O'Daniel & the Light Crust Doughboys, Bob Wills & the Texas Playboys, Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Williams, Woody Guthrie, Lefty Frizzell

Leland Rucker

Tamarack

Formed 1978, in Canada.

Alex Sinclair (born October 26, 1952, in Bassano, Alberta, Canada), guitar, mandolin, vocals; James Gordon (born July 2, 1955, in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada), guitar, accordion, pennywhistle, hammered dulcimer, banjo, harmonica, percussion, vocals; Molly Kurvink (born January 27, 1956, in Detroit, MI), bass, vocals.

What started as a group performing traditional Canadian folk songs, Tamarack has become one of the most respected acts in the country, with a growing following in the United States, as well. In the tradition of Stan Rogers and Gordon Lightfoot, Tamarack has dipped into the well of Canadian life, mining for gems about history, people, and the stories they have to tell about logging camps, fishing grounds, mines and mills. Even their new songs sound as if they were drawn from the tradition—a reflection of the variety of influences that have driven each incarnation of the band. The name "Tamarack" is derived from a tree that was important to early Canadian settlers because it didn't decay. They used it for foundations for cabins and other structures because of its resilience. In many ways, the group Tamarack lives up to that enduring nature. The group has been playing for about 20 years. It has survived countless personnel changes, but remains an acoustic trio. Their tastefully appointed music is filled with harmony-rich choruses, and rousing, emotional verses that tug at the very nature of Canadian life. Based in Guelph, Ontario, they have recorded 12 albums and have performed live on television and radio. Previous members of Tamarack have included Cowboy Junkie Jeff Bird (a founding member), fellow Cowboy Junkie Margo Timmins, Daniel Lanois (a guitarist and producer of Bob Dylan, Emmylou Harris, and U2), Gwen Swick, Melanie Doane (Mamas & the Papas), Jane Siberry (James Gordon's former college roommate), and many others. The group was formed in 1978 by songwriter Gordon, Bird, and Randy Rutherford. They toured extensively though Canada, the United States, and Mexico playing mostly traditional Canadian folk songs. In 1987 Bird left for the Cowboy Junkies. The group recorded Gordon's song "Mining for Gold" on its hit album *Trinity Session*. By 1989 Sutherland had left to work in the computer field. Around that time, the group started writing its own material about Canada's history. Singer-songwriter Alex Sinclair joined in 1985. A prolific songwriter, he also runs Snowy River Records and writes satirical songs for CBC Radio, for films, theater productions, labor organizations, arts groups, and many others. Roots-rock singer Molly Kurvink joined in 1995. A well-known singer and bass player in Guelph, she draws influences from the Detroit music scene, and has fronted several Ontario-based groups. Gordon, meanwhile, has been the group's hingepin, consistently providing fine instrumentation, vocals, and songs on each of the group's albums. He has released children's albums, and with former band member David Archibald has written five family musicals about the environment and conflict resolution. He runs a recording studio, tries his hand at symphonic arrangements, and writes songs for CBC Radio.

what to buy: The most striking and memorable album is *Frobisher Bay* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1993, prod. Jeff Bird, Pat Mooney), a lovely gathering of mostly originals about the Yukon and Alaska. There are historical touches as Gwen Swick, Alex Sinclair, and Gordon tell of Klondike gold seekers, the construction of the Alaska Highway in 1942 and of the British loyalists who fled the states to Canada during the American Revolution. Their a cappella title track is inspirational as it captures the passions and dangers of Arctic whaling, while Swick's joyous "Vacuum Song" relates fond thoughts of muck, music, and memories. The sparse production calls in acoustic guitar, recorder, violin, hammered dulcimer, mandolin, and bass, as needed. Also impressive is *On the Grand: The Story of a River* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1994, prod. Tamarack). The album, based on stories and themes related to the Grand River, tells the affecting true story

of a slave called "Pawpine," speaks of broken promises in "Our White Man's Word," displays striking vocals and strings in "The Virginia Brand" (sung by Carol LeClair), and evokes the nostalgia of someone who grew up along "The Grand River Canal."

what to buy next: On *Leaving Inverarden* ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1995, prod. Tamarack), the group sings about the workers who helped to forge the nation, from fur trading, to iron and furniture makers and miners. Gordon sings of a 1930s flash flood in Ontario in "Banks of the Rocky Saugeen," its personal tone relaying its tragic outcome. "The Huntsville Fire" recalls the great fire that destroyed Huntsville, Ontario in 1894. They mourn the demise of tugboats that carried timber and tourists to isolated communities in "Tugboat Days," and they sing the a cappella "The Pride of Muskoka," a tribute to a 100-year-old steamboat that plies Ontario's Muskoka Lakes. "Le Sergent," sung in French, tells the story of a Quebecois who went to fight the British during the American Revolution. Kurvink brings a smoky, June Tabor-like emotional voice to the recording.

the rest:

Fields of Rock and Snow ♪♪♪½ (Folk Era, 1991)
Tamarack on the Prairies ♪♪♪ (SGB Productions, 1993)
Muskoka's Calling ♪♪♪♪ (SGB Productions, 1996)
Tamarack Thirteen N/A (Folk Era, 1998)

worth searching for: For a good review of the group's early years, *The Tamarack Collection* ♪♪♪½ (SGB Productions, 1985, prod. Tamarack) contains tracks from their albums from 1980 to 1985. However, it is out of print. The band itself has only archival copies of the cassette. Included is an early version of "Mining for Gold," along with "The Old Ragadoo," a rendition of the traditional song many know as "The Red-Haired Boy." Other gems here: "Scarborough Settler's Lament" and the Western ranges tune "Buffalo Skinners." *The 15th Anniversary Concert* ♪♪♪ (SGB Productions, 1995, prod. Jeff Bird, James Gordon) is a reunion of many of the various members of Tamarack over the years, the proceeds of which go to the Ontario Lung Association. Several out of print albums worth searching for include: *Music of Canada* (SGB Productions), *A Pleasant Gale* (SGB Productions, 1983), *Ontario: 200 Musical Years* (SGB Productions, 1984), and *Shave the Bear* (SGB Productions, 1989).

influences:

- Gordon Lightfoot, Ian Tyson, Martin Carthy, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Neil Young, Leonard Cohen, the music of Motown, '20s and '30s jazz
- Stan Rogers

Stephen Ide

Tannahill Weavers

Formed 1968, in Paisley, Scotland.

Roy Gullane, guitar, vocals; Phil Smillie, flute, bodhrán, whistles, vocals; Leslie Wilson, guitar, bouzouki, keyboards, bass pedals, vocals; John Martin, fiddle, cello, mandolin, viola, vocals; Duncan Nicholson, Highland bagpipes, Scottish small-pipes, whistles, keyboards.

Ever since their earliest years, the Tannahill Weavers have established their niche deep in the heart of traditional music, staying almost purely acoustic in nature, and using predominantly traditional Celtic tunes, or new material that sounds so traditional it is indiscernible from the old. This has made them unique in the field of Celtic music; for most groups that start with their feet firmly rooted on traditional soil soon find themselves wandering into new territory, leaving the realm of the traditional altogether. Combining this deep-rooted tradition with skilled instrumentalists, tight harmonies, an intensity of rhythm, and a well-rounded sound has defined a new voice in Celtic music, the Tannahill Weaver sound. Boasting a cast of more than 20 members during nearly three decades as a group, the Tannahill Weavers have seen a variety of talent come and go, but have always managed to maintain the integrity of the group's sound through their excellent arrangements. The signature of the Tannies has to be the use of the Highland bagpipes in their music. The first professional Scottish folk group to include full-sized pipes on stage, they quickly drew the attention of music lovers and critics alike. The various pipes, combined with hearty vocals, soaring flute lines, and a fiery violin, carry the group through a wide variety of traditional tunes, keeping listeners humming along. The cast of pipers has been represented by Alan MacLeod, Iain MacInnes, Kenny Forsyth, and Duncan Nicholson. Phil Smillie's flute lines and Roy Gullane's work on guitar and mandolin combine to add to the depth of the music, and their vocal work is the all-essential icing on the cake. The Tannahill Weavers have been creating hearty, enjoyable music for their listeners for a quarter of a century.

what to buy: The group reached a musical peak with *The Mermaid's Song* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992) and *Capernaum* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1994). Both albums display top-of-the-line piping by Kenny Forsyth and some amazing fiddle work by John Martin. The choice of tunes on these albums is particularly wonderful, mixing delightful dance tunes and heartfelt ballads, perfectly distributed throughout the albums. *Capernaum* won the Indie Award in the United States at the 1994 National Association of Independent Record Distributors conference for Celtic Album of the Year.

what to buy next: Although it lacks the pipe sound characteristic of the Tannies during the rest of their career, their first album, *Are Ye Sleeping Maggie* ♪♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1976/Hedera 1993), contains a wonderful selection of tunes passionately performed by the group. The opening thunderstorm on the first and title track, "Are Ye Sleeping Maggie," is indicative of the highly charged performance to come. Also from their early days, *Tannahill Weavers* ♪♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1979/Green Linnet, 1982/Hedera 1993) won the group the Scotstar Award for Best Folk Group in 1980. *Tannahill Weavers IV* ♪♪♪♪ (Plant Life, 1982/Green Linnet, 1982/Hedera 1993) rounds out the "top of the Tannies" set, with a collection of exciting and memorable dance tunes.

what to avoid: *Passage* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1984) was a definite diversion for the group, where they toyed with electric instruments and a more modern sound. This album contains some excellent numbers, but it doesn't stand out the way the rest of their work does. Their two "favorites" albums, *The Best of the Tannahill Weavers 1979–89* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1989) and *Choice Cuts 1987–96* ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997) are both good collections, but true fans will want the rest of the material that comes on the original albums. Since neither collection contains any new material, they are somewhat superfluous.

the rest:
Old Woman's Dance ♪♪♪½ (Plant Life 1978/Hedera 1993)
Land of Light ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1985)
Dancing Feet ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1987)
Cullen Bay ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1990)
Leaving St. Kilda ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Davy Spillane, Alan MacDonald
▶▶ Silly Wizard, Capercaillie

Jo Hughey Morrison

Barry & Holly Tashian

Husband-and-wife duo from Westport, CT.

Barry and Holly Tashian both grew up in New England and attended the same high school. In 1964 Barry and his Boston-based rock 'n' roll band, the Remains, achieved near-stardom when they toured with the Beatles. Barry and the Remains couldn't top that feat, however, and quickly disbanded. Tashian then joined Gram Parsons in the country/rock outfit the International Submarine Band and married Holly in 1972. Holly's musical experience encompasses both bluegrass and madrigal singing. The couple formed a country band, called the Outskirts, that was pretty far away from the sweet, acoustic music they're known for today. In 1980 Barry was asked to join Emmylou Harris's Hot Band, and began a nine-year stint with the group, replacing Ricky Skaggs on guitar and harmony vocals. After Barry exited the Hot Band, the Tashians began their recording career, first with Northeastern Records, then with Rounder in 1993. Their records are marked not only by their tight harmony, but also by the fact that they write much of their material. They've also contributed vocals, and songwriting skills to records by other artists. Favorites on the folk and bluegrass festival circuits, the Tashians' music is warm and gentle, not entirely bluegrass, but not strictly folk, enjoyable, if maybe a bit safe.

what to buy: *Ready for Love* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1993, prod. Jim Rooney) showcases the best of the duo.

the rest:
Trust in Me ♪♪♪½ (Northeastern, 1989)
Straw into Gold ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1994)
Live in Holland ♪♪♪ (Strictly Country, 1995)

influences:
◀◀ Emmylou Harris, International Submarine Band
▶▶ Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Laurie Lewis & Tom Rozum

Stephen L. Betts

Tasso

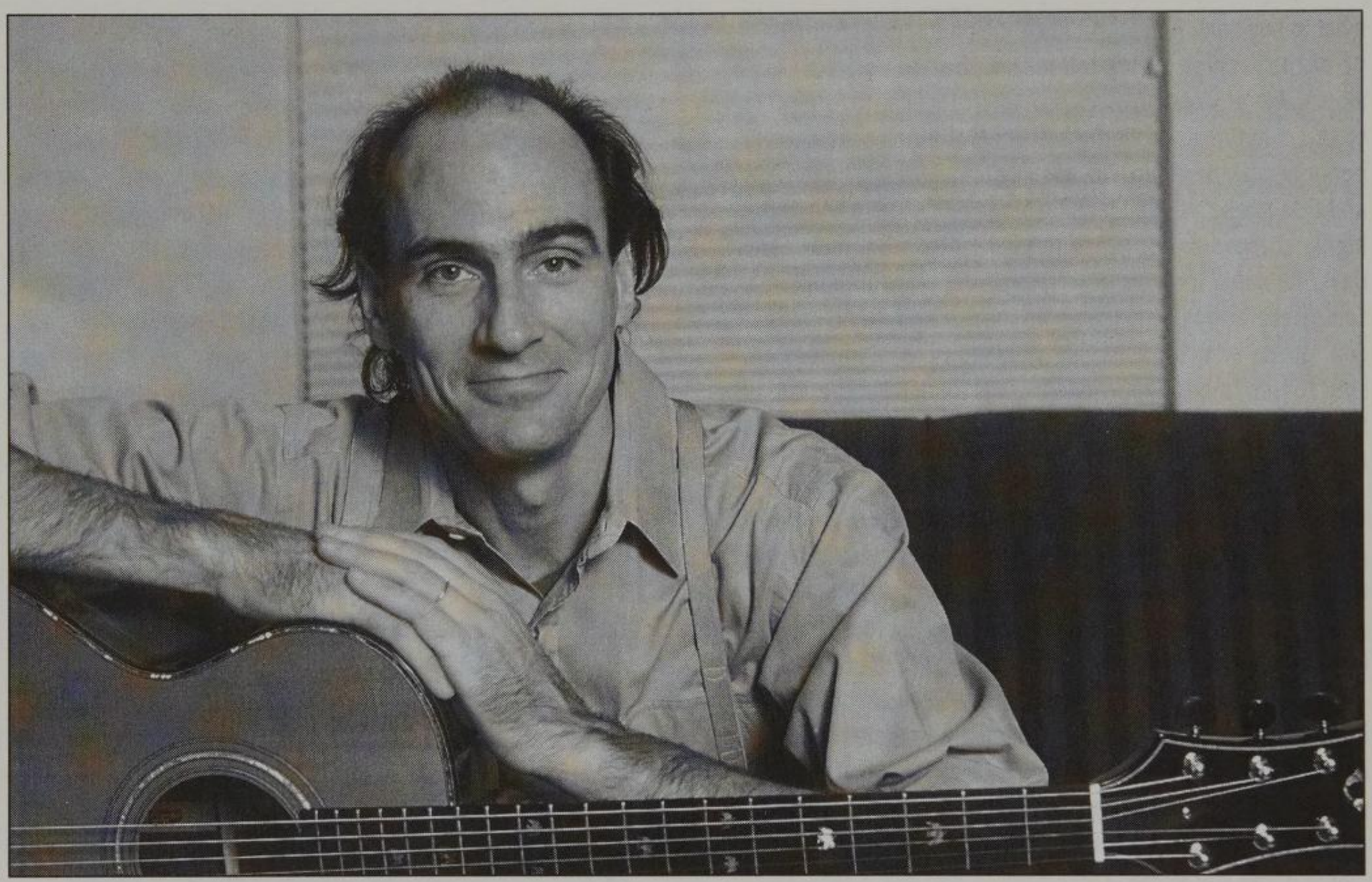
Formed as McCauley, Reed & Vidrine, 1990. Became Tasso in 1992, after Cory McCauley left group.

Philip Allemond, accordion, vocals; Mitchell Reed, fiddle; Randy Vidrine, guitar, vocals; Cory McCauley, accordion, vocals (1990–92).

Tasso is a Cajun term for raw meat that is hung on a wire and dried for preservative purposes. A picture of traditional Tasso adorns the front cover of *The Old Timey Way* CD by the group Tasso. Yet if you go to LeJeune's Meats outside of Eunice, you'll find that tasso is a delicious Cajun delicacy. The same could be said for this group. They play with a hard-core reverence to traditional Cajun music, carefully picking not only the songs, but the most traditional approach they can find to playing the music. Mitchell Reed's sliding, sometimes raw fiddle emulates the style that all Cajun players played before the advent of amplification.

what to buy: Tasso's emulation of the Cajun porch sound comes to a head on *The Old Timey Way* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1994, prod. Floyd Soileau, Benny Graeff). The record was recorded

7/8/2 *eric taylor*



James Taylor **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

live with the three musicians sitting in a circle and it captures the excitement of live performance. Reed plays like a young Canray Fontenot and Philip Allemond's singing is particularly strong. There are lots of buzzes and wheezes on this record, all captured with modern recording equipment.

what to buy next: Michael Doucet grins ear to ear when he talks about Tasso, probably thinking about how proud someone like his mentor Dennis McGee would feel after listening to their *Viens à Ma Maison (Come to My House)* ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1994, prod. Michael Doucet). Like *The Old Timey Way*, this has a live sound. Reed plays in a drier, rougher style than almost any other fiddler of his generation, but he's emulating the sound of legendary Cajun fiddlers like McGee and Adam Landreau, who played with even more sawing in their bow strokes. The thing about Tasso is how they seem to love this really old-time music for its emotional power and not as some kind of relic in need of preservation. *1929 and Back: Traditional Cajun Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1991, prod. Benny Graeff, Tasso) is an earlier version of the group called McCauley Reed Vidrine, which featured Cory McCauley on accordion.

worth searching for: *Catch My Hat* ♪♪♪½ (Swallow, 1993, prod. Benny Graeff), by the Mamou Praire Band, includes Bobby and Rick Michot, along with Reed and Randy Vidrine in a more contemporary Cajun setting.

influences:

- Michael Doucet, Balfa Brothers, Dennis McGee, Amédée Ardoin
- Horace Trahan, Balfa Toujours

Jared Snyder

Eric Taylor

Born 1950, in Atlanta, GA.

Eric Taylor grew up near Atlanta, where he was equally entranced by such '60s soul singers as Otis Redding and such

folkies as Bob Dylan and Tim Hardin. He was hitchhiking to California when he got a ride to Houston, saw Lightnin' Hopkins and Townes Van Zandt his first two days there, and decided to stay. He soon became the young up-and-comer on a Houston singer-songwriter scene that eventually included Hopkins, Van Zandt, Guy Clark, Jerry Jeff Walker, Rodney Crowell, and Steve Earle. Lyle Lovett wrote about Taylor for his school paper in 1979 and eventually co-wrote "Fat Babies" with Taylor. Taylor and Nanci Griffith were romantically linked for a while; she's on the cover of his 1981 debut album and later recorded several of his songs. After a promising start, however, Taylor fell into amphetamine and alcohol problems and didn't get clean until 1983. Now he splits his time between music and his second career as a drug counselor in Texas.

what's available: It took Taylor 14 years to follow up his debut effort with *Eric Taylor* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1995, prod. Mark Hallman, Iain Matthews), his only CD release. He sings in the blues-drenched drone of Van Zandt and their common hero, Lightnin' Hopkins, but Taylor's lyrics come in longer lines with more narrative and visual detail than Van Zandt's elliptical riddles. Taylor's new batch of songs provide striking portraits of a Georgia murderer, a South Dakota barfly, Houston hobos, Rust Belt refugees from Indiana, and Jack Kerouac's pal Neal Cassady, and they're fascinating precisely because they're so paradoxical. The songs are nicely framed with backing vocals by Lovett and Matthews and fiddle by George Strait's Gene Elders.

worth searching for: *Shameless Love* ♪♪♪♪ (Featherbed, 1981, prod. Eric Taylor, John & Laurie Hill), Taylor's self-released, vinyl-only debut album, is a real treat if you can find it. Backed by Griffith, future Lovett cellist John Hagen, and future Lucinda Williams guitarist Gurf Morlix, Taylor sings delightful songs full of detail and irony in a dry, deadpan drawl.

influences:

◀◀ Lightnin' Hopkins, Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark

▶▶ Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, Steve Earle

Geoffrey Himes

editor's choice

5 songs that shook the folk-rock world

The Byrds, "Turn, Turn, Turn"
Fairport Convention, "Tam Lin"
Nick Drake, "Northern Sky"
Richard Thompson, "The Poor Ditching Boy"
Steeleye Span, "Allison Gross"

James Taylor

Born March 12, 1948, in Boston, MA.

Regardless of what he says in the song "Steamroller," of the many things that James Taylor is, has been, or may someday be, a "churnin' urn of burnin' funk" is not one of them. Perhaps the dictionary definition of the sensitive male singer/songwriter, Taylor's confessional odes and gentle, folk-inflected R&B covers to this day make whole amphitheaters full of boomers swoon. One of the Beatles' initial signings to Apple Records, Taylor ushered in an era of—depending on your point of view—ruthless self-examination or hopeless navel-gazing. It's telling that he actually began his career as a songwriter after checking himself into a mental institution. Songs such as "Fire and Rain" were the result, but Taylor (who once was married to singer Carly Simon) actually had greater success covering the work of others, notably Carole King's "You've Got a Friend." Once a dependable hit maker, if an erratic songwriter, Taylor has for the most part vanished from the scene, save for semi-annual summer tours, political campaigns, and public-television pledge drives. If that doesn't sum up the mellow music of the '70s, what does?

what to buy: *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1976, prod. various) would seem the natural place to start, but "Carolina in My Mind" and "Something in the Way She Moves" are re-recorded versions, not the originals. If you're looking for Taylor's best single album, you have to go all the way back to *Sweet Baby James* ♪♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1970, prod. Peter Asher), which contains a number of songs that became his fans' favorites, including the title track, "Fire and Rain," "Country Road," and "Steamroller Blues"—Taylor's own personal "Freebird." Since Taylor lacks a hits collection that covers his entire career (excepting the import *Classic Songs*), *(Live)* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1993, prod. Don Grolnick, George Massenburg) has to do. All the requisite songs are here, but Taylor's performance is disappointingly subdued. The set is also available in an abridged one-disc version, *Best Live* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1994, prod. Don Grolnick, George Massenburg).

7
8
4 *livingston taylor*

what to buy next: Taylor's debut, *James Taylor* ♪♪♪½ (Apple, 1969/Alliance, 1997, prod. Peter Asher) lets you feel his pain as he helps establish the singer/songwriter genre with "Rainy Day Man," "Carolina in My Mind," and "Something in the Way She Moves," as well as the upbeat "Knockin' around the Zoo." *Gorilla* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1975, prod. Lenny Waronker, Russ Titelman) was Taylor's comeback album after a self-imposed exile during the early '70s; it contains the delightful original "Mexico" but also eased his transition from confessional singer/songwriter to craftsman-like cover man with Marvin Gaye's "How Sweet It Is (to Be Loved by You)." One of his better mid-period albums, *J.T.* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1979, prod. Peter Asher) includes the sunny hit "Your Smiling Face," the requisite R&B cover "Handy Man," and the charming "Secret o' Life," plus "Bartender's Blues," which Taylor wrote for George Jones. More recently, *New Moon Shine* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1991, prod. Danny Kortchmar, Don Grolnick) offers Taylor's sharpest and most relevant set of lyrics in some time, notably on "Slap Leather" and "Shed a Little Light."

what to avoid: *Never Die Young* ♪♪ (Columbia, 1988, prod. Don Grolnick) is a slight collection, even by Taylor's sometimes lightweight standards.

the rest:
Mud Slide Slim and the Blue Horizon ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1971)
One Man Dog ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972)
Walking Man ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1974)
In the Pocket ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976)
Flag ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1979)
Dad Loves His Work ♪♪½ (Columbia, 1981)
That's Why I'm Here ♪♪ (Columbia, 1985)
Never Die Young ♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1988)
Hourglass ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1997)

worth searching for: *James Taylor and the Original Flying Machine 1967* ♪ (Euphoria, 1971/Gadfly, 1996) is an interesting curio that contains demos—studio chatter included—of "Night Owl," "Rainy Day Man," and "Brighten Your Night with My Day" that Taylor and guitarist Danny Kortchmar recorded in 1967. The seven-song album saw the light of day only after Taylor hit pay dirt elsewhere and was released without his permission.

influences:

◀◀ Simon & Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Carole King, Beatles

▶▶ Jackson Browne, Duncan Sheik, Garth Brooks

Daniel Durchholz

Livingston Taylor

Born 1951, in Weston, MA.

Although his commercial success has never reached that of his older brother, James, Livingston Taylor has built his musical career with a similar mix of folk, pop, and rock influences. Accompanying his self-described "scratchy baritone vocals" on acoustic guitar and banjo, Taylor turns every performance into a highly entertaining interaction with his audience. The youngest of three sons and one daughter born to a dean of a medical school and a lyric soprano, Taylor grew up in New England and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, surrounded by music. His oldest brother, Alex, exposed him to R&B while AM radio provided a grounding in pop music. Along with his siblings, Taylor struggled with emotional problems as a youngster. While attending a Quaker-run high school in Pennsylvania, he suffered from acute depression and was hospitalized in McLean Hospital, a private sanitarium near Boston. Music became an important part of his therapy. After his release during the late 1960s, he moved back to Weston, Massachusetts, a rural suburb of Boston, and began performing in folk music clubs and coffeehouses. Although he released several folk-pop albums during the 1970s and had minor hits with "Carolina Day" and "Get Out of Bed," he remained in the shadow of his more famous brother. Taylor maintained a low profile during the 1980s. After releasing the disappointing album *Man's Best Friend*, co-produced by John Boyland and ex–Doobie Brothers guitarist Jeff Baxter, he didn't return to the recording studio until 1988, releasing *Life Is Good*, produced by Artie Traum and Scott Petito.

what to buy: Taylor's true magic comes out as an entertainer. With the release of his 1994 album *Unsolicited Material* ♪♪♪♪ (Whistling Dog, 1994), the excitement of his shows is finally captured. Songs range from long-time favorites, including "Carolina Day," from Taylor's first album, to more recent material. The romanticism of "Save Your Heart for Me" and "No Easy Way to Break Somebody's Heart" is balanced by the joviality of "Railroad Bill," "I Hate Country Music," "Pajamas," and "Jason (Waltzing with Bears)." An extended segment featuring the banjo links bluegrass classic tunes—"Earl's Breakdown" and "Eight More Miles to Louisville"—with a humorous collection of "Songs That Should Never Be Played on the Banjo." The album concludes with a tender version of "Over the Rainbow," from *The Wizard of Oz*.

what to buy next: The original studio cuts of Taylor's best-known songs are assembled on *Echoes* ♪♪♪½ (Capricorn,1979, prod. Ed Freeman, Jon Landau).

the rest:
Livingston Taylor ♪♪♪ (Capricorn, 1970)
Liv ♪♪♪ (Capricorn, 1971)
Over the Rainbow ♪♪♪½ (Capricorn, 1973)
Three-Way Mirror ♪♪♪ (Epic, 1978)
Man's Best Friend ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1980)
Life Is Good ♪♪♪♪½ (Critique, 1988)
Good Friends ♪♪♪ (Chesky, 1993)
Our Turn to Dance ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1993)
Bicycle ♪♪♪½ (Coconut Bay, 1996)
Arial ♪♪♪½ (Chesky, 1997)

influences:
James Taylor, Alex Taylor, Earl Scruggs

Greg Greenway, David Wilcox, Brooks Williams

Craig Harris

Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee

Sonny Terry born Saunders Teddell, October 24, 1911, in Durham, NC; died March 11, 1986, in Mineola, NY; Brownie McGhee born Walter Brown McGhee, November 30, 1915, in Knoxville, TN; died February 23, 1996, in Oakland, CA.

As important a team in blues as Lennon and McCartney were in rock 'n' roll or Ruth and Gehrig in baseball, harpist Sonny Terry and guitarist Brownie McGhee had several significant bonds that created a prolific and influential life-long partnership. McGhee overcame polio as a child, though he had to walk on crutches for years; Terry lost almost all his eyesight in two separate childhood accidents. They met in 1939, after Terry had recorded with Blind Boy Fuller and McGhee hadn't yet recorded his influential Columbia recordings as "Blind Boy Fuller #2." (Terry found himself onstage at Carnegie Hall, as one of many performers in John Hammond's important From Spirituals to Swing concert, in 1939.) They hooked up in the early 1940s, and it was immediately obvious that Terry's enthusiastically squawking harp lines fit nicely above McGhee's understated guitar strumming—and their folksy harmonies (punctuated with Terry's occasional trademark whoops) were just perfect for McGhee's singalong songwriting style. After World War II, when they had business problems with record companies, they took to the streets and made occasional Broadway appearances in such plays as *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Langston Hughes's *Simply Heavenly.* Soon they were swept up in the American folk movement, performing with Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Josh White, Pete Seeger, and other leftists who believed traditional music could be used to effect important societal change. (Bob Dylan and Joan Baez were among the 1960s artists to build effectively on this approach.) Where rock 'n' roll destroyed the careers of many popular bluesmen, especially traditional acoustic ones, Terry and McGhee timed everything just right. They caught on in Europe in the late 1950s, while Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis were exploding in the States, and returned just in time for the 1960s blues revival. Their European tours and American festival work gave them extraordinary career longevity, although there was reported friction which slowed down the partnership in the 1970s. McGhee was always the more prolific solo artist, although Terry made several excellent R&B singles for various record labels in the 1950s. But they're the most influential duo in blues history and one of a select few in popular music in general.

what to buy: Start with two important solo collections: Terry's *Whoopin' the Blues: The Capitol Recordings, 1947–50* ♪♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1995, prod. Pete Welding) collects all 16 of his Capitol blues combo sides, some with McGhee on guitar and some with his guitarist brother, "Drinking Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee" hitmaker Stick McGhee; the two-disc *The Complete Brownie McGhee* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy, 1994, prod. various) includes many soft-spoken, occasionally spooky and depressing, solo sides as Blind Boy Fuller #2, but despite the eloquence of "Death of Blind Boy Fuller" and "Back Door Stranger" it's clearly lacking Terry's playful harp element. Among the best of many duo compilations are *Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry Sing* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways, 1958/Rounder, 1990), *Back to New Orleans* ♪♪♪♪ (Bluesville, 1961/Fantasy, 1989), and the 1948–51 recordings *Hometown Blues* ♪♪♪♪½ (Mainstream/Legacy, 1993, prod. Bob Shad).

what to buy next: McGhee and Terry recorded six and eight albums each for Folkways between 1944 and 1963, and although they got separate star billing, most of the songs were basically Terry-McGhee duo recordings. The original albums are hard to find, but the best available collections are McGhee's *The Folkways Years 1945–59* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways/Rounder, 1991, prod. various), which includes the solemn "Grievin' Hearted Blues" and the lecherous "'Fore Day Creep;" and Terry's *The Folkways Years 1944–63* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways/Rounder, 1991, prod. various), with "Going down Slow," "Custard Pie Blues," and "Harmonica with Slaps."

what to avoid: On Terry's *Whoopin'* ♪♪½ (Alligator, 1984, prod. Johnny Winter), the harpist sounds like he's coasting, and the presence of the great bassist Willie Dixon and ex-Muddy Wa-

ters guitarist Johnny Winter only works to twist the sound in an unfocused direction.

the rest:
Back Country Blues ♪♪♪½ (Savoy, 1958)
Sonny's Story ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1960)
At Sugar Hill ♪♪♪½ (Original Blues Classics, 1961/Fantasy, 1991)
At the Second Fret ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1962/Fantasy, 1993)
The Best of Brownie McGhee ♪♪♪ (Storyville, 1971)
Sonny and Brownie ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1973)
Sonny Terry ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1987)
Blowin' the Fuses: Golden Classics ♪♪♪½ (Collectables, 1989)
California Blues ♪♪♪½ (Fantasy, 1990)
Midnight Special ♪♪♪ (Fantasy, 1990)
Sonny Is King ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1990)
Brownie's Blues ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1990)
Chain Gang Blues ♪♪♪½ (Collectables, 1991)
Just a Closer Walk with Thee ♪♪♪ (Original Blues Classics, 1991)
Giants of the Blues ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1992)
Facts of Life ♪♪♪ (Blue Rock-It, 1992)
1958 London Sessions ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1994)
Po' Boys ♪♪♪ (Drive Archive, 1994)
Climbin' Up ♪♪♪½ (Savoy Jazz, 1995)
Blues Is Truth ♪♪♪ (Blues Alliance, 1996)
Mr. Brownie & Mr. Sonny ♪♪♪ (Prestige, 1996)
Not Guilty Blues ♪♪♪ (Collector's Edition, 1996)
Going It Alone ♪♪♪ (Blues Alliance, 1997)

worth searching for: The original Folkways albums, including *Sonny Terry's Washboard Band* ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways) and *Sonny Terry, Harmonica* ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian Folkways), have long since been trumped by the 1991 CD collections, but they're excellent holy grails for collectors.

influences:
◀◀ Sonny Boy Williamson I, Josh White, Leadbelly, Blind Boy Fuller
▶▶ Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, Charlie Musselwhite

Steve Knopper

Rosetta Tharpe

Born Rosetta Nubin, March 20, 1915, in Cotton Plant, AR. Died October 9, 1973, in Philadelphia, PA.

Rosetta Tharpe was the best-known of the guitar playing female gospel singers, her high-pitched rough voice enhanced by an exuberant and dynamic guitar style inspired by jazz, early rock 'n' roll, and, most of all, the blues. She had a forceful presence on stage and exuded happiness and delight. Tharpe started singing in church and playing guitar at a very early age with her mother, an itinerant evangelist. Her experience on the road with her mother led to torrid sessions in Chicago's Church of God in Christ in the early 1930s. In 1934 she married Pastor Thorpe, and the trio had success in the storefront churches of Florida before settling down in New York in 1936. In 1938 she made her first gospel records as Sister Rosetta Tharpe (from Thorpe), "Rock Me" and "That's All," and the same year, as star attraction, she played the Cotton Club in Harlem, fronting Cab Calloway's band and recording with Lucky Millinder and his orchestra, Louis Jordan, and Noble Sissle. The sides she recorded for Decca between 1944 and 1954 with the Sammy Price Trio and her duos with Marie Knight ("Didn't It Rain?"), graced by her biting guitar and strong voice, are masterpieces of swing, dripping with rejoicing and contagious joy. In 1950 she recorded a moving album for Verve with her mother, Katie Bell Nubin, and the ceremony of her second marriage in 1951 was recorded and issued on Decca. She was busy from the late 1950s on. A colorful artist, she was the flamboyant gospel counterpart to Memphis Minnie, and she deserves the strong following of collectors and specialists.

what to buy: *Sister Rosetta Tharpe* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Frémeaux & Associates, 1994, prod Jean Buzelin) offers the best sides from the period 1938–43. *Live at the Hot Club de France* ♪♪♪♪ (Flame, 1966/Milan, 1992, prod. J. Morgantini), a solo, live session, is the best of the gospel evergreens. *Sister R. Tharpe* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rosetta, 1988, prod. Rosetta Reitz) offers a nice selection of 1941–69 sides. *Sister R. Tharpe* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1975) is a multi-volume series with the best sides recorded between 1944–56 with the Sammy Price Trio, Marie Knight, and various groups.

what to buy next: The two-volume *Sister Rosetta Tharpe Complete Recorded Works* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1995, prod. Johnny Parth) includes 53 tracks, her complete output from 1938–44, and is worthwhile not only for completists. Not to be overlooked is *Live in Paris—1964* ♪♪♪♪ (France's Concerts, 1988), which includes two live shows; one with Otis Spann, Ransom Knowling, and Willie Smith and a second with the Original Tuxedo Jazz Band.

influences:
◀◀ Big Bill Broonzy, Memphis Minnie
▶▶ Sister O.M. Terrell, Dinah Washington

Robert Sacré

Hans Theessink /Blue Groove

Born April 5, 1948, in Enschede, the Netherlands.

Blue Groove: Hans Theessink, guitar, vocals; Jon Sass, tuba; Dorretta Carter, harmony vocals; Ali Thelfa, harmony vocals, percussion.

He's a bluesman. He's from the Netherlands. His accompanist plays the tuba. No, it's not the plot of a Robin Williams movie; it's the true story of Hans Theessink. In the 1960s, the blues captured the attention of white American college students, British rock bands, and a Dutch kid who played the mandolin. Hearing Big Bill Broonzy and Leadbelly on late-night radio changed the direction of Theessink's life. In an unlikely development, he taught himself to be a respected blues guitarist. He spent some time in America learning from the originals: "The first time I went down to Mississippi I was really shocked to find that some of these great bluesmen were living in such poverty," he recalled in a *Sing Out!* interview. Theessink proves that "derivative" isn't always a bad word. But his music has its moments of inspired originality. Part of its distinctive charm comes from tuba player Jon Sass, who frequently adds oomph to Theessink's blues. Sass and Theessink first teamed up in 1986 for *Baby Wants to Boogie*. Their work is unusual, in that both play lead and accompaniment; their "voices" meld perfectly.

what to buy: *Call Me* ♪♪♪♪ (Deluge, 1993, prod. Colin Linden, Hans Theessink) contains a kick-ass cover of "Mabelline" (sic); "Lonely Days and Lonely Nights," featuring great piano by Richard Bell and contributions by Colin Linden, Maceo Parker, and Pee Wee Ellis; and Theessink's signature song "Call Me." The album also features Garth Hudson, Rick Danko, Bobby King, and tuba-tooter Sass.

what to buy next: Theessink's earthy baritone is especially striking on *Baby Wants to Boogie* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1988). The album is a delight throughout, particularly because of such unexpected touches as Flaco Jimenez's accordion. Most of the songs are Theessink originals, but he plays some gorgeous slide on Robert Johnson's "Stones in My Passway."

best of the rest:

Johnny and the Devil ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990)
Hard Road Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Groove, 1994)
Hans Theessink and Blue Groove: *Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Groove, 1993)
Crazy Moon ♪♪♪½ (Blue Groove, 1997)

influences:

◀◀ Leadbelly, Big Bill Broonzy

▶▶ Martin Sexton, Keb' Mo'

Pamela Murray Winters

Them

See: Van Morrison

Chris Thile

Born February 20, 1981, in Oceanside, CA.

Chris Thile began playing mandolin at age five and added fiddle and guitar to his arsenal at ages eight and nine respectively. He won the prestigious Walnut Valley Championship in 1993 and released his first bluegrass-rich album in 1994, at the age of 13. Playing mandolin with a dexterity and sophistication that's jaw-dropping-unusual in someone so young, Thile performed and toured for several years with bluegrass/C&W band Nickel Creek and is a founding member of the Grass Is Greener with Richard Greene and David Grier.

what's available: *Leading Off* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Pete Wernick) is a bluegrass showcase introducing an eighth-grader with the sensitivity, chops, and musical friskiness of an adult. Thile wrote or arranged 11 of the 13 tracks here and is joined by luminaries including fiddlers Byron Berline and Stuart Duncan and guitarist Scott Nygaard. Thile is even more agile and self-assured on sophomore outing *Stealing Second* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1997, prod. Sam Bush), recorded in Nashville with an all-star line-up that includes Jerry Douglas, Russ Barenberg, and producer Bush. The album's title is part baseball reference as the young mandolinist happens to be a huge Chicago Cubs fan. The material is all original, and song titles include "Hop the Fence," "Road to Wrigley," and "Ryno's Lament," a bluesy tribute to Thile's hero Ryne Sandberg.

worth searching for: *Tinsel Tunes* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996, prod. Barry Poss) is a generous, various artists collection of bluegrassy holiday material performed by artists from the Sugar Hill roster. Thile arranged "Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella" for the project, which also includes tracks by Chris Hillman and Herb Pedersen, Sam Bush, Mollie O'Brien, Robert Earl Keen Jr., the Laurel Canyon Ramblers, and others.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Alison Krauss

▶▶ Dr. Banjo's Bluegrass Youth All-Stars

David Sokol

iiird tyme out

open tunings for guitar

In the most common (E) tuning, a guitar must be fretted on several strings to form a major chord. In several cultures, most notably Hawaiian and African American, the instrument's tuning was altered to either produce a major or minor chord without fretting or to create distinctive voicings such as the DADGAD tuning common to music of the British Isles. Guitars in such "open" tunings can either be played with a slide or fingerpicked, with two or more fingers plucking the strings directly, often playing a bass line on the upper strings while playing the melody on the lower ones. Guitarists like Merle Travis, the Reverend Gary Davis, and Richard Thompson have made this approach a high art, often sounding like two or more instrumentalists when playing solo. As fingerstyle guitarists have become more numerous, tunings have become more numerous and complex, and guitarists have resorted to multiple capos (which strap across a guitar's frets and raise the pitch of one or more strings) to allow them to switch tunings quickly onstage. Another approach taken by Indian classical guitarists like Debashish Bhachttayara, who utilize a slide, and American instrumentalists like William Eaton and the late Michael Hedges, is to add additional strings to the guitar, increasing its tonal range and allowing a drone accompaniment to their solo playing. Most folk guitarists utilize some open tunings, and players like Patty Larkin, Martin Simpson, and David Wilcox have made incorporation of these unique voicings a high art.

Michael Parrish

IIIrd Tyme Out

Formed 1991.

Russell Moore, guitar, lead vocals; Ray Deaton, bass guitar, vocals; Mike Hartgrove, fiddle; Wayne Benson, mandolin, vocals (1993–present); Steve Dilling, banjo, vocals (1994–present); Terry Baucom, banjo (1991–92); Alan Bibey, mandolin (1991–92); Barry Abernathy, banjo (1993).

Founded by veterans of Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, IIIrd Tyme Out made an immediate impact on the bluegrass world when their debut album received an "Album of the Year" nomination by the International Bluegrass Music Association. A single from that album, "Erase the Miles," spent two months at Number One on the *Bluegrass Unlimited* chart. The band has won several awards for their vocal work and is noted for producing a contemporary sound while staying firmly within the genre's traditions.

what to buy: *Puttin' New Roots Down* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1992, prod. IIIrd Tyme Out), a more than worthy follow-up to their successful debut, once had four songs in *Bluegrass Unlimited*'s Top 30. It includes songs from Hank Williams, Jimmy Rodgers, Lionel Delmore, and others.

what to buy next: The band's first Rounder album, *Letter to Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. IIIrd Tyme Out), includes an inspired a cappella cover of the Platters' "Only You (And You Alone)" plus Wes Golding's classic "Raining in LA."

the rest:

IIIrd Tyme Out ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1991)
Grandpa's Mandolin ♪♪♪½ (Rebel, 1993)
Across the Miles ♪♪♪ (New Haven, 1994)
Living on the Other Side ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver
▶▶ Blue Highway, Lonesome River Band

Douglas Fulmer

Anthony Thistlewaite

See: The Waterboys

Buddy Thomas

Born October 10, 1935 in Emerson, KY. Died October 4, 1974.

Oldtime fiddler "Buddy" Elwood Carl Thomas grew up on an isolated mountain farm in eastern Kentucky, one of 10 children in a family that raised all the food they ate; Thomas used to joke that his family was "so poor, even the poor folks said we were poor." He was one of the last generation of regional fiddlers to learn music without the influence of radio or records. As a boy, he was sickly, and was unable to walk until age 11. He learned to play on a homemade fiddle, starting with his grandfather's tunes which he had heard his mother whistle around

the house. Most of Thomas's fiddling was done when carousing at the homes of friends or for small square dances in his community, but towards the end of his brief life he appeared at the Smithsonian National Folk Festival in Washington, D.C. In 1973 Mark Wilson and Gus Meade ran across Thomas at a small folk festival in Kentucky and began visiting with him, and taping his remarkable repertoire of uncommon traditional tunes. Selections from these field recordings were issued as *Kitty Puss*. Sadly, Thomas died just a few months after the last recordings were made. He had lain down for a nap during a strenuous square dance, and never got up again. All his life, Thomas had suffered from ill health; harsh living conditions, poor nutrition, and inadequate medical care cut his life short.

what to buy: *Kitty Puss* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1998, prod. Mark Wilson, Guthrie T. Meade), the CD release of Thomas's 1976 masterpiece, showcases his elegant melodic fiddling, backed simply on the guitar by his sister, Leona Stamm. Thomas's repertoire was already rare at the time *Kitty Puss* was recorded (1973–74), for it hearkened back to an era a century before bluegrass music was invented, with archaic echoes of minstrelsy, Scots-Irish airs, and the bluesy tunes carried to the region by black settlers. Originally issued in 1976, *Kitty Puss* stands as a prime distillation of a master fiddler's distinctive personal and regional style, and has influenced many of today's most important old-time fiddlers. Thomas's seminal versions of "Briarpicker Brown" and "Yellow Barber" alone make this album worth buying; his vivid melodies meander about, bobbing and dancing, curving and bending, yet they remain light, simple and firmly grounded in the rhythmic tradition of dance fiddling. This is a must-have for anyone seriously interested in American fiddle music.

what to buy next: *Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky: Volume I, Up the Ohio and Licking Rivers* (Rounder, 1996, prod. John Harrod, Mark Wilson) is an anthology which includes six cuts by Thomas that do not appear on *Kitty Puss*.

influences:

◀◀ Doc Roberts, Ed Haley, Clark Kessinger, J.P. Fraley

▶▶ Roger Cooper, Bruce Greene, John Hartford, Bob Carlin

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Henry "Ragtime Texas" Thomas

Born reportedly 1874, in TX. Death date unknown.

When the Los Angeles blues-rock group Canned Heat hit with "Going up the Country" in December 1968, the song charted at Number 11 on its eerie pan-pipe backing. If the ethereal tune seemed transported from another time, it was. The pipes and the song's lilting melody were lifted from Texas drifter Henry Thomas, the oldest known singer to record the blues at the start of its recorded history in the late 1920s—likely the clearest link to the birth of the blues. Thomas's delicate ragtime and ballad-influenced blues, sung in a rasping baritone, seem born of the nineteenth century, more naturally sung around a wagon train campfire than in a juke joint. Thomas was a one-man-band of sorts who could dive off into a rapid reel, backing himself both on the pan pipes—an instrument of several reeds also called "quills"—and guitar. His "Run, Mollie, Run" speeds along at a dizzying clip, sounding like a drunk band of hornpipe-blowing sea dogs. His version of black composer Irving Jones's "Honey Won't You Allow Me One More Chance?" was definitive, appropriated years later by a young Bob Dylan on *Freewheelin'*, and his "Fishing Blues" has become a folk standard. A traveling minstrel who likely roamed with medicine shows, Thomas reportedly rode the boxcars as far as St. Louis and Chicago. He made repeated trips to Chicago, showing up twice in 1927 and again in 1928 and 1929, recording 23 sides for Vocalion, ranging from songster classics like "John Henry" to spirituals like "Joshua in the Wilderness." Unlike fellow Texans Leadbelly and Texas Alexander, Thomas could not be tamed. He hit the rails and disappeared, leaving only his ageless music as his legacy.

what to buy: The first comprehensive release of Thomas's stirring sides is *Texas Worried Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1990, prod. Richard Nevins), accompanied by as definitive a history of his life as can be gleaned by the scant details turned up by researchers. The Austrian version, *Henry Thomas 1927–29* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991, prod. Johnny Parth), has the same exquisite 23 songs but fewer scholarly notes.

influences:

▶▶ Leadbelly, Bob Dylan, Taj Mahal, Canned Heat

Steve Braun

Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey

Formed 1991, in Raytown, MO.

Linda Thomas (born April 17, 1947, in Nevada, MO); Dan DeLancey (born May 19, 1961, Kansas City, MO).

Though the members of this duo have been acquainted for 15

years, Linda Thomas and Dan DeLancey formed their musical partnership of old-time music played on hammered dulcimer and guitar less than a decade ago. Thomas and DeLancey describe themselves as modern-day minstrels playing old world tunes, having grown up surrounded by traditional American music in Missouri. They specialize in adapting a wide variety of fiddle tunes, waltzes and schottisches to their chosen instruments. Both musicians are award-winning players and practitioners of traditional acoustic music with DeLancey being a former Kansas and two-time Oklahoma State Flatpick Guitar Champion, and Thomas being a finalist in hammered dulcimer competitions in Arkansas and Texas.

what's available: *The Gathering Place* ♪♪♪♪ (Thomas/DeLancey, 1997, prod. Linda Thomas, Dan DeLancey) offers an instrumental collection of such favorite songs of inspiration as "Amazing Grace," "How Great Thou Art," and "Wayfaring Stranger," featuring the wonderful blend of hammered dulcimer and guitar. They are joined by Scott Tichenor, who adds an exceptional mandolin throughout, and Ronnie DeLancey on acoustic bass who completes the ensemble sound of the recording. *Merry Christmas* ♪♪♪♪ (Thomas/DeLancey, 1995, prod. Linda Thomas, Dan DeLancey) is a special treat for fans looking to add an acoustic touch to their holidays! A review in the *Kansas City Star* says "If you want instrumental Christmas music that sets a warm peaceful mood, buy this one." In addition to the supporting musicians on *The Gathering Place*, Annie Tichenor adds rhythm guitar. *Among Old Friends* ♪♪♪♪ (Thomas/DeLancey, 1996, prod. Linda Thomas, Dan DeLancey) includes the most requested tunes from their first two recordings *Plain and Simple* and *Music from the Heart* plus a few new favorites. This assortment of fiddle tunes is described as "reminiscent of the sounds one might expect to hear at an Irish farmhouse dance." The tunes are played with plenty of energy and also include such wonderful waltzes as "Kentucky Waltz" and "Midnight on the Water." Any of these recordings are available through County Sales or directly from the artists at 7911 Hunter, Raytown, Missouri 64138.

worth searching for: *Plain and Simple* ♪♪♪ (Thomas/DeLancey, 1993, prod. Linda Thomas, Dan DeLancey) and *Music from the Heart* ♪♪♪ (Thomas/DeLancey, 1994, prod. Linda Thomas, Dan DeLancey) are the two recordings from which *Among Old Friends* was drawn. These older recordings (available on cassette tape) feature Thomas's dulcimer made by Harvey Printz, while on their newest recording *The Gathering Place*, she plays a David Lindsey "Baby Grand" hammered dulcimer.

influences:

◀◀ Bill Monroe, Doc Watson, Walt Michael, Steve Kaufman

▶▶ Scott Jackson, Kendra Ward-Bence, Tina Bergmann

Heidi Cerrigione

Carol Thompson

Born December 4, 1941.

Carol Thompson is one of America's foremost players of the Celtic harp. She began at age 13 with classical lessons from Pennsylvania harpist Dorothy Knauss. After years of playing classical music, she allowed her lifelong interest in traditional folk music to take the fore, and learned to play several different variants of her instrument. Unlike most harpists, she plays the familiar orchestral pedal harp, the bright-sounding diatonic neo-Celtic harp, and the difficult, chromatic Welsh triple harp. Like many folk musicians, Thompson is a touring performer, a recording artist, and an influential teacher. She can be found at concerts, festivals, and workshops across the United States.

what to buy: Thompson's harp playing on *Carolan's Welcome* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1993, prod. David H. Walters) is impeccable, and the varied program of tunes is both interesting and beautiful. The characteristic crystalline tone of her harps and the plaintive nature of the airs makes them sound both fragile and expressive under Thompson's expert fingers. Her guests Jack Coen, Billy McComiskey, and Darcy Fair all add their own special talents, and Thompson is generous enough to share the limelight and play accompaniment. McComiskey, one of this generation's finest Irish accordionists, plays lovely "continental waltzes" from the repertoire of his mentor Sean McGlynn. Coen, a National treasure, adds some tunes on the wooden flute paced for leisurely listening. Fair, one of Thompson's former star pupils, plays lead harp on a hornpipe, a reel, and on the title cut, an air by O'Carolan. The airs are gentle and lovely and the dance tunes aren't over-the-top, so the overall feel of this album, like that of most harp albums, is subdued. It will be cherished by anyone who likes Irish traditional music's quieter side.

what to buy next: *The Peacock's Feather* ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1996, prod. Debbie Reynolds) marked Thompson's return to totally solo recording after *Carolan's Welcome*. Unlike that album, *The Peacock's Feather* features music not only from Ireland, but also from England, Scotland, and Wales. Her impeccable taste in selecting among traditional slow airs, lilting dances, and the gentle baroque compositions of Turlough O'Carolan make this

a wonderful album of solo harp music. Scholarly liner notes by folklorist Darcy Fair help illuminate the history of each melody. *The Enchanted Isles* ♪♪♪♪ (Dorian, 1989, prod. Craig Dory, Douglas Brown) was Thompson's first solo CD on the Dorian label. Like *The Peacock's Feather*, it contains selections of music from all over Britain and Ireland, masterfully played on neo-Celtic and triple harps. It also features a few tunes on the large pedal harp. This album made a big splash when it came out, both in the United States and abroad; in Hong Kong, it even entered the pop charts. On *Wild Swans* ♪♪♪½ (Bonaventure, 1995, prod. Ron Bach), Thompson teamed up with literature scholar and poetry reader Jack Vickrey to record an album of poetry readings and harp music. The 13 selections include accompanied readings, solo harp tunes, and a few instrumental duets on which Vickrey plays viola da gamba. Thompson achieves a full, measured, and beautiful sound on her harps. Vickrey's dramatic readings bring equal sonic power to the works of poets like William Butler Yeats, Dylan Thomas, and Gerard Manley Hopkins. This album won't do for those who use harp albums as quiet background music; the 12-minute reading of Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," backed by a sixteenth-century Spanish tune, requires a serious commitment of attention. But it pays off in the end, and the album is a satisfying pairing of poetry and music.

influences:

◀◀ Dorothy Knauss, Jack Coen

▶▶ Darcy Fair

Stephen Winick

Eric & Suzy Thompson

Formed 1976, in San Francisco, CA.

Eric Thompson (born March 21, 1946 in Stockton CA), guitar; Suzy Thompson (born September 20, 1954 in Frankfurt Germany), fiddle, guitar, vocals.

Veteran performers and alumni of such groups as the Blue Flame String Band, the Backwoods Band, and the California Cajun Orchestra, Eric and Suzy Thompson brilliantly cover a wide range of acoustic music territory, from the down-and-out blues to old time fiddle-guitar duets to Cajun waltzes and stomps. Their 22 years of performing together give them an unusual combination of technical virtuosity, unpretentious delivery, and a strong commitment to retaining the essential feel of the many roots styles they tackle. The Thompsons have learned their craft from rare recordings, and directly from older generations of traditional musicians. They take their inspiration from old-time greats like Memphis Minnie and Mance Lipscomb, both legendary blues singers and guitarists; the Cajun musicians they have visited in Louisiana, including Dewey Balfa, Dennis McGee, and the late Cheese Read; 1920s string bands such as the East Texas Serenaders and A.L. Steeley's Redheaded Fiddlers; Karakosta, the Greek clarinet king; and other important figures in roots music, both obscure, like blueswoman Hociel Thomas, and well-known, like bluegrass great Bill Monroe. Eric Thompson has been active as an acoustic guitarist since the mid-1960s when he won the championship at Union Grove and has worked with Jerry Garcia, David Grisman, Mike Seeger, Michael Doucet, and the Balfa Brothers. *Frets* magazine calls him "a virtual encyclopedia of flatpicking." His playing stands out for its soulfulness and speed, and for its exceptional tone. Eric's classic *Bluegrass Guitar* album is a staple of many serious bluegrass record collections; a later duet recording with Alan Senauke, *Two Guitars*, also explores Irish reels, ragtime and blues, and Greek rembetika. Suzy Thompson grew up in the Northeast, studied classical violin as a child, and became enamored of Cajun music after hearing the Balfa Brothers in 1976. She is a prize-winning fiddler and an impassioned vocalist whose specialties are classic blues of the 1920s and Cajun French songs. She learned Cajun music in Louisiana under an NBA fellowship with her Cajun fiddle mentor, Dewey Balfa. Her finger-style guitar playing, inspired by blueswoman Memphis Minnie, lays out a rock-solid rhythm behind her powerful voice. The Thompsons' virtuosity, the breadth of their repertoire, and the sheer energy they infuse into their music results in a show that leaves audiences not only thoroughly entertained but also educated and inspired.

what to buy: *Adam and Eve Had the Blues* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1989, prod. John Lumsdaine, Eric and Suzy Thompson) has the duo doing what they do best: country blues and Cajun songs and tunes. Suzy's fiddling and singing is a treat and Eric contributes his usual boxcar-load of hot guitar licks. On the classic blues of Ma Rainey or Bessie Smith, Eric's sparkling lead guitar weaves and darts around Suzy's pyrotechnical vocals. When they pick up their fiddles for a Cajun waltz or two-step, the interplay between the two is hypnotic. And Suzy's steady rhythm guitar provides the perfect foil for Eric's flashy flatpicking solos. The supporting cast includes Laurie Lewis, David Grisman, and George Winston to name but a few.

what to buy next: Either of the Thompson's two albums with the California Cajun Orchestra, *Not Lonesome Anymore* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1991, prod. Jody Stecher, Suzy Thompson) or *Nonc Adam Two-Step* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Jody Stecher, Suzy Thompson, Bob Shumaker) are worth pursuing. Both contain large helpings of some of the best Cajun dance music you'll hear anywhere.

the rest:
Some Kind of Love ♪♪♪ (Fourteen Carrot, 1985)
(With the Backwoods Band) *Jes' Fine* ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1979)
(With the Blue Flame Stringband) *The Blue Flame Stringband* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1982)

worth searching for: The Thompsons appear on two Rounder compilations that everyone should own. *The Young Fogies* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994) and *The American Fogies* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996) are both treasures of American old time and roots music. Eric Thompson's first solo album, *Bluegrass Guitar* ♪♪♪♪ (Kicking Mule, 1979, prod. Eric Thompson) is a classic of the genre and features Thompson with a supporting cast that includes David Grisman, Tony Rice, Paul Shelasky, and Todd Phillips. It's sadly out-of-print. Suzy also appears in the film *J'ai Etais au Bal* (aired on PBS as *French Dance Tonight*) playing fiddle with D.L. Menard and Danny Poullard.

solo outings:
Eric Thompson:
Flatpicking Guitar Festival ♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1976)
Flatpicking Guitar ♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1979)
(With Alan Senauke) *Two Guitars* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986)
(With Charles River Valley Boys) *Beatle Country* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)

Suzy Thompson:
(With Any Old Time Stringband) *I Bid You Goodnight* ♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1978/1980/1996)

influences:
Dewey Balfa, Dennis McGee, Cheese Read, Hociel Thomas, Clarence White

California Cajun Orchestra, Balfa Toujours

see also: *California Cajun Orchestra, Any Old Time Stringband*

Neal Walters

Linda Thompson

See: Richard Thompson

Richard Thompson /Linda Thompson /Richard & Linda Thompson

Formed 1972.

Richard Thompson (born April 3, 1949, in London, England), vocals, guitar; Linda Thompson (born 1948), vocals.

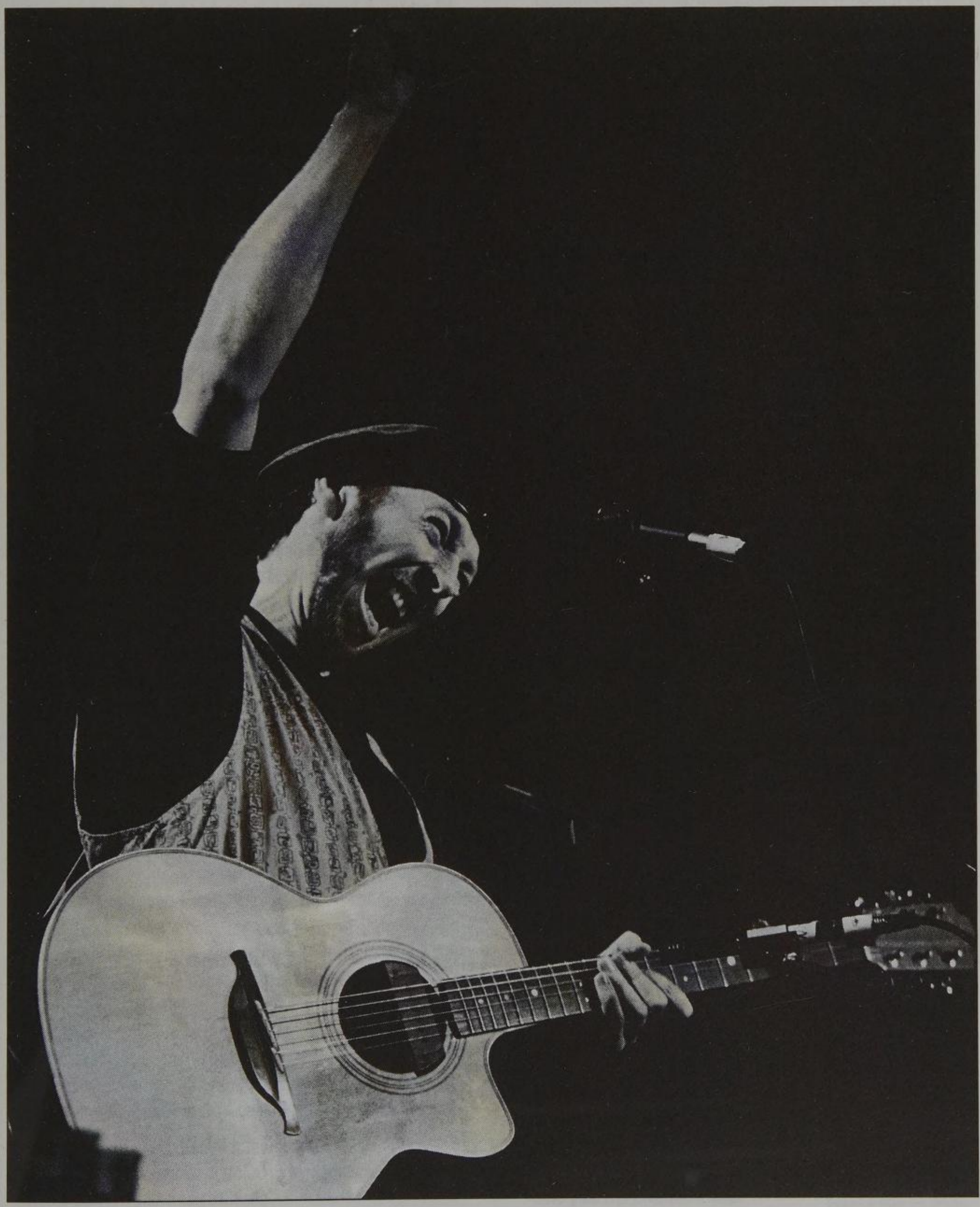
Richard Thompson was an original member of the innovative folk-rock band Fairport Convention and has in the intervening years carved out a niche as a supremely gifted songwriter and guitarist. With his deep, burnished vocals and generally dark songs, he has modernized the British folk idiom in several ways; his expressive, often baroque fretwork joins a number of different traditions—imagine a Celtic Hendrix in Morocco—and has hugely influenced Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits, among many others. Thompson met Linda Peters while working with the group Bunch, a loose aggregation of Fairport alumni; they married during the early '70s, converted to Islam in 1974, and divorced in 1982. (Richard subsequently married Nancy Covey.) Richard began his solo career first, with 1972's *Henry the Human Fly,* then joined forces with Linda for some of the most emotionally bare music ever produced in the pop idiom. After they split up, Richard re-activated his solo career, worked with avant-gardists Fred Frith, Henry Kaiser, and John French, was a busy gun-for-hire (Nick Drake, J.J. Cale, Robert Plant, Bonnie Raitt, Crowded House, Suzanne Vega, the Golden Palominos, Syd Straw), and wielded enough influenced to inspire a 1994 tribute album featuring a bevy of cutting-edge acts. Linda moved into theater before releasing a solo album in 1985 and a retrospective in 1996.

what to buy: The couple's *Shoot out the Lights* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1982, prod. Joe Boyd)—the release of which barely preceded their divorce—is a devastating, virtually flawless set of performances and the last of their collaborations. Their first release, *I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight,* ♪♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1974/Rykodisc, 1991, prod. Richard Thompson, John Wood) is an equally gripping and somewhat happier dialogue. Richard's *Rumour and Sigh* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1991, prod. Mitchell Froom) is his personal masterpiece, highlighted by the ironic "I Feel So Good" and the updated Irish ballad "1952 Vincent Black Lightning."

what to buy next: Richard's best solo work is collected in the hefty but consistently engaging three-disc set *Watching the*

Richard Thompson **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

richard thompson



Dark: The History of Richard Thompson ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc/Hannibal, 1993, prod. various). Linda's *Dreams Fly Away* ♪♪♪½ (Rykodisc/Hannibal, 1996, prod. various) is a 20-track overview of her career, from before Richard to her post-divorce work.

what to avoid: *Richard Thompson Live! (More or Less)* ♪♪½ (Island, 1977, prod. Joe Boyd) was originally paired with *I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight* as a double album—but didn't deserve to be.

the rest:
Henry the Human Fly ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972/Rykodisc-Hannibal, 1991)
(Guitar, Vocal) ♪♪½ (Island, 1976/Rykodisc-Hannibal, 1991)
Strict Tempo! ♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1981)
Hand of Kindness ♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1983/Rykodisc-Hannibal, 1991)
Small Town Romance ♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1984)
Across a Crowded Room ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1985)
Daring Adventures ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1986)
Amnesia ♪♪♪½ (Capitol, 1988)
Mirror Blue ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1994)
You? Me? Us? ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996)

worth searching for: Worth looking for is *Lonely Hearts* ♪♪♪♪ (Silver Rarities, 1995), a wonderful two-disc bootleg set that captures Richard and Linda's performances from 1981 and 1982, with a few Fairporters guesting on the latter.

solo outings:

Richard and Danny Thompson:
Industry (Hannibal/Carthage, 1997)

Richard and Linda Thompson:
Hokey Pokey ♪♪♪ (Hannibal, 1975/Rykodisc-Hannibal, 1991)
Pour down like Silver ♪♪♪½ (Hannibal, 1975/Rykodisc-Hannibal, 1991)
First Light ♪♪♪ (Carthage, 1978/Rykodisc, 1992)
Sunnyvista ♪♪♪ (Carthage, 1979/Rykodisc, 1992)

Linda Thompson:
One Clear Moment ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1978)

French, Frith, Kaiser, and Thompson:
Live, Love, Larf and Loaf ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1987)
Invisible Means ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1990)

influences:
◀◀ Wes Montgomery, Django Rheinhardt, Jimi Hendrix, Nick Drake, Van Morrison, Bob Dylan

▶▶ Dire Straits, Elvis Costello, Jeff Buckley, Womack & Womack

see also: *Fairport Convention*

Simon Glickman and Gary Graff

Rick Thum

Born October 6, 1953, in St. Louis, MO.

Hammered dulcimer recording artist Rick Thum won the 1994 Southern Regional Championship and placed third in 1995 in the Winfield National Championships. His musical career began with rock 'n' roll guitar and drums during his high school and college years, and those influences of rhythm and musical expression are clearly evident in his hammered dulcimer playing. While the hammered dulcimer is his main focus, selling, repairing, teaching, and playing musical instruments of all types has become his career. He currently performs solo or as part of Cabin Fever, a five-piece old-time string band

what's available: *A Reason to Dance* ♪♪♪ (RT Audio, 1997, prod. Rick Thum) is a fine example of five fine musicians gathered together in an exciting jam environment. Thum's energetic (but not overbearing) hammered dulcimer interacts superbly with Dan Levenson's banjo, Gary Hunt's guitar, and Marc Renard's fiddle, all supported by Vince Corkery's bass. The tune selection includes old and new alike, from "Forked Deer" to Chris Romaine's "Black Widow Romp," plus two original waltzes by Rick Thum titled "Front Porch Waltz" and "Morning's Waltz." The CD liner notes are well done with complete information about each tune. *Hammered Fiddle Tunes* ♪♪½ (RT Audio, 1994, prod. Rick Thum) is a short collection of well-known fiddle tunes from "Soldier's Joy" to "Flop Eared Mule" played with a great amount of energy and unique syncopated rhythms. One variation from the fiddle tune theme is a beautiful rendition of "The Meeting House," written by Rick Kuethe. Steve Craig (banjo) and Renee Poirier (hammered dulcimer) contribute on several tracks. These two recordings are available from the artist at RT Audio, 36 Villawood, St. Louis, Missouri 63119.

influences:
◀◀ Cathy Barton, Ken Kolodner, Dana Hamilton, Jim Hudson, Ed Hale

▶▶ Kendra Ward-Bence, Walt Michael

Heidi Cerrigione

Kathryn Tickell

Born June 8, 1967, in Wark, North Tyne Valley, Northumberland, England.

Kathryn Tickell has almost single-handedly brought the Northumbrian smallpipes to international fame, establishing herself as an outstanding folk musician along the way. Tickell's

technique on the bellows-blown pipes is only excelled by her general musicianship, allowing emotion to flow through the pipes as she plays. From hard-driving, almost rocking reels and hornpipes to evocative airs and waltzes, Tickell covers a broad spectrum of musical images when performing. She is not only an excellent piper, she has also distinguished herself as a fiddler, winning several awards in Open Competitions. Growing up in a family of musicians greatly influenced Tickell. Her father is a ballad singer, her mother is a concertina player, and both grandfathers were musicians as well. Folk music was always there for her, and her desire to learn was evidenced early in life. She began on piano at age six and started learning both the smallpipes and the fiddle by age nine. At 13 she was winning piping competitions and appearing at major festivals. A local radio station encouraged her to make her first recording while she was still in high school, which resulted in *On Kielder Side*, a brilliant first recording. That same year, Tickell was named official piper to the Lord Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Through the ensuing years, she has developed into a musical force to be reckoned with, having five more albums under her belt and a long list of self-authored tunes. She has also collaborated with numerous fine musicians, including Sting (she is on at least three of his albums), John Surman, and the Chieftains. She also works to encourage new folk musicians, both through personal appearances and through a charity she established to assist lower-income children in receiving music lessons.

what's available: Tickell's most recent release, *The Gathering* ♪♪♪♪ (Park, 1997, prod. Kathryn Tickell), showcases a mix of traditional and original music. Her own tunes are soulful, playful, and traditional in nature, while branching out rebelliously towards rock 'n' roll at times. This recording displays Tickell's mature understanding of music, her highly developed expert fingering and technique, and a fiery passion that is typical of her work. *On Kielder Side* ♪♪♪½ (Saydisc, 1984, prod. Keith Proud), Tickell's first album, features traditional music from Northumberland, Ireland, and Scotland, all brilliantly played when she was only a teenager. From the lively full-band sound on "The Peacock Followed the Hen," featuring pipes, fiddle, keyboards, and guitar, to the exciting smallpipe solo "Jean's Reel," Tickell shows her versatility and virtuosity. Other highlights include a moving Shetland tune "Da Slockit Light" and an uplifting air and hornpipe set, "Border Spirit/A.B. Hornpipe/Billy Pigg's Hornpipe."

worth searching for: Tickell's other four albums appear to be in limbo at the moment, having been retired by Black Crow in June 1997. They are all well worth hearing, especially her work with the Kathryn Tickell band (which includes guitar, bass guitar, and accordion) on *The Kathryn Tickell Band* (Black Crow, 1991) and *Signs* (Black Crow, 1993), which feature an energetic, contemporary sound.

influences:

◀◀ Alistair Anderson, Tom Anderson, Will Atkinson, Joe Hutton, Willy Taylor, Mike Tickell

▶▶ Chris Ormston, Billy Bragg, Pogues, Oyster Band

Jo Hughey Morrison

Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle

Steve Tilston born March 6, 1950, in Liverpool, England; Maggie Boyle born December 24, 1956, in Battersea, London, England. Began as a duo c. 1986.

The Guinness Who's Who of Folk Music describes Steve Tilston's guitar playing as having a classical sensibility; this quality helps distinguish him from England's many other fine guitarists. Tilston released his first album in 1971 and has been steadily growing as an artist ever since. He and his wife, Maggie Boyle, have performed with many of Britain's finest musicians, and were members of John Renbourn's group Ship of Fools. Boyle's Irish origins inform her vocal style, particularly its simplicity and warmth.

what to buy: *All under the Sun* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1996, prod. Steve Tilston, Maggie Boyle) benefits from Boyle's lovely vocals, but Tilston is also a compelling singer with an appealingly understated style.

the rest:

Of Moor and Mesa ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1992)

Silently the Snow Falls ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1989)

solo outings:

Steve Tilston:

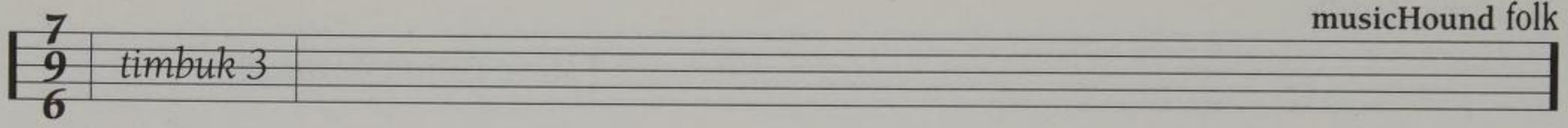
And So It Goes . . . ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1996)

influences:

◀◀ John Renbourn, Richard & Linda Thompson

▶▶ Fairport Convention, Chris Smither

Pamela Murray Winters



Timbuk 3

Formed 1978, in Madison, WI.

Pat MacDonald, vocals, guitar, harmonica, bass; Barbara Kooyman MacDonald, vocals, guitar, harmonica, violin, mandolin; Wally Ingram, drums (1991–present); Courtney Audain, bass (1991–present).

Ever since their bluesy anti-nuclear diatribe "The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades" was adopted as a yuppie-lifestyle anthem in 1986, this Austin, Texas-based husband-wife duo has been thwarted by the Randy Newman Principle: if you use tongue-in-cheek humor to get under the skin, you'll wind up going over the heads of most listeners. Their compelling blend of hypnotic rhythms, clever wordplay, stinging guitars and sweet-and-sour harmonies helped them score big on college radio with underdog-championing commentaries on homelessness ("Dirty Dirty Rice"), the religious right ("Prey"), jingoism ("National Holiday"), and shallow values ("Hairstyles and Attitudes"). Once relying on a beatbox for backing, Timbuk 3 expanded to a four-piece band on its last two albums. But lack of commercial success and personal strife led to the MacDonalds breaking up both their band and their marriage after 1995's *A Hundred Lovers*. Barbara continues performing on the Austin club scene; Pat has been collaborating with artists ranging from Brazilian singer Marina Lima to Cher and released his first solo album, *Pat MacDonald Sleeps with His Guitar*, in 1997 on Miles Copeland's new Ark 21 label.

what to buy: The MacDonalds' bluesy cynicism runs rampant through *Greetings from Timbuk 3* ♪♪♪½ (I.R.S., 1986, prod. Dennis Herring), the launch pad of such college favorites as "The Future's So Bright," "Life Is Hard," and "Just Another Movie." *Eden Alley* ♪♪♪½ (I.R.S., 1988, prod. Dennis Herring) broadens their musical base and expands their targets to include "Sample the Dog" (which predicted technology's chilling effect on education and the arts), the ska-flavored "Too Much Sex, Not Enough Affection" and a reggae-tinged hymn of devotion called "A Sinful Life." *Edge of Allegiance* ♪♪♪½ (I.R.S., 1989, prod. Denardo Coleman, Timbuk 3) boasts some of Pat MacDonald's darkest compositions, including "Standard White Jesus," "Daddy's down in the Mine," "B-Side of Life," and "Acid Rain."

what to buy next: *Espace Ornano* ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1993, prod. Timbuk 3) is a live band album recorded in France that mixes longtime favorites like "Tarzan Was a Bluesman" and "Reckless Driver" with the previously unreleased "Rage of Angels," "Throw Down Gun," and "Bleeding Heart."

what to avoid: *Looks like Dark to Me* ♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1994, prod. Timbuk 3), a stopgap EP with alternate versions of two songs found on *A Hundred Lovers*: a spooky rearrangement of "The Future's So Bright" and a bland cover of Steppenwolf's "Born to Be Wild."

the rest:
Big Shot in the Dark ♪♪♪ (I.R.S., 1991)
Field Guide: Some of the Best of Timbuk 3 ♪♪♪ (I.R.S., 1992)
A Hundred Lovers ♪♪♪ (Windham Hill, 1995)

worth searching for: *Just in Time for Christmas* ♪♪♪ (IRS, 1990, prod. various) includes Timbuk 3's bluesy diatribe against children's war toys, "All I Want for Christmas (Is World Peace)."

solo outings:
Pat MacDonald:
Pat MacDonald Sleeps with His Guitar ♪♪♪ (Ark 21, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Muddy Waters, Talking Heads, Leonard Cohen, Jim Kweskin Jug Band

▶▶ Lisa Loeb, Penelope Houston, Luscious Jackson

David Okamoto

Toast String Stretchers

See: Paul Brown

Touchstone

See: Nightnoise

Horace Trahan

Born June 12, 1976, in Lafayette, LA.

Horace Trahan is the Cajun traditionalist, a student both of Cajun music and Cajun culture. Perhaps the only Eddie LeJeune or Cory McCauley plays a more traditional style of Cajun accordion. Equally, he sings with great sincerity and authority. That is the stunning part, since Trahan is still in his early 20s! Trahan wasn't born until the third year of the Festival Acadian, which had only one performer under 40 in its first year. Like most of the kids of his generation he started out on guitar wanting to play rock 'n' roll. Once that had lost its romance he started playing country music. When he became interested in the accordion he went to his father for guidance. His father took him to visit his cousin Felix Richard, an accomplished Cajun accordionist who had taught Zachary

Richard. "Mr. Felix" tutored Trahan almost daily after school. It was not just music, but an appreciation for Cajun culture that the teacher imparted to the impressionable young man. Trahan was frustrated by his limited mastery of the Cajun language and made a pact with family and friends to speak only French with him so he could improve. It made him aware of how important the Cajun language is to Cajun music and how easy a thing it is to lose. He honed his musical skills on his own and by touring and recording with D.L. Menard and Kristi Guillory.

what to buy: *Ossun Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1996, prod. Terry Huval) is as good a Cajun record as has been made since *The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music*. While Trahan's accordion playing is truly something special (the best comparison may be Eddie LeJeune), his singing is his most impressive talent. Trahan has a true unaffected Cajun voice, there are no hints of rock 'n' roll or country in his style. He compares most favorably with a very young Dewey Balfa or Iry Lejeune in his full-throated style. He has picked a mix of classics from Nathan Abshire, Iry Lejeune, Dewey Balfa, and D.L. Menard and mixed in his own originals that fit into the style seamlessly.

what to buy next: *Reveille: The New Cajun Generation* ♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1994, prod. Terry Huval) is listed under Kristi Guillory and Bill Grass, but it features Trahan playing rhythm guitar and sharing the lead vocals with Kristi Guillory. Each member of this band was under 20 at the time of the recording, but the only way you'd know it is from the friskiness of their playing. Trahan's rich voice evokes the great traditional Cajun singers on traditional tunes like "T'en a Eu, T'en Auras Plus" and "L'Anse aux Pailles." His and Guillory's deep voices intertwine together on "Les Veuves de la Coulée" and "Les Flammes d'en Fer" a bit like Marc and Ann Savoy's duets.

worth searching for: *The American Fogies, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ray Alden), an anthology of American bands playing roots music, includes a track of Trahan playing Douglas Belair's "Les Barres de la Prison" with Mitch Reed of Tasso and the Mamou Praire Band.

influences:

◀◀ Nathan Abshire, Balfa Brothers, Iry Lejeune

▶▶ Tasso, Balfa Toujours

see also: *Kristi Guillory, D.L. Menard*

Jared Snyder

Trapezoid

Formed 1975, in Elkins, WV.

Paul Reisler, hammered dulcimer, guitar, electric guitar, guitar synthesizer (1975–present); Sam Rizzetta, hammer dulcimer, fretted dulcimer,(1975–80); Paul Yeaton, dulcetta, mandolin (1975–77); Pete Vigour, dulcimer, banjo, pennywhistle (1975–77); Ralph Gordon, bass, cello, bass dulcimer, vocals (1978–86); Tina Lisa Jones, vocals, banjo, concertina, mandolin, dulcimer (1977–80); Stuart Light, harmony vocals, fiddle, bass, dulcimer, guitar, pedal steel (1977–80; Lorraine Duisit, mandola, bowed psaltery, harp, guitar, vocals (1980–88); Freyda Epstein, violins, viola, vocals (1981–88); Michael Aharon, piano, cello, bass, synthesizer (1986–88); Cheryl Hurwitz, violin, electric violin, vocals (1988–91); Bob Read, saxophones, clarinet, flute, piano, synthesizers, percussion, vocals (1988–94); Tim Valdes, percussion, drums, mandolin (1988–91); Anne Louise White, keyboards, vocals (1988–90); Martha Sandefer, guitar, vocals (1990–present); Cecil Hooker, violin, vocals (1991–present).

Beginning in 1975 and starting with hammered dulcimer as a lead instrument, Trapezoid created a unique musical tapestry of southern folk music, mountain ballads, jazz, swing, and Irish songs. Their albums were an eclectic mix of Scott Joplin rags, bluegrass instrumentals, Mozart preludes, O'Carolan planxtys, songs by Si Kahn, Richard Fariña and Jay Unger, and original pieces by Lorraine Duisit and Paul Reisler. Trapezoid initially formed around hammered dulcimer players Sam Rizzetta and Reisler. Their first album focused on old-time tunes using the dulcimer—sometimes a dulcimer quartet—as the lead instrument. Rizzetta left after the first few albums, but Reisler persisted, enlisting classically trained musicians to form a group that evolved from a straight-ahead old-time band in the 1970s to—by the time of their last album in 1990—a New Age group complete with synths, reeds, keyboards, and percussion. Their eight albums chronicle the evolution of the group—from the decidedly traditional direction of *Trapezoid* to the innovative fusion of their most recent album of all Reisler originals, *Remembered Ways*. Their 20th anniversary collection, *Long Time down This Road* charts the long and somewhat twisted path that their music has followed. The music can be roughly divided into three eras: 1. the traditional from 1975–79 (*Trapezoid*, *Three Forks of Cheat*), 2. the fusion of the traditional with the contemporary from 1980–88 that featured the haunting vocals of Lorraine Duisit and Freyda Epstein (*Now and Then*, *Another Country*, *Cool of the Day*), and 3. the original contemporary acoustic music of the band from 1988 on that features the original songs and instrumentals of Reisler (*Moon Run*, *Remembered Ways*). It is music that exists in some new terri-

tory—outside the borders of pop, classical, folk, new age, or world music; but in a place where all these musics find they speak the same language. In addition to their own albums, they have been featured on recordings of many other artists, including Holly Near, Si Kahn, John McCutcheon, and Sally Rogers. Reisler continues to lead the group that includes Cecil Hooker on violin and vocals and Marta Sandefer on vocals, bass, and guitar and he writes almost all of the Trapezoid material. He also tours solo and has just completed an original instrumental album with former "Zoid" and Bruce Hornsby Band saxman Bob Read. Reisler also has numerous producer credits, including a number of John McCutcheon's albums. He's currently composing a children's symphony with Tom Paxton and an album of original songs with Charles John Quarto. Watch out for *Birth of a River* by Reisler and Read, an album of original instrumentals by these "Zoids." Read now plays in the Bruce Hornsby Band. Some of the group's albums may be hard to find, but all are available with the exception of *Trapezoid* (1975) from: Trapezoid, P.O. Box 38, Washington, Virginia 22747-0038 (zoid@pobox.com).

what to buy: *Long Time down This Road* ♪♪♪♪ (Azure, 1995, prod. Paul Reisler) is the band's retrospective recording, and includes cuts that span their 20-year history as well as containing four previously unreleased cuts. *Trapezoid: Another Country* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1981, prod. Trapezoid, Bill McElroy) featured Reisler's hammered dulcimer weaving heavily syncopated melodies. This version of the band was, in many peoples eyes, perhaps the best version of the band and they had a nice run in the 1980s playing a combination of traditional material and Duisit originals. While they perform spirited versions of traditional folk songs, "Wagoner's Lad" and "Little Billy Wilson," they show their flexibility on songs ranging from Al Jolson's "Back in Your Own Backyard" to Si Kahn's "Sailing Alone" and Richard Fariña's "Another Country" and "The Quiet Joys of Brotherhood." Duisit shows her songwriting skills with her original tunes including the African-like "Kora," based on Bai Konte's "Baa To Toto," "Indian Paintbrush," "Dragontree," and "Pt. Reyes." *Cool of the Day* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1985, prod. Paul Reisler, Russ Miller) was a bit more ambitious in terms of production and clearly signaled the new direction the group was taking, adding percussion, saxophone, synthesizer, and piano to the mix.

the rest:
Three Forks of Cheat ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978)
Now and Then ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1980)
(With Holly Near) *Watch Out!* ♪♪♪ (Redwood, 1989)
Moon Run ♪♪♪ (Narada, 1990)

worth searching for: *Trapezoid: Hammered Dulcimer String Band* ♪♪♪ (Skyline, 1975)was the original album and it's long out of print but worth searching out if only for the novelty of the four dulcimer combination. You may also find Trapezoid represented on several of the more popular Narada collections of new age material.

influences:
◀◀ Richard Fariña, Jean Ritchie, Turlough O'Carolan
▶▶ John McCutcheon, Sally Rogers, Lorraine Hammond

see also: *Sam Rizzetta, Tom Espinola & Lorraine Duisit*

Craig Harris and Neal Walters

Artie Traum

Born 1943, in New York City, NY.

Artie Traum was led by his older brother, Happy, into folk music and blues. But he's shown continually that he's no mere follower. A sought-after session guitarist, Traum accompanied such folk and rock performers as Judy Roderick, Jean Ritchie, and John Sebastian during the 1960s. Traum made his recording debut in 1964 with the True Endeavor Jug Band, a folk-ragtime band featuring Sam Charters and Danny Kalb. He later performed with the Danny Kalb Quartet, a blues-rock group that evolved into the Blues Project. In addition to performing with such short-lived bands as the Children of Paradise and Bear, Traum composed and recorded the score for a film, *Greetings*. He collaborated with his older brother on an instructional book, *Rock Guitar* during the early 1970s. After moving to Woodstock, New York, during the late 1960s, Traum joined his brother in an acoustic duo and in a folk supergroup, the Woodstock Mountain Revue. Although the two brothers continue to work together, Traum has maintained his own separate identity. In addition to producing albums for Priscilla Herdman and Livingston Taylor and co-hosting a National Public Radio show, *Bring It on Home*, for four years, he's released an impressive string of atmospheric, new age-meets-folk instrumental albums that showcase his musical skills.

what to buy: Traum's early solo albums hinted of his mastery of the acoustic guitar. But the world took notice when his all-instrumental recording, *Letters from Joubee* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1994, prod. Scott Petito), spent six weeks in the top position of the *Gavin Report*. Accompanied by such musicians as Tony Levin (bass), Cyndi Cashdollar (Dobro and electric lapsteel), and David Torn (electric guitar and guitar loops), Traum creates

an impressionistic sound-painting with his fluid and imaginative acoustic guitar melodies.

what to buy next: After two albums recorded with Nashville-based singer-songwriter Pat Alger, Traum launched his journey into instrumental music with *Cayenne: Spicy New Music for Acoustic Guitar* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986). His sensitive compositions and virtuoso guitar playing, backed by Woodstock musicians including Jay Unger, Lance Hoppen, Robbie Dupree, Johnny Average, Rick Derringer, Cyndi Cashdollar, and his brother, Happy, testify to the expressive strengths of acoustic music.

the rest:
Life on Earth ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1974)
From the Heart ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1980)
The View from Here ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Brownie McGhee, Pat Alger, Will Ackerman, Alex de Grassi
▶▶ Priscilla Herdman, Livingston Taylor

Craig Harris

Happy Traum /Happy & Artie Traum

Born 1939, in New York City, NY.

Happy and Artie Traum were one of the most influential folk duos of the late 1960s, inspiring Dylan and the Band with their rustic mixture of traditional folk music, bluegrass, ragtime, and acoustic blues. The oldest of the two Greenwich Village-raised brothers, Happy Traum made his recording debut on the 1963 album, *Broadsides*, recorded during a historic session at Folkways studios. In addition to songs by Phil Ochs, Pete Seeger, Peter LaFarge, and the Freedom Singers, the album featured several tracks by Bob Dylan, using the pseudonym "Blind Boy Grunt." In addition to performing the world premier of Dylan's song, "Blowin' in the Wind," with his band, the New World Singers, Traum sang a duet with Dylan on "I Will Not Go down under the Ground." Dylan repaid the debt by writing the liner notes for the New World Singers' self-titled debut album. Traum's knowledge of music theory and guitar playing has been expressed in a variety of mediums. He published the first of more than a dozen instructional books, *Fingerpicking Styles for Guitar,* in 1965 and served as editor of *Sing Out!* from 1967 to 1970. During the late 1960s, the Traum brothers moved to Woodstock, New York, and formed a duo. Their first two albums, 1970's *Happy and Artie Traum* and 1971's *Double Back*, were released by Capitol. Their third album, *Hard Times in the Country,* featured liner notes by poet Allen Ginsberg. Happy Traum continued to collaborate with a wide spectrum of influential musicians. In 1971 he played guitar, bass, banjo, and sang harmony on several tracks recorded for Dylan's album *Greatest Hits, Volume II*. The following year, the two brothers gathered musical friends from the Woodstock area, including Maria Muldaur, John Herald, Eric Kaz, Jim Rooney, and Bill Keith, and recorded an impromptu album, *Mud Acres—Music among Friends*, as the Woodstock Mountain Revue. They expanded the format to include Eric Andersen, Rory Block, John Sebastian, and Paul Butterfield for a follow-up recording, *More Music from Mud Acres*. Traum's solo albums have included an impressive debut, *Relax Your Mind* in 1985 and a 1988 collection, *Buckets of Songs*, that included tracks from his first two solo sessions during the 1970s. He has continued to periodically perform and record with his younger brother. They served as hosts of a "live performance" radio show broadcast for four years by National Public Radio. A two-CD set, released by Sony, includes performances from the show by Rick Danko, David Wilcox, Rory Block, and many others. Their most recent duo album, *Test of Time*, was released in 1994. With his wife Jane, Traum began Homespun Tapes in 1967. In the two decades since, the company has become the leading distributor of recorded music instruction taught by top-notch instrumentalists including Doc Watson, Richard Thompson, Béla Fleck, Tony Rice, Dan Crary, Russ Barenberg, and David Grisman.

what to buy: Happy and Artie Traum's first duo album in two decades, *The Test of Time* ♪♪♪♪½ (Roaring Stream, 1993, prod. Scott Petito, Artie Traum), picks up where they left off. Accompanied by fellow Woodstock musicians including Rick Danko, John Sebastian, Diane Ziegler, Béla Fleck, and Howard Levy, the Traums serve up a smorgasbord of musical influences. In addition to performing gutsy, acoustic, versions of Dylan's "It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry," Tom Waits's "The Heart of Saturday Night," and Rex Fowler's "The Road to Ba Vinai," the brothers show their distinct talents. Happy pays homage to his roots with a skillful rendition of Brownie McGhee's "Betty and Dupree" and a re-recording of "Mississippi John," his early-70s tribute to ragtime/blues guitarist Mississippi John Hurt. His younger brother's instrumental wizardry and songwriting is showcased by five original tunes including the title track, which he wrote with Nashville songwriter Pat Alger.

what to buy next: *Buckets of Rain* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1988, prod. Stefan Grossman, Happy Traum, Andy Robinson) samples the two solo albums that Traum recorded on the Kicking Mule label and reveals a true mastery of traditional folk music and

blues. Although none of the songs are originals, he injects his musical persona into tunes ranging from Charlie Patton's "Dark Road Blues" and Leadbelly's "When I Was a Cowboy" and "Relax Your Mind" to Woody Guthrie's "Gypsy Davey" and Bob Dylan's "Buckets of Rain." Arrangements remain sparse and intimate. In addition to five songs that he plays solo, Traum performs duets with mandolinist Alger ("Relax Your Mind"), cellist Judi Vogel ("American Stranger"), and vocalist Betty McDonald ("Delia's Gone").

the rest:
Happy Traum ♪♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1975)
Relax Your Mind ♪♪♪½ (Kicking Mule, 1976)
Bright Morning Stars ♪♪♪½ (Greenhays, 1980)

worth searching for: Traum's first recording, *Broadsides* (Folkways, 1963), remains a treasured artifact of early-1960s folk music. The two-CD set, *Bring It on Home* (Sony/Legacy, 1994), was recorded during the four years that the Traums hosted their National Public radio show. In addition to tracks by the brothers and friends, the collection includes performances by Maria Muldaur, John Herald, Rick Danko, John Hall, Amy and Leslie, Livingston Taylor, John Sebastian, Rory Block, and Jorma Kaukonen.

solo outings:
Happy and Artie Traum:
Happy and Artie Traum ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1970)
Doubleback ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1971)
Hard Times in the Country ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1975)

influences:
◀◀ Brownie McGhee, Bob Dylan, Jimmie Rodgers, Mississippi John Hurt

▶▶ Bob Dylan, the Band, the Eagles

see also: *Artie Traum, Woodstock Mountain Revue*

Craig Harris

Mary Travers

See: Peter, Paul & Mary

Merle Travis

Born November 29, 1917, in Rosewood, KY. Died October 20, 1983, in Tahlequah, OK.

Beginning his career shortly after World War II, guitarist Merle Travis wrote, recorded, and had covered some of the most enduring (and sometimes amusing) songs in the country collection, among them "Smoke, Smoke, Smoke That Cigarette," "So Round, So Firm, So Fully Packed," and "Dark as a Dungeon." His most memorable tune, "16 Tons," became a huge hit for Tennessee Ernie Ford and perhaps one of the biggest country standards of the century. That would be enough for anyone's resume, but Travis's ultimate claim to fame is his singular guitar fingerpicking style, known appropriately as "Travis picking," which he developed with a nod to Everly Brothers' pop Ike Everly and which has been used far and wide by folkies and rockers alike for the past 50 years.

what to buy: *Best of Merle Travis* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990, prod. James Austin) is a 20-year collection of prime Travis, featuring the above-mentioned gems in addition to other blatantly misogynist and totally memorable entries like "I Like My Chicken Fryin' Size," "Fat Gal," and "Divorce Me C.O.D."

what to buy next: *Folk Songs of the Hills* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1947/1996, prod. Lee Gillette) is the most worthwhile set of Travis songs he recorded during the late 1940s, including his popular blue-collar ode "I Am a Pilgrim" plus his own rendition of the Hall of Famer, "16 Tons."

the rest:
(With Joe Maphis) *Country Guitar Giants* ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1979)
Guitar Standards ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1980)
Light Singin' and Heavy Pickin' ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1980)
Travis Pickin' ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1981)
(With Mac Wiseman) *Clayton McMichen Story* ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1982)
(With Grandpa Jones) *Merle and Grandpa's Farm and Home* ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1985)
Rough, Rowdy, and Blue ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1986)
Merle Travis Story ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1989)
Guitar Rags and a Too Far Past ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1992)
Guitar Retrospective ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1995)
Walkin' the Strings ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Ike Everly

▶▶ Everly Brothers, Chet Atkins, Bob Dylan, David Bromberg

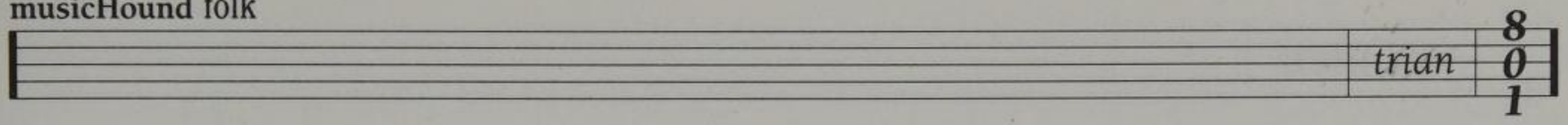
David Simons

Trian

Formed 1987, in Baltimore, MD.

Billy McComiskey (born in 1951, in Brooklyn, NY), button accordion, concertina; Daithi Sproule (born 1950, in Derry, Northern Ireland), guitar, vocals; Liz Carroll (born in 1956, in Chicago, IL), fiddle.

Trian easily ranks among the best traditional Irish groups in



America. Indeed, only top acts from abroad, like Altan, even come close to their superb musicianship. All of the members of Trian were renowned musicians before forming the group, and, as with many groups on the North American Irish music scene, they had played together in various formations for years before coming together as a touring ensemble. Raised in an exclusively Irish neighborhood, Billy McComiskey was exposed to the country's music very early in his life. He began to play accordion during the 1960s, influenced first by Bobby Gardiner and then by the great Sean McGlynn. In 1970 he came in second in the all-Ireland accordion championships, becoming the first American to place so highly. In 1975, having moved to Baltimore, he formed the Irish Tradition, in its day the most successful traditional Irish music group in the Baltimore/Washington area. After the Irish Tradition went their separate ways in the 1980s, McComiskey remained active in the traditional music scene. He reckons it was about 1987 when he formed Trian with Liz Carroll and Daithi Sproule. Carroll took up the fiddle when she was nine years old, and honed her technique in sessions with Chicago musicians like Johnny McGreevy, Joe Shannon, and Jimmy Keane. In 1974 she won the junior all-Ireland fiddle championship, and returned the following year to capture the senior title. She has been a member of some of the outstanding lineups of traditional Irish music in America, including the Green Fields of America and Cherish the Ladies. She is currently known not only as a member of Trian, but also as a solo fiddler and a composer of magnificent tunes. Daithi Sproule's early musical influences were mostly from American and British folk artists, people like Joan Baez and Bert Jansch. He combined this love of folk music with his strong interest in the Irish language when he formed the Irish-language singing group Skara Brae with Triona, Mairead, and Micheal Ó Domhnaill in the early 1970s. When Skara Brae broke up, Triona and Micheal Ó Domhnaill went on to found the Bothy Band, while Sproule went south to Dublin. During the late 1970s, Sproule immigrated to the United States, where he quickly became part of the nationwide Irish music community by joining forces with fiddler James Kelly and accordionist Paddy O'Brien. This trio appeared regularly and recorded two LPs, cementing Sproule's reputation as one of the foremost guitar accompanists and bilingual singers in the Irish music world. Sproule is currently a member of two of the top Irish traditional bands in existence, Trian and Altan, and is in heavy demand as an accompanist, arranger, and solo artist. The trio of McComiskey, Carroll, and Sproule did not immediately settle on the name Trian as a moniker for the band. They first used the name as the title of their 1991 debut album, which is credited to them under their individual names. In the next few years, as their reputation grew and demand for them increased, they settled on Trian as a name for the band.

what to buy: *Trian* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991, prod. Liz Carroll, Daithi Sproule, Billy McComiskey) is truly one of the landmark Irish CDs of the 1990s. Most of the album is made up of dance tunes played by all three musicians. In these trio arrangements, McComiskey's accordion and Carroll's fiddle weave in and out of one another effortlessly, sounding like one instrument, while Sproule's guitar keeps the rhythm with interesting and precise picking. Listen closely to McComiskey's accordion and you'll hear ornamentation you never would have thought possible from 10 fingers. Carroll's fiddle playing is equally impressive, and Sproule's guitar makes sure your feet keep tapping. In addition, McComiskey and Carroll each give us a few solo tunes to prove their mettle, and leave the listener in awe, if not in tears. Sproule's lovely, shrill singing voice treats four songs, two in Gaelic and two in English; of these, Peggy Seeger's "My Dearest Dear" stands out as the best.

what to buy next: *Trian II* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Billy McComiskey, Liz Carroll, Daithi Sproule), the unimaginatively named follow-up to *Trian*, is another brilliant recording featuring McComiskey and Carroll's tight melodic duets accompanied by Sproule's bright, quick guitar work. A bit less flashy and ferocious, more subtle and controlled, than its predecessor, it takes their collaborations a step further, featuring more original compositions and more challenging arrangements. Sproule's songs on this outing include his melodic setting of the old ballad "The Death of Queen Jane," which he had given to Micheal Ó Dhomhnaill in the early 1970s; Ó Dhomhnaill recorded it with the Bothy Band, but this is the first time Sproule himself did so.

solo outings:

Liz Carroll:

A Friend Indeed ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1978)

Liz Carroll ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988)

Billy McComiskey:

Makin' the Rounds ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1981)

Daithi Sproule:

A Heart Made of Glass ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993)

influences:

Skara Brae, Irish Tradition, Green Fields of America, Sean McGlynn, Johnny McGreevy, John Healy

Altan, Cherish the Ladies

see also: *Liz Carroll, Billy McComiskey*

Stephen Winick

Ed Trickett

See: Bok, Muir & Trickett

Trillium

See: Margaret MacArthur

Tony Trischka

Born January 16, 1949, in Syracuse, NY.

An innovative and influential banjo player, Tony Trischka was one of the first to play jazz on the five-string. In addition to working as a solo artist, he's played with Country Cooking, Breakfast Special, Skyline, the Big Dogs, and Psychograss, and is currently putting together the Tony Trischka Band. Trischka was Béla Fleck's first banjo instructor.

what to buy: *Dust on the Needle* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987), a collection of the best from Trischka's first six albums, documents his early experiments with jazz fusion.

what to buy next: Virtually a history of the banjo, *World Turning* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1993) traces the instrument's developments from its roots in Africa up though its most modern stylings.

the rest:
Banjoland ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1978)
Robot Plane Flys over Arkansas ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
Hill Country ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985)
(With Tom Adams and Tony Furtado) *Rounder Banjo Extravaganza* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1988)
(With Béla Fleck) *Solo Banjo Works* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1992)
(With Joe Ayers, Clarke Buehling, Bob Carlin, Rob Flesher, and Bob Winans) *Minstrel Banjo Style* (Rounder, 1994)
Glory Shone Around: A Christmas Carol ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995)

worth searching for: *Fiddle Tunes for Banjo* (Rounder, 1981) features some interesting picking with fellow banjoists Bill Keith and Béla Fleck.

influences:
◀◀ Bill Keith, Country Cooking
▶▶ Béla Fleck, Tony Furtado, Alison Brown

Douglas Fulmer

Trout Fishing in America

Formed 1979, in Houston, TX.

Ezra Idlet, guitar, vocals; Keith Grimwood, bass, vocals.

If you've never heard of Trout Fishing in America, here are the fundamental things to know, in order: (1) They're a kids' band. (2) They're not just a kids' band. Ezra Idlet and Keith Grimwood met when the Houston Symphony went on strike, forcing Grimwood out of a job. He joined the band St. Elmo's Fire, of which Idlet was a member, and the two were thrown together as the ones who drove the equipment truck. When St. Elmo's Fire burned out, Trout Fishing in America was born. The duo are best known as children's performers. Their three children's albums get frequent, and deserved, airplay on radio geared to children. Less known to their fans' parents are their adult-oriented albums, which contain the same smart wit and friendly energy found in the kids' fare.

what to buy: Kids of all ages will enjoy *Mine!* ♪♪♪♪ (Trout, 1994, prod. Carl Finch). A warning about this album: It contains a counting song called "18 Wheels on a Big Rig" that's sort of the preschool version of "99 Bottles of Beer." It's hopelessly addictive. Trout Fishing in America has helpfully given the phone number of the composer, Heywood Banks, in the liner notes (with the warning "Ask your parents first!"). My guess is that Banks has gotten lots of calls from addled parents in the past four years. For the other side of the band, try *Over the Limit* ♪♪♪♪ (Trout, 1992, prod. Carl Finch), an excellent pop album with bluesy touches. The standout track is "Dead Egyptian Blues," which feels like a collaboration between Louis Prima and Randy Newman.

the rest:
Big Trouble ♪♪♪ (Trout, 1991)
Who Are These People? ♪♪♪ (Trout, 1994)
Reel Life ♪♪♪ (Trout, 1996)
My World ♪♪♪½ (Trout, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Shel Silverstein, Everly Brothers, Randy Newman
▶▶ Electric Bonsai Band

Pamela Murray Winters

Susan Trump

Born January 13, 1951, in Columbus, OH.

Susan Trump grew up outside of Washington, D.C., before moving to New York, where she now resides. She spent summers at her grandparents' home in Brinkhaven, Ohio (population less than 100, including the dogs), and taught herself to play the guitar on their front porch swing. Music was important to her family as both parents played violin in the community orchestra. Saturday nights often were spent singing around the piano.

This background perhaps explains Trump's ability to link the pastoral, tranquil images of traditional rural America to our contemporary life. Her songs touch the heart, recall the past, and inspire the times ahead. Her sense of humor always adds a fresh touch to her performances, combined with her outstanding artistry on the guitar, banjo, fretless banjo, and mountain dulcimer. Trump is also a much sought-after instructor and performer whose work has included residencies at Kentucky Music Week in Louisville; Appalachian State University at Boone, North Carolina; Artpark, Sagamore Institute, and the Chautauqua Institution in New York; Pinewoods Folk Music Camp in Massachusetts; and festivals nationwide. She has won awards in both banjo and mountain-dulcimer competitions. Her interest in traditional folk culture was stimulated by leading youth groups to work with disabled miners in West Virginia. Since then she has conducted extensive studies of Appalachian life, arts, music, and instrument makers. Her love of Anglo-American music has taken her from the mountains of Southern Appalachia and the Adirondacks to the British Isles, where she has collected and performed traditional music. Trump also enjoys sharing her music with children. She has been associated with the New York Foundation for the Arts since 1986, and has been awarded several "Meet the Composer" grants for songwriting from the National Endowment for the Arts.

what to buy: *Tree of Life* ♪♪♪½ (Susan Trump Music, 1994, prod. Susan Trump) features several originals as well as covers of songs by Dolly Parton, Kate Wolf, Bill Staines, T.R. Ritchie, Ewan MacColl, Willie Nelson, and John Stewart. She has a clean fingerpicking guitar style that adds harmony and counter-melodies to vocals. She obviously views her instruments as singing partners and her arrangements reflect her careful approach. She "like(s) to sing poignant songs about people's lives, especially those with a rural flavor. The most important aspect of a song is the message. I want people to be moved by the songs I sing; have something to think about, and be inspired and hopeful about life." Trump is also responsible for a nice compilation, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Susan Trump Music, 1997, prod. Susan Trump), which features 19 of the country's best dulcimer players, including one cut by Trump.

what to buy next: *What the Hill People Say* ♪♪♪½ (Susan Trump Music, 1989, prod. Susan Trump), her first solo album, is still available and is also nicely done.

influences:

⏪ Jean Ritchie, Maddie MacNeil

⏩ Julie Davis, Gail Rundlett

Neal Walters

Ernest Tubb

Born Ernest Dale Tubb, February 9, 1914, in Crisp, TX. Died September 6, 1984.

Ernest Tubb quite simply defined the term "hard-core honky-tonk." With his paint-peeling voice, his willingness to help other aspiring entertainers, and his inescapable connection to the Jimmie Rodgers tradition, "E.T." cut a wide path across country music over his 50-year career. Tubb worked on radio in both San Antonio and Fort Worth during the mid-1930s and began his recording career with Bluebird in 1936. A visit with the widow of Jimmie Rodgers in 1935 was an important one for Tubb. Carrie Rodgers was so taken with E.T.'s devotion to her late husband's music that she helped secure a pair of recording dates with RCA for him. That year also brought him his first son, Justin, who would later have a successful career of his own in country music. Next came a move to Decca in 1940, but little excitement was generated by initial releases, until the recording of his best-known tune, "Walkin' the Floor over You." Tubb soon appeared in the film *Hollywood Barn Dance*, and made his way to Nashville in 1942 to appear on the Grand Ole Opry, earning three encores during his debut. Tubb's Texas Troubadours took the stage with him in 1943, by which time he was recording hit after hit. Soon thereafter came the debut of the *Midnight Jamboree*, the radio show that followed the Opry on WSM, and which originated from the recently opened Ernest Tubb Record Shop. Each year for the next decade there were at least two and, more often than not, several E.T. records in the Top 10, including duets with the Andrews Sisters and comic records with Decca labelmate Red Foley. Later collaborations with the Wilburn Brothers and Loretta Lynn also scored hits for Tubb. During the late 1950s Tubb was hitting the charts less frequently, and hitting the bottle more. The definitive Tubb biography, *Ernest Tubb: The Texas Troubadour*, by country music historian Ronnie Pugh, contains several lively stories of Tubb's exploits, including a celebrated incident during which he brandished a .357 magnum and fired several rounds, luckily in no one's particular direction, in the lobby at WSM's downtown Nashville studio. 1963's "Thanks a Lot" was Tubb's final entry in the Top 10, although he continued to tour and record over the next two decades. Former Texas Troubadours who went on to successful solo careers include Jack Greene and Cal Smith. Also worth noting is Tubb's "Singing Bus Driver" during the early 1960s, Johnny Wiggins, who is the father of Mercury artist Au-

drey Wiggins. Tubb helped Audrey make her debut on the Grand Ole Opry at 12 years old, a full four years before meeting the age requirement of 16. Along the way Tubb was an ally to countless artists either seeking their big break, or just a little advice. In 1984 he died in a Nashville hospital, his legend and his legacy by that time well documented and well preserved.

what to buy: For the most complete collection, the best bet is *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪♪ (1991, MCA, prod. Country Music Foundation).

what to buy next: *Ernest Tubb—The Last Sessions; All-Time Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪ (First Generation, 1997, prod. Pete Drake) is a two-CD set that collects the same material found on the Step One and Laserlight sets recorded during the late '70s, but with one major difference: it's ALL Ernest, no overdubs by "special guests." They're not the original versions, but they're not bad, considering they were done so late in his life.

the rest:

Greatest Hits ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1987) (cassette only)
Ernest Tubb and Friends: Collection ♪♪♪ (Step One, 1989)
The Legendary Ernest Tubb and Friends ♪♪½ (Laserlight, 1992)
Rainbow at Midnight ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
Soldier's Last Letter ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
It's Been So Long, Darling ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
Walking the Floor over You ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
Waltz across Texas ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
Retropsective, Volume I ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1994)
Retrospective, Volume II ♪♪♪½ (MCA Special Products, 1994)
Best of Ernest Tubb ♪♪½ (Curb, 1996)
Family Bible ♪♪♪½ (MCA Special Products, 1996)

worth searching for: The three collections *Let's Say Goodbye like We Said Hello* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1994), *The Yellow Rose of Texas* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1993), and *Walking the Floor over You* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family), with more than a dozen discs between them, are much more than anyone, save for completists and researchers, would ever need. But they do well at telling most of the Ernest Tubb story on record, for sure. For a peek into an important aspect of Tubb's career, that of traveling Troubadour, you'll need to be on the lookout for the recently deleted *Live 1965* ♪♪♪♪½ (1989, Rhino).

influences:

◀◀ Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Thompson

▶▶ Webb Pierce, Hank Snow

Stephen L. Betts

moses asch (1905–1986)

Moses Asch profoundly changed the way traditional music was viewed outside of ethnomusicology circles. Starting out installing recording equipment in radio stations, Asch later combined his passions for audio technology and exotic music to run a series of record labels. Asch Records, which began in 1939, was the home of influential recordings by Lead Belly, Josh White, Woody Guthrie, Burl Ives, and Pete Seeger, among many others. Asch's subsequent label, Folkways, started in 1948, and ultimately released nearly 2,200 recordings during his lifetime, including traditional American music, contemporary recordings, and a dazzling variety of ethnic recordings spanning the globe. Folkways also drew on Asch's vast collection of vintage 78 RPM records, many of which he stockpiled during the depression. In a policy counter to those of any other recording company, Asch always kept each of the company's catalog selections in print, even if it only sold a few dozen copies. Upon Asch's death, Folkways was inherited by the Smithsonian Institution where, under the leadership of Anthony Seeger, the label has been systematically reissuing the Folkways catalog on compact disc, augmenting the original releases (all of which remained available on cassette) with other recordings drawn from Asch's prodigious vaults and newly recorded selections.

Michael Parrish

Leslie Tucker

Born in VA.

Though she began playing guitar in bands around age 11, Leslie Tucker didn't pursue a music career vigorously until much later—after she'd spent 14 years being a homemaker and raising four children. She began writing and performing again after she became a single parent, and those experiences factor strongly into her music. Signed to banjo player's Alison Brown's eclectic Compass during the mid-'90s, she made an impressive critical splash with her debut, *In This Room*.

what's available: On *In This Room* ♪♪♪♪ (Compass, 1995, prod. Garry West), Tucker shows a gentle, accessible style of songwriting that's complemented by the warmth of her voice and the talents of players like mandolin player Mike Marshall, fiddler Stuart Duncan, and cellist John Catchings. Songs like "True Gentleman" and "KB's Garden" may be romantic, but they're not romanticized; Tucker's music, as singer/songwriter Pierce Pettis has said, has an honesty that "can't be made up—it has to be lived."

influences:

◀◀ Linda Ronstadt, Kate Wolf, Maura O'Connell, Clive Gregson & Christine Collister

▶▶ Judith Edelman

Brian Mansfield

Ian Tyson

Born Ian Dawson Tyson, September 25, 1932, in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Ian Tyson is an iconoclast in contemporary country music, one of the few artists still mining the fertile but now overlooked ground of Western music and culture. He's a much bigger star in his native Canada than in the United States, but his influence over the small but growing legion of Western music makers is undeniable. Tyson is a former rodeo rider who took up the guitar while hospitalized with an injury. He got caught up in Toronto's burgeoning folk music scene during the 1960s, where he met his first wife and singing partner Sylvia Fricker. Ian and Sylvia became one of Canada's most popular and best-selling folk acts, thanks to such signature songs as his "Four Strong Winds" and her "You Were on My Mind." Their success opened doors for fellow Canadians Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, and Neil Young, and they presaged the neo-traditionalism of the late 1980s and early 1990s with their group Great Speckled Bird, named for the Roy Acuff classic. They released a dozen albums together and hosted their own popular TV show in Canada before separating during the mid-1970s. Tyson returned to western Canada, where he took up ranching and started writing songs about the Western culture he soaked up as an avid reader of Will James's adventures and an admirer of nineteenth-century painter Charlie Russell. Tyson has cut his own swath in modern country and western, turning a grass roots following into a cottage industry.

what to buy: The album that established Tyson's unique voice was *Cowboyography* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1987, prod. Adrian Chornowol), sort of a manifesto for the modern cowboy. The final installment of a so-called "cowboy trilogy," this understated masterpiece put into words and music the honesty, the simplicity, the romanticism, and the magic that was and still is part of the West today.

what to buy next: *All the Good 'Uns* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1996, prod. various) isn't as complete a retrospective as it could be. There's nothing from the Ian and Sylvia days, and, perhaps for contractual reasons, the gems from his self-titled 1984 Columbia album aren't here either. But what is included on this 19-song collection of audience and artist favorites represents a formidable body of work in a style and voice that is unique among today's assembly-line country stars. With such songs as "M.C. Horses," "Navajo Rug," "Will James," and " 'Til the Circle Is Through" (with Suzy Bogguss), Tyson casts a sentimental eye to the past and a wary glance to the future of a dying culture.

the rest:

I Outgrew the Wagon ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1989)
And Stood There Amazed ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1991)
Old Corrals and Sagebrush (1983–84) ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1993)
18 Inches of Rain ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1994)

worth searching for: All of Tyson's solo catalog is available in Canada, including complete versions of *Old Corrals and Sagebrush* ♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1983, prod. Ian Tyson) and *Ian Tyson* ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1984, prod. Ian Tyson). Tyson's hard-core fans can trace the roots of his sound on two compilations of Ian and Sylvia songs, *Greatest Hits Volume I* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970, prod. various) and *Greatest Hits Volume II* ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1971, prod. various).

influences:

◀◀ Gene Autry, Roy Acuff, Marty Robbins

▶▶ Chris LeDoux, Michael Martin Murphey

see also: *Ian & Sylvia*

Doug Pullen

U

Uncle Bonsai

See: Electric Bonsai Band

Uncle Tupelo /Wilco /Son Volt

Formed 1987, in Belleville, IL.

Jeff Tweedy, vocals, guitar, bass; Jay Farrar, vocals, guitar, banjo, harmonica, mandolin; Mike Heidorn, drums (1987–92); Bill Belzer, drums (1992); Ken Coomer, drums (1992–94); John Stirratt, bass; Max Johnston, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, steel guitar (1993–94).

Like many important bands before them, Uncle Tupelo's reputation spread fastest after its breakup, and its influence far outdistanced the number of units sold—to the point where they are now seen by some as the Rosetta stone of the alternative/roots/country movement sometimes called No Depression after the title of the group's debut album (which itself was named for an A.P. Carter song). Rising from the factory- and farm-belt community of Belleville, Illinois (near St. Louis) during 1987, the band in its initial incarnation—Jeff Tweedy, Jay Farrar, and Mike Heidorn—drew equally on hardcore country and hardcore punk. Songwriting chores were split between Farrar, whose tunes are oblique and wistful, and Tweedy, who speaks more directly but is no less profound in describing the pair's favorite subject, small-town ennui. Heidorn left the band, and new members Ken Coomer, John Stirratt, and Max Johnston signed on. But just as the new lineup was gaining steam, Farrar left the band to form Son Volt, while Tweedy soldiered on with the rest of Tupelo, switching its name to Wilco. Son Volt, which also includes brothers Jim and Dave Boquist and original Tupelo drummer Heidorn, continues to survey Farrar's trademark brand of alt. country, switching back and forth between blistering rockers and bittersweet acoustic numbers. Wilco, which added guitarist Jay Bennett and cast off multi-instrumentalist Johnston after its first album, at first continued in the vein of pleasant, mid-tempo country rock, only to switch gears on their sprawling second album, which aspires to the range and gritty feel of the Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main Street*.

what to buy: *Anodyne* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sire/Reprise, 1993, prod. Brian Paulson) is Uncle Tupelo's swan song but also its finest hour. Alternating between yearning, hard-bitten country-folk ("Slate," "Anodyne") and careening rockers ("The Long Cut," "We've Been Had"), it epitomizes the sound, pacing, and texture of Tupelo's memorable live shows. The group's first two albums, *No Depression* ♪♪♪♪ (Rockville, 1990, prod. Paul Kolderie, Sean Slade) and *Still Feel Gone* ♪♪♪♪ (Rockville, 1991, prod. Paul Kolderie, Sean Slade), are of a piece, both of them raucous affairs featuring numerous anthems to booze and boredom.

what to buy next: *March 16–20, 1992* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rockville, 1992, prod. Peter Buck) is a fine acoustic effort featuring Buck's minimal production, and spotlighting dour white-gospel tunes and equally grim originals. Farrar wrote the music for Son Volt's debut during long, searching sojourns up and down the highways along the Mississippi River. *Trace* ♪♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1995, prod. Brian Paulson, Son Volt) reflects the countryside that inspired it. Though lyrically obtuse, Farrar's tunes hit home hard, particularly the hard-country/folk numbers "Windfall" and "Tear-Stained Eye," and the slashing rockers "Drown" and "Loose String." Wilco's second album, *Being There* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1996, prod. Jeff Tweedy) jettisons the friendly, mid-tempo country-rock of its debut for a more aggressive stance, clearly inspired by the Stones' *Exile*. The two-disc set, a series of sketches from the road and fevered noise-rock experiments, succeeds on guts and sheer ambition.

the rest:
(As Wilco) *A.M.* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1995)
Being There ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1996)
(As Son Volt) *Straightaways* ♪♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1997)

worth searching for: *The Long Cut + Five Live* ♪♪♪ (Sire/Reprise EP, 1993) offers the single from *Anodyne* plus a handful of live cuts featuring the full, five-piece Tupelo lineup.

influences:

- Gram Parsons, Neil Young, Black Flag, Merle Haggard, the Clash, Louvin Brothers
- Bottle Rockets, Blue Mountain, Old 97's, Honeydogs, Golden Smog

Daniel Durchholz

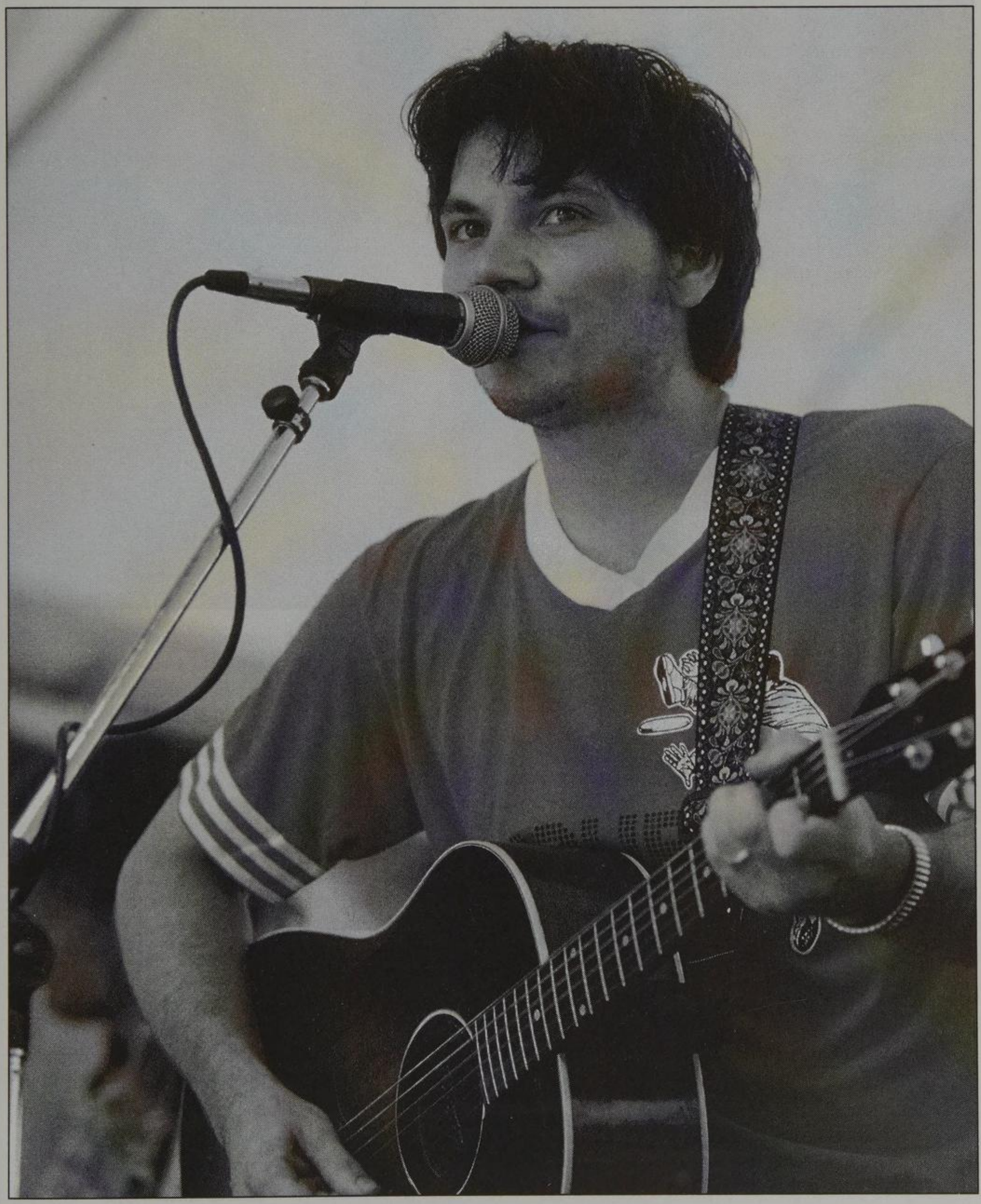
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Jay Ungar, fiddle; Molly Mason, guitar.

Fiddle player Jay Ungar has gained international acclaim with his composition "Ashokan Farewell," the haunting theme of his Grammy Award-winning soundtrack from the PBS documentary *The Civil War*. With his wife—guitarist Molly Mason—he performs both original and traditional instrumental music: their

Jeff Tweedy of Uncle Tupelo **(© Ken Settle)**

jay ungar & molly mason



jay ungar & molly mason

Jay Ungar (l) with Molly Mason **(© Stephen A. Ide)**

success on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion* has gained them a national audience. The duo's portfolio of soundtrack credits includes the PBS series *The Civil War, Baseball,* and *The West,* as well as the motion picture *Brother's Keeper.* Their latest CD, *The Lovers' Waltz*, features a diversity of composers from Stephen Foster to Fats Waller. For summer fun, Jay and Molly run the "Fiddle and Dance Workshop," at Ashokan (yes, that Ashokan) in upstate New York.

what to buy: Ungar describes *The Lover's Waltz* ♪♪♪♪½ (Angel, 1997, prod. Jay Ungar, Molly Mason) as a soundtrack to an imaginary movie where the couple meets at a dance, falls in love, gets cold feet—but then returns for a happy ending. Appropriately, the disc opens and closes with sheer pleasure, Ungar's original "The Lovers' Waltz" for violin and piano. The collection continues with the grace of a royal wedding, but punctuated with surprise visits from Fats Waller ("Honey on the Moon") and a few of his swing buddies ("It's All in Your Mind"). As expected, Ungar's compositions take the cake, but the circumspect nature of Mason's accompaniments attest to her musical poise and intuitiveness. Show stomper: the rowdy Klezmer nuptial, "Chosen Challe Mazeltau."

what to buy next: *Brother's Keeper* ♪♪♪♪½ (Angel, 1993, prod. Jay Ungar, Molly Mason) makes for a nifty introduction to Ungar and Mason's soundtrack artistry, from the motion picture by the same name. Featuring the duo's trademark fiddle, acoustic guitar, and other traditional accompaniments, this score makes a warm backdrop for work or pleasure. Says Garrison Keillor: "This (soundtrack) . . . absolutely stands on its own—I haven't seen the movie and I found the album deeply moving. Jay and Molly make music that is simple and overwhelming . . . they created a work that is an apotheosis of American traditional music, sweet and dark and brooding." Lake Wobegon still doesn't have a movie theater.

the rest:

Catskill Mountain Goosechase ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1978)
Civil War—Soundtrack ♪♪♪♪½ (Elektra/Nonesuch, 1990)

Songs of the Civil War ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1991)
(With David Levine) *Dance of a Child's Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Angel Records, 1993)
Civil War Classics ♪♪♪♪ (Fiddle and Dance Records, 1994)
The West ♪♪♪½ (Sony, 1996)

solo outings:

Jay Ungar and Lyn Hardy:
Catskill Mountain Goose Chase ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1992)

Fiddle Fever:
The Best of Fiddle Fever ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990)
Waltz of the Wind ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1992)

Thomas Hampson:
American Dreamer ♪♪♪ (Angel Records, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ Stephen Foster, Evan Stover, Russ Barenberg, Matt Glaser, Rory Dall O'Cathain, Dizzy Gillespie

▶▶ Fiddle Fever, Lyn Hardy, Thomas Hampson, David Levine, Priscilla Herdman, John Whelan, Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Art Wojtowicz

Union Springs

Formed 1992, in OH.

Dwight McCall, mandolin, vocals; Randy Pollard, banjo, vocals; Jon Weisberger, bass, vocals; Tim Strong, guitar (1994–present); Joe McGinnis, guitar (1992–94).

Dwight McCall, the son of Jim McCall, a former bluegrass sideman for a number of bands in the early days, takes the lead on most of the vocals for the group as well as plays mandolin. His voice is modern and, while not perfect, has enough power to drive many of their songs in the same way Don Rigsby can drive a Lonesome River Band song. A major force behind this band is their aptitude for writing, and, most important, singing great bluegrass songs.

what to buy: *Next Train Headed South* ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1995, prod. Chris Kelly, Union Springs) is a good set of driving bluegrass. There are a number of great original songs here, including the title cut written by mandolin player McCall. The Wendy Smith–penned "Carolyn the Teenage Queen" is also on this album. After the Lonesome River Band heard Union Springs do this song, they recorded it themselves for their *One Step Forward* CD and turned it into a Top 10 bluegrass hit.

what to buy next: *Help Me, Lord* ♪♪♪ (Vetco, 1994, prod. Union Springs) is an all-gospel CD that highlights the band's songwriting talents as well as their singing. There are also a few old songs on here from Jim and Jesse, Bill Monroe, Jimmy Martin, and Jim McCall. Jason Carter, from the Del McCoury Band, guests on the fiddle. One negative to this recording, and their other Vetco release, is poor production, which makes the band sound a bit thin.

the rest:
Ten Past Midnight ♪♪ (Vetco, 1992)

influences:

◀◀ J.D. Crowe & the New South, Ricky Skaggs, Jim McCall

▶▶ Lonesome River Band

Steve Gardner

Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Formed 1970, in MA. Disbanded 1985.

Joe Val (born Joseph Valiante, June 25, 1926, in Everett, MA; died June 13, 1985), mandolin, vocals; Herb Applin, guitar, vocals; Bob French, banjo, vocals; Bob Tidwell, bass. Later members included Dave Dillon, guitar, vocals; Paul Silvius, banjo, guitar, vocals; Eric Levenson, bass; Dave Haney, guitar, vocals; Roger Williams, Dobro; Karl Lauber, banjo, guitar; Jim Buchanan, fiddle; Herb Hooven, fiddle.

Though his Massachusetts upbringing was a far cry from the hills of Kentucky, Joe Val managed to convincingly yodel, moan the blues, and play mandolin as if he were a true Blue Grass Boy. Val began his professional career with the Radio Rangers, and soon discovered West Virginia transplants the Lilly Brothers and Don Stover playing bluegrass in Boston. Prior to joining the Charles River Valley Boys in 1963, he performed with future Blue Grass Boy Bill Keith and folklorist/record producer Jim Rooney at Club 47 in Cambridge. In 1970 Val formed the New England Blue Grass Boys, aided uniquely on high tenor vocals by Herb Applin. The group went through several personnel changes throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, playing their last show in December 1984. Six months later Val died of cancer.

what to buy: *One Morning in May* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996) is the group's 1971 debut, chock full of high tenor singing and expert playing. The CD version features several unissued tracks and is highlighted by a heart-stopping version of "Sparkling Brown Eyes."

guy van duser

what to buy next: *Diamond Joe* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1995) is basically a Joe Val retrospective, with several incarnations of the New England Blue Grass Boys providing solid support throughout. Five albums are well represented by an impressive 25 tracks.

the rest:
Live in Holland ♪♪♪♪ (Strictly Country, 1981)

influences:
◀◀ Charles River Valley Boys, Lilly Brothers
▶▶ Del McCoury Band

Stephen L. Betts

Guy Van Duser

Born July 9, 1948, in Rochester, NY.

The fingerstyle country melodies of Chet Atkins and Doc Watson inspired the acoustic guitar playing of Guy Van Duser, but the sophisticated lyrical style of jazz pianist Teddy Wilson and the chordal innovations of guitarist George Van Eps inspired him to adapt the six-stringed instrument to the swing jazz repertoire of the 1940s. A former touring and recording partner of folksinger Bill Staines, Van Duser has explored his mix of pre-World War II jazz and acoustic folk music in a duo that he shares with clarinet, saxophone, and pennywhistle player Billy Novick. On his own, Van Duser has composed soundtracks for numerous public broadcasting network programs including *Nova* and *The American Experience*, and for a series of language videos, *World of English*, produced by Disney. His soundtrack for the 1986 film, *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*, was nominated for an Academy award. In collaboration with dance choreographer Nikki Hu, Van Duser has performed many shows in schools under the banner of Young Audiences of Massachusetts.

what to buy: *American Finger-Style Guitar* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. Guy Van Duser) assembles mostly solo guitar tracks from Van Duser's earlier, out-of-print albums. With Novick occasionally flavoring the melodies on clarinet, soprano saxophone, and pennywhistle, Van Duser runs his fingers across his nylon-strung guitar in a celebration of the jazz and pop music of the early twentieth century. In addition to his lyrical interpretations of tunes by Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, Rodgers and Hart, and the Gershwins, the collection includes the inventive "Great Western Medley" and unique re-workings of "The Syncopated Clock" and "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

what to buy next: With the release of *Stride Guitar* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1981, prod. Guy Van Duser), Van Duser adopts the post-ragtime "stride" piano style to his guitar playing. Virtuoso instrumental renditions of Ellington, Waller, and Jerome Kern tunes are balanced by Van Duser's original piece, "Seneca Slide," and a good-humored version of the Disney classic song, "When I See an Elephant Fly," sung by Novick.

the rest:
(With Billy Novick) *Raisin' the Rent* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)
(With Billy Novick) *The New Pennywhistle Album* ♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1988)
(With Billy Novick) *Get Yourself a New Broom . . .* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
(With Billy Novick) *Exactly like Us* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1989)
(With Billy Novick) *Guy and Billy* ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1994)
(With Billy Novick) *Every Little Moment* ♪♪♪ (Daring, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Chet Atkins, Doc Watson, George Van Eps, Teddy Wilson
▶▶ Jeannie Stahl, Bill Staines

see also: *Billy Novick*

Craig Harris

Sally Van Meter

Born October 7, 1956, in Los Angeles, CA.

One of the few women instrumentalists in bluegrass to have recorded a solo album, California Dobroist Sally Van Meter started her career in 1977 when she joined the Good Ol' Persons, a San Francisco band that also included Laurie Lewis and Kathy Kallick. With a reputation for vibrant tone, dexterity, expressiveness, and creativity, Van Meter continues to play Dobro with the G.O.P. today, in addition to a busy solo career, and has contributed to four Good Ol' Persons albums. Her other recording credits include albums by Lewis, Kallick, Tony Furtado, Sugarbeat, Peter Rowan and the Rowan Brothers, Sarah Elizabeth Campbell, Blue Rose, and John Reischman. She made her solo recording debut in 1991, and in 1994 was one of 10 Dobro players featured on 1995's Grammy-winning *The Great Dobro Sessions*.

what to buy: *All in Good Time* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1991, prod. Jerry Douglas) shows Van Meter's versatility on the Dobro as she adeptly handles both up-tempo bluegrass ("Road to Columbus," "Crazy Creek") and more atmospheric tunes like "Annie's Waltz" and "Amor de Mi Vida." Three of the tracks also feature vocals, the best of which is a soulful duet on "Blues for Your Own." Guests include Douglas, Kallick, Furtado, and Scott Ny-

gaard. Notable are "Crazy Creek" and "Anne's Waltz," with Van Meter and Douglas trading Dobro licks.

what to buy next: *The Great Dobro Sessions* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. Jerry Douglas, Tut Taylor), which won the Grammy for "Best Bluegrass Recording" in 1995, presents 10 of the country's leading resophonic guitarists; Van Meter is featured on two cuts. *Blue Rose* ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988, prod, Cathy Fink), a one-shot album by a folk/bluegrass all-star band of the same name, features Van Meter, Lewis, Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer, and Molly Mason.

influences:

◀◀ Josh Graves, Mike Auldridge, Jerry Douglas

▶▶ Rob Ickes, Kathy Barwick, New Grass Revival, Kathy Kallick

see also: *Good Ol' Persons*

Jon Hartley Fox and Douglas Fulmer

Dave Van Ronk

Born June 30, 1936, in Brooklyn, NY.

Dave Van Ronk was one of the leading figures in the early 1960s folk-music revival centered in Greenwich Village. Performing alongside Bob Dylan, Odetta, and Phil Ochs, he was known for his growling vocals and unmatched repertoire of obscure blues, folk, and jug-band tunes. In the early 1960s he recorded several classic albums for Prestige and Folkways. While recording sporadically over the next several decades for a series of small labels, Van Ronk has continued to perform at small clubs and festivals. A big bear of a man sporting a gravel voice tinged with honey, he can sing the most wretched blues and "Teddy Bears' Picnic" with equal conviction. It's easy to imagine him singing drinking songs hour after hour with a group of Dutch sailors just arrived in port. Hunched over his guitar with a shock of greasy hair falling in his face, he exhibits a complete commitment to his music. His acoustic guitar playing is heavily influenced by Piedmont-area pickers like the Rev. Gary Davis and Brownie McGhee.

what to buy: *Inside Dave Van Ronk* ♪♪♪♪½ (Fantasy, 1989) combines two separate releases recorded in April, 1962. The first, comprising 13 selections, was originally titled *Folksinger* ♪♪♪♪½ (1962) and is Van Ronk's crowning achievement. Passionate singing and instrumental mastery distinguish these songs, which sound like they're forcing their way out to be heard. The fearsome visions of "Samson and Delilah" start things off with a wallop, while "Motherless Children" looks unblinkingly at absolute despair and loneliness. On each song, Van Ronk's guitar work, whether intricate or spare, reinforces the mood and propels the story. The second half is the original release of *Inside Dave Van Ronk* ♪♪♪♪ (1962), and it's a different kettle of fish—a pleasant album of British- and Appalachian-style folk songs with Van Ronk on 12-string guitar, autoharp, and dulcimer. *From . . . Another Time and Place* ♪♪♪♪ (Alcazar, 1995) is an excellent set of acoustic blues and folk songs, with Van Ronk covering old favorites of his like "Lovin' Spoonful," the Reverend Gary Davis's humorous look at sex, and Carr & Blackwell's "Down South Blues." Several original compositions, including the gorgeous "Honey Hair," first recorded three decades ago, add a gentler, folk-music element. His Southeast-style finger picking is as good as ever. Van Ronk has made his career by playing other people's music. In a well-deserved tribute to himself, *Going back to Brooklyn* ♪♪♪♪ (Gazell, 1991), he recorded 14 of his own compositions accompanied only by his guitar. Included are the anti-war diatribe "Luang Prabang," a hilarious song made up entirely of the names of New Jersey cities, and his terrific, after-hours "Last Call," with the great line: "If I'd been drunk when I was born, I'd be ignorant of sorrow."

what to buy next: *The Folkways Years: 1959–61* ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991) is a compilation of Van Ronk's Folkways recordings at the height of the "folk revival." It includes great story-songs like "Duncan and Brady" and "Gambler's Blues," classic rag-style guitar picking on "Hesitation Blues," and the spare emotion of "Please See That My Grave Is Kept Clean." *A Chrestomathy* ♪♪♪½ (Gazell, 1992) is the only Van Ronk retrospective covering his entire career and wisely includes five cuts from *Folksinger*. Other songs showcase him with various groups, including the Red Onion Jazz Band, the Hudson Dusters, and the Ragtime Jug Stompers. As might be expected, the stylistic range is enormous—from the novelty pop of "Alley Oop" and "My Little Grass Shack" to the heartfelt tribute of "John Hurt." *Hummin' to Myself* ♪♪♪½ (Gazell, 1990, prod. Sam Charters) offers a charming set of jazz standards on which Van Ronk is backed by an excellent combo, including John Pizzarelli on guitar and Harry Allen on tenor sax. He sounds perfectly at home swinging his way through "Making Whoopie," "Jack You're Dead," and Hoagy Carmichael's classic "Hong Kong Blues."

the rest:

Let No One Deceive You ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1990)
Peter and the Wolf ♪♪♪ (Alacazam, 1990)
To All My Friends in Far-Flung Places ♪♪♪ (Gazell, 1994)

worth searching for: *Sunday Street* ♪♪♪½ (Philo, 1976, prod. Dave Van Ronk) and *Songs for Aging Children* ♪♪♪ (Cadet,

8
1
2 *townes van zandt*

1973, prod. Michael Brovsky) are out-of-print vinyl releases from the 1970s that reveal Van Ronk's varied interests. *Sunday Street* is all acoustic, a collection of blues, rags, and jive, while *Songs for Aging Children* mixes blues, rock, and Brecht. Several of the songs show up on *A Chrestomathy*, but it's worth having both entire sessions.

influences:

⏪ Rev. Gary Davis, Brownie McGhee, Mississippi John Hurt

⏩ David Bromberg, Bob Dylan

David Feld

Townes Van Zandt

Born March 7, 1944, in Fort Worth, TX. Died January 1, 1997, in Smyrna, TN.

Born into a wealthy and prestigious Texas oil family, Townes Van Zandt found his life's work to be a far more spiritual calling. Bent on hard living and heavy drinking, he aged quickly and died early of a heart attack at age 52, but not before leaving behind an indelible legacy of American music. "Townes Van Zandt is the best songwriter in the world, and I'd stand on Bob Dylan's coffee table in my cowboy boots and say that," declared Steve Earle in an oft-repeated quote. And while Van Zandt's notoriety never approached Dylan's household-name status, it's worth noting that Dylan and Willie Nelson once dueted on Van Zandt's classic "Pancho & Lefty" on a prime-time network TV special. (Nelson and Merle Haggard took the same song to the top of the country charts in 1983.) While Van Zandt racked up a remarkable catalog of cuts covered by other artists (more than 100 versions of his songs have been recorded by everyone from Hoyt Axton to the Walkabouts), his own recordings are a wellspring of considerable musical magic in their own right. A master lyricist considered by many to be one of the finest poets of his generation, Van Zandt also possessed a gift for darkly beautiful, often melancholy melodies, as well as a plaintive and personable voice, though his singing grew increasingly rougher and deeper in his later years.

what to buy: *The Late Great Townes Van Zandt* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1973/Rhino, 1994, prod. Jack Clement) was in fact recorded a good quarter-century before his demise and caught Van Zandt at the peak of his artistic instincts. It contains his two best-known tunes, "Pancho & Lefty" and "If I Needed You" (a country smash duet for Emmylou Harris and Don Williams), as well as several other unforgettable songs. *Live at the Old Quarter, Houston, Texas* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Tomato, 1977, prod. Earl Willis) was recorded during July 1973, completely solo acoustic, and is a *de facto* overview of his oeuvre to that date, with 27 songs on the original vinyl (though eight are missing on the CD reissue).

what to buy next: *Rear View Mirror* ♪♪♪♪ (Sundown, 1993, prod. Townes Van Zandt) is a 17-song live recording from 1979 that covers some of the same ground as *Old Quarter* but in a slightly more augmented acoustic trio format. *At My Window* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987, prod. Jack Clement, Jim Rooney) showed that Van Zandt remained one of country-folk's finest songwriters a good 15 years past his supposed prime, introducing such classics as "Buckskin Stallion Blues" and "Still Lookin' for You." Whereas *At My Window* benefited from the wisdom of Van Zandt's years, his earliest efforts are equally marvelous for their youthful wonder: *For the Sake of the Song* ♪♪♪½ (Poppy, 1968), *Our Mother the Mountain* ♪♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1969/Rhino, 1994, prod. Kevin Eggers, Jack Clement, Jim Malloy), and *Townes Van Zandt* ♪♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1970/Rhino, 1994, prod. Kevin Eggers, Jim Malloy).

what to avoid: *Live and Obscure* ♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987) doesn't have the coherence or quality of material that Van Zandt's other live recordings possess. *Roadsongs* ♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994), 15 covers of songs by artists ranging from Lightnin' Hopkins to Bruce Springsteen, is of interest to devoted fans but doesn't play to Van Zandt's obvious strengths, and the performances are spotty.

the rest:

Delta Momma Blues ♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1971/Rhino, 1994)
High, Low, and in Between ♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1972/Rhino, 1994)
Flyin' Shoes ♪♪♪½ (Tomato, 1978)
The Nashville Sessions ♪♪½ (Tomato, 1993)
No Deeper Blue ♪♪½ (Sugar Hill 1994)
The Highway Kind ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1997)

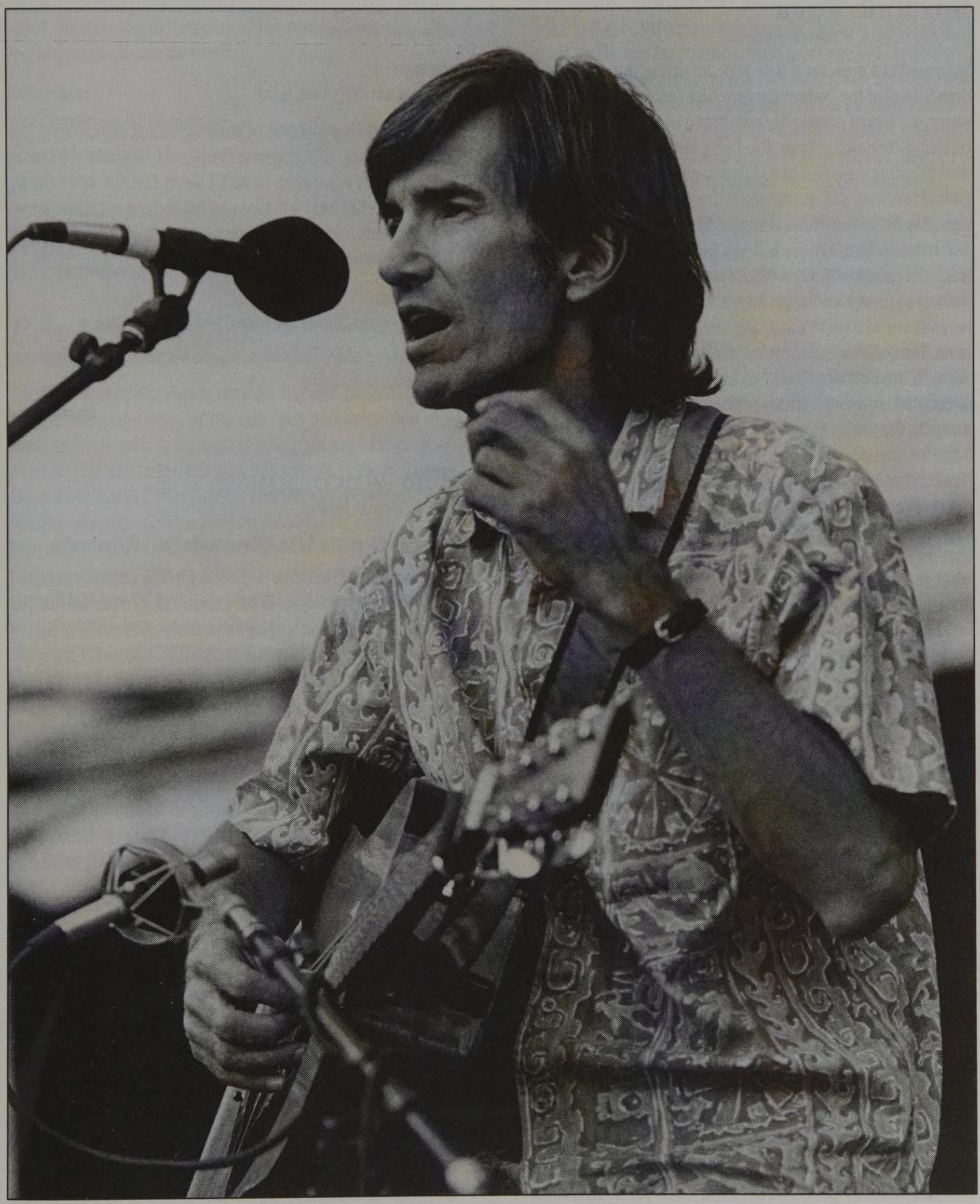
influences:

⏪ Lightnin' Hopkins, Bob Dylan, Hank Williams, Elvis Presley, Woody Guthrie, Mickey Newbury

⏩ Guy Clark, Steve Earle, Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Butch Hancock, Steve Young, Rodney Crowell, Richard Dobson, Jerry Jeff Walker, Peter Rowan, Nanci Griffith, Lyle Lovett, Emmylou Harris, Garth Brooks, Hal Ketchum, Jonell Mosser, Alejandro Escovedo, Will T. Massey, Son Volt, Walkabouts, Paul K., Tindersticks, Mudhoney

Peter Blackstock

Townes Van Zandt **(© Jack Vartoogian)**



Suzanne Vega

Born July 11, 1959, in Santa Monica, CA.

Suzanne Vega grew up in New York, attending the prestigious High School of the Performing Arts. She continued at Barnard, where she began playing her own brand of folk songs at small clubs in Greenwich Village. Her light, whispery voice blended with haunting melodies and vivid imagery, building an underground following and, eventually, a larger audience. In 1984 she signed to A&M Records, and since then her career has evolved dramatically. Like Tom Waits, Vega began with sparse coffeehouse folk and has firmly moved forward into new territory. Her 1985 debut revealed insightful lyrics, acoustic guitar playing reminiscent of Joni Mitchell, and the solitary feel of her folk roots. Three albums later, her musical influences have provided her with the skill of successful risk-taking, with expanded instrumentation, more intricate melodies, and even a collaboration with the dance group DNA. While this growth may not be fattening anybody's pockets, her influence as a creative force is incalculable. Her 1987 hit "Luka" helped female performers gain the recognition they long deserved, paving the way for artists such as Tracy Chapman, 10,000 Maniacs, and Sarah McLachlan.

what to buy: Her debut, *Suzanne Vega* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1985, prod. Steve Addabbo, Lenny Kaye) is still her most consistently moving work. This folky album opens with the lyrically wonderful "Cracking," a depiction of someone who is often on the edge of breaking down. The sparse "Straight Lines," the poppy "Marlene on the Wall," and the dark fable "Queen and the Soldier" make this album a complete gem.

what to buy next: *Nine Objects of Desire* ♪♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1996) continues the sonic experiments Vega began with her 1992 album, *99.9 Degrees*, using driving, urban-style drum sounds, strong electric guitars, and keyboards atop the poetic images that are her trademark. More than ever before, she uses eclectic layering of backing vocals, experimental beats, and exotic melodies as a vehicle to emphasize and complement the incredible images that her songs evoke. *Days of Open Hand* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1990, prod. Anton Sanko, Suzanne Vega) is another of her most ambitious albums. Here Vega successfully makes the jump from accomplished folkster to extraordinary musical artist, flaunting a string arrangement from Philip Glass, heavy use of a Hammond organ and synthesizers for ambient effect, and the eclectic rhythms of drums from around the world. *Solitude Standing* ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1987, prod. Steve Addabbo, Lenny Kaye) contains her two biggest hits, "Luka" and "Tom's Diner." The latter actually gained its notoriety three years later, when the DNA took Vega's vocal and added a strong techno beat and a few sound loops.

the rest:
99.9 Degrees ♪♪♪ (A&M, 1992)

worth searching for: One of Vega's greatest attributes is her stage presence, which is never really displayed in her studio work. On the Australian import *Live in London* ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1986) we get to hear her sense of humor and excellent storytelling talents, as well as wonderful versions of "Left of Center," "Neighborhood Girls," and other songs.

influences:
◀◀ Tom Waits, Rickie Lee Jones, Joni Mitchell, DNA

▶▶ Shawn Colvin, Tori Amos, 10,000 Maniacs, Tracy Chapman, Sarah McLachlan

Joshua Zarov

The Voice Squad

Formed 1987, in Ireland.

Fran McPhail, vocals; Gerry Cullen, vocals; Phil Callery, vocals.

Unaccompanied harmony singing in the folk tradition got a big boost with the recordings of the Copper Family from Sussex. The Voice Squad's style of singing in harmony does not form part of the Irish singing tradition but McPhail, Cullen, and Callery, already well known in the field of Irish traditional song, have built upon the basic elements of this style to develop a powerful and highly distinctive approach to their own native tradition. Their style and repertoire is nourished by deeper and older wellsprings, especially by the great song traditions of Northern Ireland. The tenor voices of McPhail and Callery contrast with Cullen's bass drone to make the trio one of the most popular and distinctive unaccompanied singing groups performing today.

what to buy: *Good People All* ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie, 1993, prod. Dan Fitzgerald) is filled with harmony, intensity, and passion. It should appeal to anyone who appreciates fine, robust, and sincere singing, and it goes down particularly well with a tankard of good ale. This is certainly not Rita Keane, Paddy Tunny, or Frank Harte, but then it's not the Clancy Brothers either.

what to buy next: *Many the Foolish Youth* ♪♪♪ (Tara Records, 1995, prod. Dan Fitzgerald) was the group's first album, originally issued in 1987, but re-released in the wake of the popularity of *Good People All*. Perhaps they weren't ready for close-harmony Irish singing in 1987? In any case, this stands on its own merit and perhaps proves that what one traditional Irish

singer can do well, maybe three can do better. Of course, you won't convince the purists of that, but perhaps you should listen and make up your own mind.

influences:

⏪ Copper Family, Watersons

⏩ Black Family

Neal Walters

Volo Bogtrotters

See: Lynn "Chirps" Smith

Eric Von Schmidt

Born 1931, in CT.

The "folk scare" that swept through Harvard Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the late '50s and early '60s took place as much in the living room of folksinger, acoustic guitarist, painter, and illustrator Eric Von Schmidt as it did in coffeehouses like Tulla's Coffee Grinder and Club 47. When he wasn't hosting late-night parties and jam sessions, he was attracting attention for his Leadbelly-style vocals and his rewritten folk songs, including "Wasn't That a Mighty Storm" and "Joshua Gone Barbados." Dylan recorded "Baby, Let Me Follow You Down" on his first album, mentioning Von Schmidt as the source of the song. The tune's title was also used as the title of Von Schmidt and Jim Rooney's photo-laden chronicle of the Cambridge folk years, published in 1979 and reissued by the University of Massachusetts Press in 1994. The son and grandson of painters, Von Schmidt was inspired by a radio appearance by Leadbelly that he heard in the 1940s. Teaching himself to play acoustic guitar, he fell in with a group of similar-minded musicians and made many trips to play in a tavern in New York. Two years spent in the Army proved pivotal. Stationed in Washington, D.C., Von Schmidt spent hours in the folk song archive of the Library of Congress searching for songs. By the time he moved to Cambridge, following a year in Italy studying art on a Fullbright scholarship, he had a large repertoire of folk and blues tunes. The Cambridge folk scene was initially relaxed and strictly amateur. By 1958, however, things had changed. With Joan Baez' early success, Harvard Square became a mecca for aspiring singer-songwriters, including Tom Rush and Jackie Washington, and Von Schmidt became one of its most influential performers. The scene was still going strong in 1970, when Von Schmidt left Cambridge. Moving to Florida for an unsuccessful second marriage, and, then, to Henniker, New Hampshire, he continued to record for a variety of labels. After an album he recorded with the Cruel Family was released but not listed in the record company catalog by Philo, he retreated from music and turned his attention to his paintings and illustrations. While his performances remain rare treats, Von Schmidt, who currently lives and works in his father's old painting studio in Westport, Connecticut, has recently ventured out more and more as a musician. His first album in 15 years was released in 1995 and included a re-recording of "Joshua Gone Barbados."

what to buy: Von Schmidt's first album in nearly two decades, *Baby, Let Me Lay It on You* ♪♪♪♪ (Gazell, 1995, prod. Sam Charters, Eric Von Schmidt) retains the earthy potency of his early recordings. In addition to showcasing his talents as a songwriter with 15 original songs, including a re-recording of "Joshua Gone Barbados," Von Schmidt pays tribute to his roots with a faithful rendition of Leadbelly's "De Kalb Blues." The title track is a reworking of the song (written by Von Schmidt with Dave Van Ronk and Reverend Gary Davis) that Dylan renamed and popularized as "Baby, Let Me Follow You Down." With Von Schmidt's vocals, guitar, harmonica, and kazoo joined by Charters on jug and tambourine, Paul Geremia on slide guitar and harmonica, Gideon Freudman on cello, and his partner Linda Clifford on guitar and harmony vocals, the album revives the jovial spirit and ragtime-jug band sounds of an earlier era.

what to buy next: With Von Schmidt's beatnik-like original songs, including "Turtle Beach" and "If I Had Good a Dog (The Male Chauvinist Possum Song)," set to folk-rooted arrangements featuring Geoff and Maria Muldaur, Amos Garrett, Ben Keith, and Paul Butterfield, *Second Right Third Row* ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1972, prod. Michael Cuscuna, James K. Rooney) is a classic of early-70s folk music.

the rest:

Folk Blues ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1964)
Eric Von Schmidt Sings ♪♪½ (Folkways, 1965)
Who Knocked the Brains out of the Sky? ♪♪½ (Smash/Mercury, 1970)
The Cruel Family ♪♪½ (Philo, 1977)

worth searching for: The multi-artist collection *Blues with a Feeling, Part Two* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1997, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin) includes a live recording of Von Schmidt performing his original tune, "Grizzly Bear," at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival.

influences:

⏪ Leadbelly, John & Alan Lomax

⏩ Bob Dylan, Maria Muldaur, Tom Rush, Jim Kweskin, Joan Baez

Craig Harris

Jane Voss /Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne

Born April 20, 1948, in Toledo, OH.

Jane Voss, guitar, vocals; Hoyle Osborne, piano.

Dubbed "an American Piaf" by Venezuelan singer Ana Gilda Leon, folksinging chanteuse Jane Voss grew up in the heart of the Midwest, soaking up the sounds of the vaudeville and country 78's from her father and grandfather's record collections. In her teens, she developed an excited interest in folk music, along with a love for R & B and early rock 'n' roll, quickly making the connection between folk balladry and the songs of Chuck Berry (for example) in their way of telling stories in song. Voss's performing career began in the coffeehouses and bars of San Francisco during the early 1970s, where she made the songs of the original Carter Family her specialty. She soon took to the road, becoming a familiar presence at coffeehouses and folk festivals on both coasts. Voss was among the first participants in Women's Music workshops at festivals, and was known for her strongly feminist stance, both in her originals and her choice of traditional songs. Her feminist anthem, "Standing behind Some Man," has appeared in publications ranging from church hymnals to feminist songbooks. Other songs by Voss have been recorded by Kate Brislin and Jody Stecher, and by Dave Van Ronk. Voss's first album, *An Album of Songs*, reflects the early years of her career, and features mostly old-time country songs from the Carter Family mixed with traditional-sounding originals. In 1976 Voss joined forces with pianist Hoyle Osborne and began a new musical direction in which popular and traditional jazz forms dominate the repertoire. The duo have released four albums, including the award-winning *Get to the Heart*.

what's available: *Sparkle and Shine* ♪♪♪ (Front Hall, 1990, prod. Jane Voss, Hoyle Osborne), the duo's most recent album, is built around five Voss compositions, including the dramatic title song, the poignant "To All My Friends in Far-Flung Places," and the witty, soul-tinged "I'm in Debt." *Get to the Heart* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1981, prod. Jane Voss, Hoyle Osborne), which won a Record of the Year Award from *Stereo Review,* contains some more Voss gems: the bittersweet "Still My Thoughts Go Back to You" (Kate Brislin and Jody Stecher recorded a wonderful version of this song on their album *Blue Lightning*), and the brassy "Gateway Blues," inspired by the blues belting of Bessie Smith. *Pullin' Through* ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1983, prod. Jane Voss, Hoyle Osborne) also features several Voss originals, mixed with traditional jazz and blues material from Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith.

worth searching for: *An Album of Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Bay LP, 1976, prod. Jane Voss, Mike Cogan) is, hands down, among the finest albums ever made by an interpreter of old-time country songs. It will be hard to find, being unfortunately long out of print, but it's worth the search: Voss does masterly versions of her classic originals, including "Standing behind Some Man" (probably her most well-known song) and "Keep in Mind." These compositions sound so much like older works that they meld seamlessly with emotionally charged renditions of obscure Carter Family and Molly O'Day material.

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Molly O'Day, Kitty Wells, Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, Ida Cox

▶▶ Kate Brislin & Jody Stecher, Iris DeMent, Rosalie Sorrels

Suzy Rothfield Thompson

Stephen Wade

Born 1953, in Chicago, IL.

Stephen Wade grew up listening to many of "the wonderful traditional musicians who had migrated north to the city from both the Mississippi Delta and the Southern Appalachians." Though his family wasn't particularly musical ("my grandmother played pump organ, but I never knew her"), his parents were very supportive. "My mother was a writer, a very literary person, and my father always encouraged me to be a full-time player. I never had to run away to become a musician." Wade began playing guitar at 11, drawn to the urban, down-home blues around his hometown. By his early teens, he had acquired a banjo and made his way to the Old Town School of Folk Music where, in 1971, he met and began an apprenticeship with his longtime mentor, Fleming Brown. Brown had a profound influence on the young Wade, instrumentally and, perhaps, even more important, philosophically. Within a few years, the student inherited his teacher's class and began working as accompanist to his teacher's teacher, Doc Hopkins, the great old-time radio singer from Harlan, Kentucky. Hopkins had appeared on the WLS *National Barn Dance* from 1930 to 1952. It was under "the loving care and watchful eye of these two musicians" that Wade's playing matured and his musical philosophies took root.

By the mid- to late '70s, Wade began touring folk clubs around the U.S. This travel afforded him the opportunity to immerse himself in the Archive of Folk Culture's collection at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. With this background, he created the one-man play, *Banjo Dancing*, which opened in Chicago in 1979. An amalgam of Wade's fiery clawhammer banjo playing, stories, and, yup, dancing blended with inspirations, tunes, and tales drawn from the Archive to create a show that grew to be an undisputed hit. After a 13-month run in Chicago, punctuated by a performance at the White House on Labor Day of that year, Wade took the show on the road, landing at the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., where the show lasted eight years, one of the longest running stage shows in the U.S. In 1989, Wade opened a second show, *On the Way Home*, which also played at the Arena for three years before he began taking both shows (alternately) on the road.

what's available: Wade's own discography consists of two fine releases that focus primarily on his wonderful clawhammer banjo playing. Both *Dancing in the Parlor* ♪♪♪♪♪ (County, 1997, prod. Stephen Wade) and *Dancing Home* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1990, prod. Bruce Kaplan, Stephen Wade) are superb and eclectic recordings that showcase the breadth of Wade's interest in old-time tunes and traditions. Either would be a great introduction to one of the country's best showmen.

worth searching for: Throughout Wade's concentration on his theater work, he continued to immerse himself in the AFC's collection, an avocation that has culminated in the release of a 30-cut Archive sampler, *A Treasury of Library of Congress Field Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1997, prod. Stephen Wade), a true labor of love.

influences:

◀◀ Fleming Brown, Doc Hopkins

▶▶ Michael Miles, Arnie Naimann and Chris Coole, Bob Carlin

Mark Moss

editor's choice
13 more desert island discs

MusicHound Folk writers make their "desert island" picks:

Steve Stolder: Bob Dylan, *John Wesley Harding* (Columbia)

Kate Dunlay: Brenda Stubbert, *In Jig Time!* (Celestial Entertainment)

Lynne Margolis: The Beatles, *Meet the Beatles* (Capitol)

Steve Winick: Planxty, *Planxty* (Polydor/Shanachie)

Gary Pig Gold: The Beach Boys, *Pet Sounds (The Mono Mix)* (Capitol)

Jared Snyder: Various Artists, *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do* (Columbia)

Craig Harris: Beach Boys, *Pet Sounds* (Capitol)

John Lupton: Mike Auldridge, *Treasures Untold* (Sugar Hill)

Geoffrey Himes: Bob Dylan, *John Wesley Harding* (Columbia)

Lauri Taylor: Michael Smith, *Time* (Flying Fish)

Karen Ashbrook: Freyda Epstein & Acoustic Attitude, *Midnight at Cabel Hall* (Red House)

Dave Shombert: Double Decker String Band, *Chasing Rainbows* (Marimac)

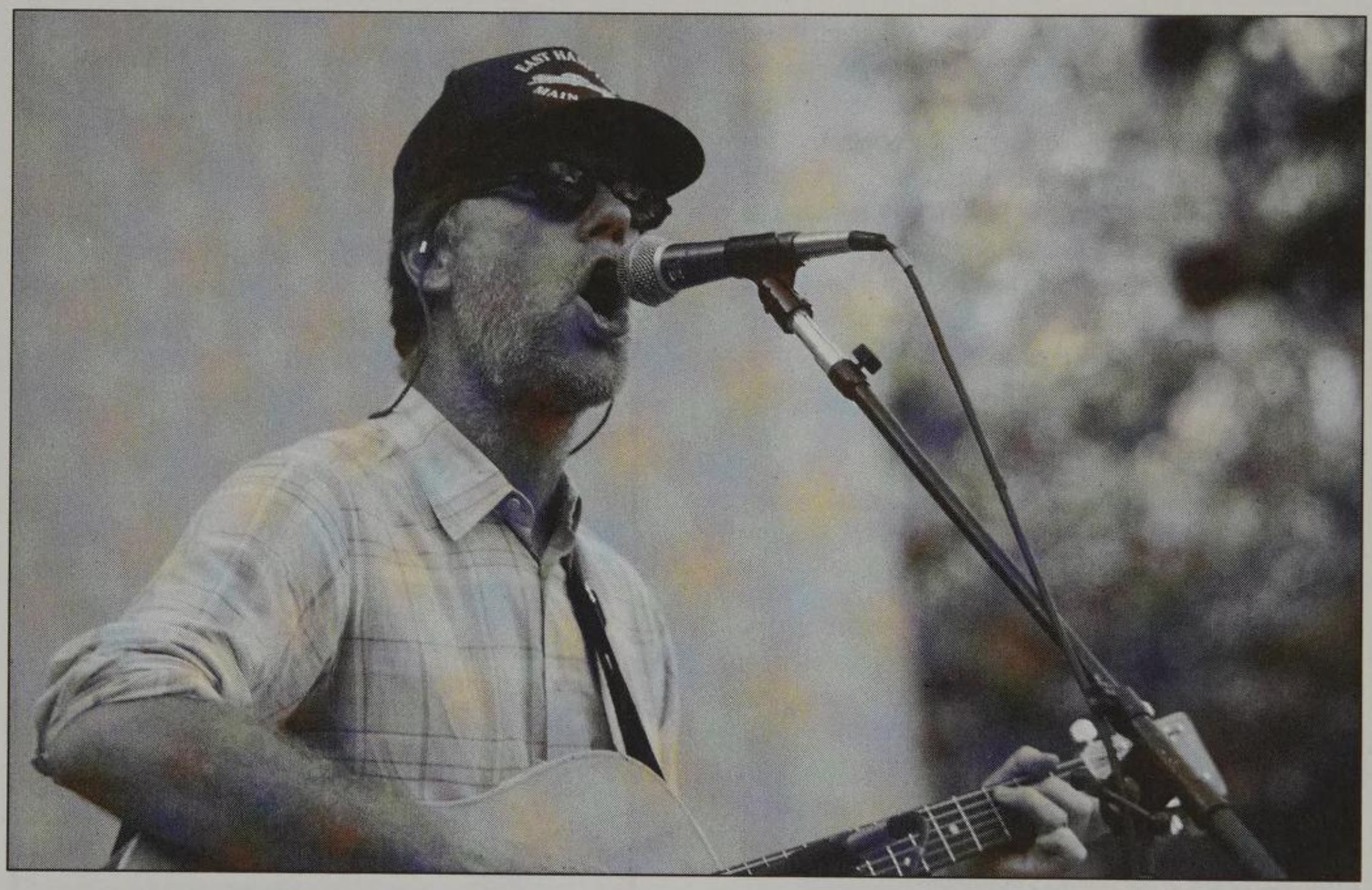
Tim Walters: June Tabor, *Abyssinians* (Shanachie)

Loudon Wainwright III

September 5, 1946 in Chapel Hill, NC.

Louden Wainwright has survived being dubbed the latest "New Dylan" and then achieving national recognition for singing about a dead skunk (all together now: "stinkin' to high heaven!") to record 16 eclectic, quirky, and intensely autobiographical albums over a span of three decades. Along the way, he has appeared on the hit TV series *M*A*S*H* as Capt. Calvin Spaulding, a singing surgeon, as well as in two films, *The Slugger's Wife*, written by Neil Simon, and *Jacknife*, which starred Robert De Niro. He's also garnered Grammy nominations for *I'm Alright* in 1985 and *More Love Songs* in 1986. Johnny Cash covered the Wainwright-penned "The Man Who Wouldn't Cry" on *American Recordings* (1994). Wainwright, whose father was a well-known *Life* magazine columnist and editor, began writing his own songs in 1968 and was "discovered" by Milton Kramer the following year while performing at the Village Gaslight in New York. He signed with Atlantic. He wrote "Dead Skunk" in 15 minutes in 1972. Typically, Wainwright's best work takes conventional musical and social

loudon wainwright iii



Loudon Wainwright III **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

standards and turns them on end, or at least applies intriguing twists. Examples: "Unhappy Anniversary," from *More Love Songs*," celebrates a failed relationship, one year later; the title track to *I'm Alright* spoofs blues clichés ("Woke up this morning/Didn't feel that bad/Last night was definitely not one of the worst I'd ever had."). Wainwright's songs often are fiercely personal, addressing issues such as his father's drinking habits and his own shortcomings as a parent. Just as you're comfortable with his humor, he'll land an emotional right cross squarely between the eyes that will leave you floored . . . and duly impressed. Sample "Natural Disaster" from *A Live One* (1987) or "That Hospital" from *Grown Man* (1995) as ample evidence.

what to buy: *Album III* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1972/Legacy, 1990) which includes the aforementioned "Dead Skunk," is an attractive entree to his early work. *A Live One* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987, prod. John Wood, Loudon Wainwright III), recorded between 1976 and 1978 in England, Scotland, and Los Angeles, finds Wainwright playing solo for appreciative audiences that embrace his eccentricity. The interaction adds vitality to his performances. Also, the stripped-down instrumental setting focuses attention on the man and his songs, which is welcome in light of some of his overproduced later works. *I'm Alright* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1985, prod. Richard Thompson, Loudon Wainwright III) features Thompson on guitar and mandolin. A document of a broken relationship, it's the best of his 1980s studio work, followed closely by the more whimsical *More Love Songs* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1986, prod. Richard Thompson, Loudon Wainwright III, Chaim Tannenbaum).

what to buy next: *Career Moves* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1993, prod. Jeffrey Lesser, Loudon Wainwright III) was recorded live at the Bottom Line in New York in 1993 and is an excellent update and companion piece to *A Live One*. Wainwright's more recent studio work on Virgin is uneven, featuring stunning songs but diminished by a variety of production approaches that don't always mesh well and a degree of intimacy that can be disconcerting. Just a little too revealing, it's honest

work, but not consistently entertaining. *Grown Man* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1997, prod. Jeffrey Lesser, Loudon Wainwright III) is the better of these Virgin releases, offering glimpses of Wainwright at the top of his tragicomic game, but requiring the listener to pick and choose among cuts. *Little Ship* ♪♪♪ (Virgin, 1997, prod. John Leventhal, Loudon Wainwright III) is spiced by Wainwright on banjo and ukulele on a couple of songs and unaccompanied on another. Shawn Colvin adds guest vocals.

best of the rest:
Fame and Wealth ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1987)
Therapy ♪♪♪ (Silvertone, 1989)
History ♪♪♪½ (Charisma, 1992)

worth searching for: *Attempted Mustache* ♪♪♪ (CBS, 1974) and *Unrequited* ♪♪♪ (CBS, 1975) are now out of print, but look for Legacy reissues in 1998.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Frank Loesser
▶▶ Bad Livers, Mike Cross

Bryan Powell

Sloan Wainwright

Born May 20, late 1950s, in Bedford, NY.

The obvious questions are answered first: Sloan Wainwright is a woman, the youngest sister of Loudon Wainwright III. Growing up in a musical family undoubtedly influenced her career choice, but aside from skill and wry humor, her songs bear little similarity to her brother's work. She specializes in piano-driven jazz-folk with a theatrical flair that suits her broad vocal range. A skilled songwriter, she can get away with a line like "Hay is for horses, it is not for girls" and still retain dignity and earth-mother warmth. Wainwright is fairly new to the singer-songwriter scene. As a teenager, she performed at coffeehouses and clubs in New York City, where her shyness about personal revelation moved her from original songs to traditional hootenanny music. After leaving music to spend more time with her family, she was drawn back in by her involvement in local children's theater. She's enjoyed great success as a touring artist in the Northeast, both solo and with her band: Liadain Clancy (vocals), Steve Murphy (guitar, mandolin, vocals), Cary Brown (keyboards, vocals), Greg Burrows (percussion), and Doug Wray (bass). Besides being a powerful vocalist, Wainwright operates the Bakers Cafe in Katonah, New York, a fine place for a meal. Her culinary creations are inventive and nourishing—just like her music.

what's available: There's just the one album, *Sloan Wainwright* ♪♪♪½ (Farkie, 1995/Waterbug, 1996) (prod. Steve Murphy, Sloan Wainwright, Pier, Cary Brown), and it's a winner. The album's two covers suggest her stylistic range; she does the Grateful Dead's "Box of Rain" and Sly and the Family Stone's "Stand"—and great work with each one, too. Her original compositions are by turns introspective ("On a Windy Day"), heartbreaking ("Poison Television"), and rousing (the anthemic "Hey Girl"). "Daddy's Water" places her in the persona of a happy small child, while "Without" reveals a settled woman's secret fantasies of escape. A second album is expected in 1998, and it will be exciting to see what direction this talented artist's work takes next.

influences:
◀◀ Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell, Joan Armatrading, Over the Rhine, October Project

Pamela Murray Winters

Tom Waits

Born December 7, 1949, in Pomona, CA.

Billy Joel may claim he's the Piano Man, but if you picture the piano being in a smoke-filled bar in some cheap motel by the bus station where grizzled has-beens guzzle bargain brand whiskey, then Waits is "your" piano man. Waits's persona is genuine; he was born in the backseat of a Yellow Cab, grew up worshiping the Beats, learned to play music on cheap Mexican guitars, and dropped out of high school. Waits was living out of his car and working as a bouncer at a small club when he realized he should be inside the club performing his own songs. He drew inspiration for his early material from the burnouts and lowlifes hanging on to their vague impossible dreams that populated the underbelly of Los Angeles.

He had built up a substantial local following by the time he recorded his first album, *Closing Time*, in 1973. With its songs of raw emotion, lonely longing, and barstool beatnik banter sung in a voice that could generously be described as raspy, and sparsely backed by acoustic instruments, the album was hailed within the industry, but largely ignored by the public. With subsequent albums in the '70s, Waits consistently revisited the same themes and characters, while his music grew more diverse and esoteric and his voice grew more weary and guttural. By the time he switched labels in the early '80s, going from Asylum to Island, Waits had outgrown the confines of his early image. Through the '80s he recorded landmark avant-garde albums like *Swordfishtrombones* and *Rain Dogs* while also

branching out into acting, playwriting, and soundtrack composing. In the '90s his work has grown even more recondite. For instance, in 1993 he worked with Beat author William Burroughs and opera director Robert Wilson on *The Black Rider,* a satirical take on an early nineteenth-century opera that melded conventional showtune melodies into a bizarre cacophony. Still, for all his critical acclaim and cultural trailblazing, he's never forgotten his roots; one of his most recognizable film roles was that of a booze-soaked limo driver living in a trailer with his coffee shop waitress wife (a perfectly cast Lily Tomlin) in Robert Altman's *Short Cuts,* exactly the type of character that Waits himself would have sung about on his early albums.

what to buy: *Closing Time* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1973, prod. Jerry Yester) is a stunning debut populated with barroom misfits longing for past loves (the heart-wrenching "Martha") and looking for new ones ("I Hope That I Don't Fall in Love with You"). The album also finds Waits's "singing" at his clearest and most melodic. Marking his maturation as an artist, *Rain Dogs* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1985, prod. Tom Waits) ups the ante from the equally ambitious *Swordfishtrombones*, the result being a sprawling 19-track musical collage combining elements from his earlier work, like beatnik scat and the occasional straightforward tune ("Downtown Train," which Rod Stewart would later make a hit), with all-new textures, beats, and instrumentations.

what to buy next: A bitter album that reflects Waits's growing impatience with the tepid audience response to his work, *Small Change* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1976, prod. Bones Howe) also marks a point in Waits's career where he both embraces and recoils from his past persona, as illustrated in songs like "The Piano Has Been Drinking (Not Me)" and "Tom Traubert's Blues." From the first track on *Swordfishtrombones* ♪♪♪♪½ (Island, 1983, prod. Tom Waits), the surreal "Underground," you can tell Waits has made a radical and ultimately rewarding departure from his early period. Though by no means definitive, *Anthology of Tom Waits* ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1985, prod. Bones Howe, Jerry Yester) serves as a good introduction to Waits's Asylum era, with 13 great tracks, including a duet with Bette Midler on "I Never Talk to Strangers" and "Jersey Girl," which Bruce Springsteen would later make famous. Unfortunately, it's only available on cassette.

what to avoid: Depending on your level of fandom, you could say that *The Early Years* ♪♪½ (Bizarre/Straight, 1991, prod. Bob Duffey) and *The Early Years, Volume 2* ♪♪½ (Bizarre/Straight, 1992, prod. Bob Duffey) offer a fascinating insight into Waits's, well, early years. More than likely, you'll find both volumes filled with unpolished and redundant material.

the rest:
Heart of Saturday Night ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1974)
Nighthawks at the Diner ♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1975)
Foreign Affairs ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1977)
Blue Valentine ♪♪♪½ (Asylum, 1978)
Heartattack and Vine ♪♪♪♪ (Asylum, 1980)
Franks Wild Years ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1987)
Big Time ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1988)
Bone Machine ♪♪♪♪ (Island, 1992)
Night on Earth ♪♪♪ (Island, 1992)
Black Rider ♪♪♪½ (Island, 1993)

worth searching for: Waits has done so many fascinating side projects that this category could merit its own page. He's shown up everywhere from the soundtrack of *Bill & Ted's Bogus Jouney* to a tribute to German composer Kurt Weill. One album especially worth combing the bins for is the soundtrack to the Francis Ford Coppola film *One from the Heart* ♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1982, prod. Bones Howe), which found Waits teamed with an unlikely partner in country star Crystal Gayle. The album even earned Waits an Academy Award nomination for best score.

influences:
◀◀ Ray Charles, George Gershwin, Frank Sinatra, Ken Nordine, Randy Newman, Spike Jones

▶▶ Buster Poindexter, Rod Stewart, Bruce Springsteen, Beck, Bonnie Raitt

Alex Gordon

Frank Wakefield

Born June 26, 1934, in Emory Gap, TN.

Frank Wakefield is one of the most zany characters of bluegrass. A virtuoso mandolin player and songwriter, Wakefield is known for his backward-talking stage persona. The composer of such classic bluegrass tunes as "New Camptown Races," "Leave Well Enough Alone," "I Can't Forget Old What's Her Name," and "Hey Mr. Mando," he has turned the influence of Bill Monroe into a unique form of musical expression. Although Wakefield started his musical career at age five on a guitar he received from his father, he found his instrumental voice at age 16 through a mandolin he received from his mom. After playing guitar and mandolin at square dances and churches, he provided musical accompaniment for an evangelist named Brother Ike. Moving from Tennessee to Detroit in 1953, Wakefield began writing his own tunes. After meeting flatpicking guitarist Harley "Red" Allen, he helped to form a band with Allen, banjo

player Don Reno, and fiddler Chubby Wise. In the early 1960s, Wakefield and Allen relocated to Washington, D.C. and formed the Kentuckians, featuring Bill Emerson, Bill Keith, Scott Stoneman, and Wise. The group's debut album was released in 1964. That same year Wakefield replaced mandolin player Ralph Rinzler in the influential urban bluegrass band the Greenbrier Boys. In the late 1960s, he moved to Saratoga Springs, New York. Although he lived for a short period in northern California, Saratoga Springs has remained his home since 1983. In 1974 Wakefield opened a show for the New Riders of the Purple Sage and became friends with their guitar player, David Nelson. The following year, he and Nelson formed the Good Old Boys with Don Reno and Wise. The group remained together for three albums. Wakefield released his most recent solo album, *That Was Now, This Is Now*, in 1997.

what to buy: Recorded during a 1975 concert, *Frank Wakefield and the Good Old Boys* ♪♪♪½ (Relix, 1992, prod. Leslie D. Kippel) captures the excitement and spontaneity of Wakefield's mid-'70s band. In addition to new versions of three of Wakefield's compositions, "New Camptown Races," "David, David," and "Jesus Loves His Mandolin Player Number Two," the set includes foot-tapping renditions of Monroe's "Bluegrass Breakdown" and "On and On," the New Riders of the Purple Sage's "Glendale Train," and Peter Rowan's "Panama Red."

what to buy next: *The Kitchen Tapes* ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1994, prod. David Grisman, Peter K. Siegel) was recorded by Wakefield and Red Allen during an informal session in April, 1963 at Allen's home in Hyattsville, Maryland. A duo recording, the album reflects two old friends and longtime musical collaborators jamming and having fun. In addition to five Wakefield originals, the album focuses on reworking traditional folk songs and seven Monroe tunes.

the rest:
Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians ♪♪♪ (Folkways, 1964)
She's No Angel ♪♪½ (Relix, 1974)
Pistol Packin' Mama ♪♪♪ (Round, 1975)
That Was Now, This Is Then ♪♪♪ (Rosewood, 1997)

influences:

- Bill Monroe, Merle Travis, Greenbrier Boys
- New Riders of the Purple Sage, Old and In the Way, David Grisman

see also: *Henry "Red" Allen*

Craig Harris

Jerry Jeff Walker

Born Ronald Clyde Crosby (a.k.a. Paul Crosby), March 16, 1942, in Oneonta, NY.

Jerry Jeff Walker is one of music's most enduringly successful "cult" figures. His claims to national fame are his authorship of "Mr. Bojangles" (which hit the pop Top 10 for the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band in 1971) and his FM radio anthem "Up against the Wall, Redneck Mother." Walker is also credited with being one of the architects of country music's Outlaw movement during the 1970s. Though his raspy, uneven vocal style is an acquired taste, Walker's sly, eclectic songs continue to resonate with his ever-expanding fan base. Born and raised in upstate New York, his musical roots are in the Greenwich Village folk scene. In 1967 he made his first recordings with Circus Maximus, a psychedelic folk-rock band, for Vanguard. His first solo LP, *Mr. Bojangles*, was well-received by critics, but it sold poorly. Subsequent releases on different labels fared even worse. After moving to Austin, Texas in 1970, Walker signed with MCA and formed the Lost Gonzo Band (later incarnations would be dubbed the Bandito Band and the Gonzo Compadres). His progressive sound and style never caught on with country radio programmers, but he cultivated a reputation as an innovator and did manage to actually sell some albums; he received a gold record for *Viva Terlingua* in 1973. By the time the Outlaw movement died during the early 1980s, critics complained that Walker's LPs all sounded alike, and sales again fell off. His last major label outing was 1982's *Cowjazz*, which was an improvement over previous efforts, but didn't sell, either. In 1986 Walker started his own label, Tried and True Music, and sold cassettes to his vast mailing list of fans, expanding its reach via a licensing deal with Rykodisc. Walker's 1989 release *Live at Gruene Hall* was his most highly regarded LP in nearly a decade. His "comeback" was furthered by his 1991–93 stint as host of TNN's *The Texas Connection*. At present, Walker's career is on a nice roll: He's planning new releases on Rykodisc, MCA has repackaged much of his old material, and the crowds at his legendary birthday bashes get bigger every year. Iconography has its perks.

what to buy: *Great Gonzos* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991, prod. various) contains Walker's best-known songs "LA Freeway," "Up against the Wall, Redneck Mother," "Desperados Waiting for a Train" and more.

what to buy next: *Live at Gruene Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1989, prod. Jerry Jeff Walker, Jim Rooney) is Walker's best live disc, featuring some funny and observant new material recorded in a Texas honky-tonk. It includes Chris Walls's "Trashy Women."

lawrence walker

Recorded in the mid-1970s, *A Man Must Carry On, Volume I* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1997, prod. Michael Brovsky) and *A Man Must Carry On, Volume II* ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1997, prod. Michael Brovsky) show Walker at his most laid-back, with *Volume One*'s busking version of *The Music Man*'s "Pick a Little/Goodnight Ladies" leading into the rollicking "Don't It Make You Wanna Dance?" and Rodney Crowell's classic "Song for the Life." *Volume II* is mostly live, with lively versions of "Mr. Bojangles" and "LA Freeway," but is weighed down by several tracks of poetry readings. For a best-of set, *The Best of Jerry Jeff Walker* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1980, prod. Michael Brovsky) is a pretty sparse affair, with only 10 tracks and no liner notes. Still, any collection with "LA Freeway" and "Desperados Waitin' for the Train" has two steps on the competition.

what to avoid: Walker's craggy vocal style doesn't mix well with the seasonal music selections on *Christmas Gonzo Style* ♪ (Rykodisc, 1994, prod. Lloyd Maines, Jerry Jeff Walker).

the rest:

Mr. Bojangles ♪♪♪♪ (Bainbridge, 1968/Rhino, 1993)
Driftin' Way of Life ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968/1991)
Five Years of Gone ♪♪ (Line, 1969/1995)
Viva Terlingua ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
Ridin' High ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1975/1990)
Gypsy Songman ♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1987)
Bein' Free ♪♪♪ (Line, 1990/1995)
Navajo Rug ♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1991)
Hill Country Rain ♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1992)
Viva Luchenbach ♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1994)
Night after Night ♪♪♪ (Tried and True Music, 1995)
Scamp ♪♪♪ (Tried and True Music, 1996)

worth searching for: *It's a Good Night for Singin'* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1976) is one of Walker's better regarded LPs from his peak years, though it's currently out of print.

influences:

◀◀ Guy Clark, Bobby Bare, Townes Van Zandt

▶▶ Steve Earle, Chris Wall

Ken Burke

Lawrence Walker

Born September 1, 1908, in Duson, LA. Died August 15, 1968, in Scott, LA.

Lawrence Walker built a reputation in Cajun music on his excellence in songwriting and the great dancabilty of his bands. He first recorded in the 1920s with his brother Elton on fiddle, playing a traditional Cajun style with strong hillbilly and blues influence. This shows up in their early recordings, which include several songs sung in English. Walker hit his prime in the 1950s with a rock-steady band featuring the superb steel playing of Dick Richard and Johnie Allan. He is renowned today for his compositions, which are considered classics of Cajun music and can be heard weekly in Cajun dance halls. They include the waltzes "Chère Alice," "Valse de Malchenceaux," "Tit Yeaux Noirs," "Bon Ton Rouley," and "Reno Waltz." The two-steps include "Mamou Two Step" and "Walker Special."

what to buy: *Tribute to the Late Great Lawrence Walker* ♪♪♪♪♪ (La Louisianne, 1985, prod. Carol Rachou Sr.), a best-of collection, contains a number of Walker's most famous waltzes: "Reno Waltz," "Unlucky Waltz," "Tit Yeaux Noir," and "Chère Alice." The recording quality is as funky and as raw as a Nirvana demo tape, but the high caliber of the songs and the musicianship shine through the sonic sludge of the mix.

what to buy next: *A Legend at Last* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Swallow, 1986, prod Floyd Soileau) brings together most of the other well-know Walker tunes including "Bon Temps Rouler," "Walker Special," and "Tout les Deux par la Memo." These are classic, very funky Cajun recordings with excellent (though unacknowledged) steel and fiddle playing along with Walker's highly influential accordion playing.

worth searching for: *Cajun Honky Tonk* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Arhoolie, 1995, prod. Chris Strachwitz) brings together Khoury label recordings from the early 1950s, including a number of Walker's tunes, several of which do not appear on either collection above. It's great to hear Walker play his version of Mayuse LeFleur's 1928 "Ton Papa Ma Sta D'ohr" and a smoking version of the "Bosco Stomp."

influences:

◀◀ Joe Falcon & Cleoma Breaux

▶▶ Dewey Balfa, Mark & Ann Savoy, Michael Doucet, Beausoleil

Jared Snyder

Kate Wallace

Born March 11, in Pasadena, CA.

Singer/songwriter Kate Wallace made her first public performance at Los Angeles' Palomino Club and later was a New Folk Finalist at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas. Before making her debut album, she had songs recorded by Billy Ray Cyrus and Neal McCoy. Some of the songs for her debut were chosen by

surveying users of on-line country-music bulletin boards, who listened to demos and selected their favorite songs for inclusion. Wallace also was the first country act to have a music CD that doubled as a CD-ROM.

what's available: *Kate Wallace* ♪♪♪ (Honest Entertainment, 1995, prod. Brent Rowan, Rocky Schnaars, Kate Wallace) is solid folk/rock-influenced country and Wallace has a warm alto voice, but this album lacks the one knock-out song to make it special.

worth searching for: Keep an eye out for the promotional three-song CD-PLUS that contains music videos for "Dancin' on the Edge of a Heartache," "Hard Woman to Love," and "Saving It All for You."

influences:

◀◀ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Kim Richey

▶▶ Stephanie Bentley, Caryl Mack Parker

Brian Mansfield

Doug & Jack Wallin

Brother duo from Madison County, NC.

Doug Wallin (born 1919); Jack Wallin (born 1932), in Sodom, NC).

Doug and Jack Wallin come from Madison County, North Carolina, an area in the Appalachian mountains rich with song. Cecil Sharp, the famous British folk-song collector, even came to these mountains where he said singing was as common a practice as singing. Doug and Jack were raised right in the middle of all this music, many of their relatives and neighbors played music and sang. Jack came to prefer instrumental music (he plays fiddle, banjo, and guitar) while Doug likes to sing the old ballads that were popular with his parents during the '20s. In 1989 Doug received the North Carolina Folk Heritage Award and in 1990 he was awarded the prestigious Heritage fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C.

what's available: *Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1995, prod. Wayne Martin, Beverly Patterson, Daniel Patterson) was recorded due to a grant from the North Carolina Arts Council. The recordings were made in Doug Wallin's home in 1992 and 1993. On this recording you will hear many old ballads including the 15-stanza "The House Carpenter," which is a ballad sung in the Appalachian mountains that originated in England during the seventeenth century. This recording is a must have for fans of the unaccompanied ballad.

influences:

◀◀ Mary Wallin Sands, Lee Wallin, Berzilla Wallin

▶▶ Sheila K. Adams

Steve Gardner

Don Walser

Born September 19, 1934, in Braunfield, TX.

Tagged the Pavarotti of the Plains—for his pure tenor voice and his prodigious girth—Don Walser is a larger-than-life figure in more ways than one. Though he started playing in bands while still in his teens, Walser waylaid his music career until he retired from his day job as an accountant with the National Guard. Having grown up listening to the Grand Ole Opry and watching singing-cowboy movies, Walser remained determined to keep the music of his childhood alive. Now able to live his dream of being a touring and recording musician, Walser is doing just that. He's fond of saying he plays the Top 40—from 40 years ago. And so he does, mixing songs from Sons of the Pioneers, Faron Young, Merle Travis, and Hank Williams in with his own songs, which stand up to the comparison. Walser's high-pitched yodel, perhaps his music's most distinctive attribute, would sound astonishing if it came from a man half his age. But that's true of all his vocals. While some contemporary singers might put a tear in your beer, a weeper in Walser's hands will have you crying buckets. And his up-tempo tunes, with a little help from his Pure Texas Band, will have you thinking that the Texas Playboys are back in the saddle again. Perhaps the strangest thing about Walser's career, though, is that he has become an unlikely bridge between traditional country and the alternative rock scene; Ministry's Al Jourgensen and the Butthole Surfers are among his fans, and Walser is one of the few non-rock acts that can hold his own on the stage of Austin, Texas' alt-rock hot spot Emo's.

what to buy: They don't make 'em like *Rolling Stone from Texas* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1994, prod. Ray Benson, T.J. McFarland) anymore, and that's too bad. Walser wrote the swinging title track when he was 18 years old and first recorded it during 1964. It still holds up as well as any other Lone Star state anthem and contains one of Walser's most astonishing yodeling performances. A hot, dusty wind blows through his version of Stan Jones's "Cowpoke," as well as Willie Nelson's "Three Days." Walser generously acknowledges one of his primary influences on "(The Party Don't Start) 'Til the Playboys Get Here," while "The John Deere Tractor Song" neatly pays tribute to family farming, a way of life that is fast disappearing. Altogether,

Rolling Stone makes as strong a case as is possible for keeping traditional country music alive.

what to buy next: Nearly as fine is *Texas Top Hand* ♪♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1996, prod. Ray Benson, T.J. McFarland), which features a gorgeous take of the Sons of the Pioneers' "Tumbling Tumbleweeds," plus a high-stepping big-band version of Bob Wills's "Whose Heart Are You Breaking Now?" As a finale, Walser pulls out all the stops on a near-operatic version of the traditional Irish tune "Danny Boy." Bring an extra handkerchief for this one.

the rest:

(With the Pure Texas Band) *Archive Series Volume I* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1995)

(With the Pure Texas Band) *Archive Series Volume II* ♪♪♪ (Watermelon, 1995)

influences:

Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Wills & the Texas Playboys, Slim Whitman, Eddy Arnold

Asleep at the Wheel, Wylie & the Wild West Show

Daniel Durchholz

Joe Walsh

See: The Eagles

Wandering Ramblers

See: Dirk Powell, Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

Formed January 1984, in Bidwell, OH.

Kendra Ward (born July 21, 1961, in Pt. Pleasant, WV), hammered dulcimer, fretted dulcimer; Bob Bence (born September 19, 1963, in Atlanta, GA), guitar.

This duo has appeared on stage with the Statler Brothers, Debbie Reynolds, Bill Monroe, Allison Krauss, John Hartford, and a host of other top performers. They have toured the United States from coast to coast, and are international favorites in England, Scotland, and Wales. Kendra Ward has been described as "the Chet Atkins of the hammered dulcimer" and is "as much fun to watch as she is to hear!" She was raised in the Appalachian mountains and traditional music is her third-generation legacy. The instrument and the music are Ward's cultural heritage, passed down through the generations. She is simply the latest family member to carry forward a tradition which reaches back over a century. Since 1984 Bob Bence, an award-winning musician, has helped Ward create musical magic. His tasteful and unique guitar playing is the perfect compliment to her dynamic dulcimer style, but he is just as well-known for his spontaneous wit and charm. Bence is a multi-talented performer with years of stand-up and sketch comedy on his résumé. These skills help keep the couple's live performances unpredictable and very entertaining. Their recordings truly capture the spirit and energy of their live performances, spotlighting the hammered dulcimer and guitar. A touch of mountain dulcimer and bass have been added on select cuts to better reflect the sounds of their native Appalachia. Ward is also the author of a best-selling hammered dulcimer instruction book and two dulcimer songbooks. Ward and Bence recently began publishing a quarterly magazine for dulcimer lovers, *The Dulcimer Times*, which includes articles, reviews, music, instruction, and festival information for both the hammered and mountain dulcimer players.

what to buy: *Dulcimer Country* ♪♪♪♪ (Upcreek Productions, 1995, prod. Kendra Ward, Bob Bence, Jim Martin) is a pleasing selection of classics such as "Chinese Breakdown" and "Listen to the Mockingbird," mixed with traditional sounding originals such as "Roses to Rhubarb" and "Worley's Waltz." The energy and excitement of this duo is evident throughout the recording, with the wonderful waltzes allowing us to breathe for a moment, before they head into the next up-tempo selection. Robin Kessinger adds a nice guitar line on "Devil's Dream," underneath Ward's flying hammers. *Some Glad Morning!* ♪♪♪♪ (Upcreek Productions, 1994, prod. Jim Martin, Kendra Ward, Bob Bence) is an outstanding compilation of America's best-loved hymns including "Whispering Hope" and "I'll Fly Away." Martha Ward adds a background accordion accompaniment on several cuts which is a nice touch.

what to buy next: *Way Down Yonder* ♪♪♪½ (Upcreek Productions, 1991, prod. Jim Martin, Kendra Ward, Bob Bence) is a spirited recording of 20 traditional American tunes such as "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" and "Orange Blossom Special." Contributing musicians include Mike Blackburn (guitar) and Jim Martin (bass, tuba, cello, guitar). *The Hammered Dulcimer Christmas Sampler* ♪♪♪ (Upcreek Productions, 1992, prod. Kendra Ward, Bob Bence, Jim Martin) is a timeless collection of holiday treasures such as "Away in a Manager" and "Jingle Bells." Jim Martin also contributes a nice English horn as well as cello and guitar. All of these recordings are available from the artists at Upcreek Productions, 1513 Upcreek Road, Bidwell, Ohio 45614, or via e-mail upcreekpro@aol.com.

influences:

Kenneth Ward, Worley Gardner

Rick Thum, Scott Jackson

Heidi Cerrigione

Jennifer Warnes

Born March 3, 1947, in Seattle, WA.

A former background singer, *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* regular, and soundtrack diva, Jennifer Warnes has lived to tell the tale. Her singing style through the years has remained appealingly understated, yet it has left her at the mercy of her material, which has ranged from superb to merely middling. After a couple of early hits, including the enduring "Right Time of the Night," Warnes hit it big with songs from a pair of popular films, "Up Where We Belong," sung with Joe Cocker, from *An Officer and a Gentleman* and "Dirty Dancing (I've Had the Time of My Life)" a duet with Righteous Brother Bill Medley, from *Dirty Dancing*. While that paid the bills, Warnes revealed a taste for stronger stuff, notably rich interpretations of Leonard Cohen songs. Despite such triumphs as her album *Famous Blue Raincoat,* Warnes remains a generally underrated artist.

what to buy: *Famous Blue Raincoat: The Songs of Leonard Cohen* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Cypress, 1986/Private 1991, prod. C. Roscoe Beck, Jennifer Warnes) is a stunning collection that makes Cohen's brooding material accessible without prettifying it too much. Stevie Ray Vaughan adds a tasty guitar solo to "First We Take Manhattan," and Cohen himself sits in on "Joan of Arc."

the rest:

Best of Jennifer Warnes ♪♪♪ (Arista, 1982)
The Hunter ♪♪♪♪ (Private, 1992)

influences:

Leonard Cohen, Joe Cocker, John Prine

Indigo Girls

Daniel Durchholz

The Waterboys

Formed 1981, in London, England. Disbanded 1993.

Mike Scott, vocals, guitar, piano, Hammond organ; Steve Wickham, fiddle, Hammond organ, vocals; Anthony Thistlethwaite, saxaphone, mandolin, organ, harmonica; Colin Blakey, whistle, flute, Hammond organ, piano; Noel Bridgeman, drums, percussion; Jay Dee Daugherty, drums; Sharon Shannon, accordion, fiddle; Trevor Hutchinson, bass, bouzouki; Karl Wallinger, bass, keyboards; Roddy Lorimer, trumpet.

The history of the Waterboys is the story of Mike Scott's ever-evolving musical and spiritual quest. "I've always followed my heart or where my latest musical fascination is, which is rarely where popular trends have been going," says Scott. The band was characterized by a continually changing cast of characters supporting Scott, with one anchor being the musical versatility of Anthony Thistlethwaite. The Waterboys originated the "Big Music," an epic, sprawling, feverish sound of layered acoustic guitars, ecstatic horns, and charging, obscure, expansive poetics reminiscent of the myth making of Yeats and Blake. At its best, the music was transcendent, leading the listener into a new, exotic land brimming with imagery and feeling, and owed a debt to the earlier work of fellow shamans Patti Smith, Van Morrison, and Bruce Springsteen, as well as the Beatles. Scott then changed tactics for the band's fourth album, the astounding "Fisherman's Blues," bringing his Celtic passions to the forefront and toning down the Big Music. That particular "raggle taggle" version of the band broke up after two albums, the Waterboys became Scott and a slew of session players, and music returned to harder guitar riffs, with disappointing results. A recent solo outing by Scott is much closer to the spiritual essence he sought with "Fisherman's Blues," and on the tour supporting that album, Scott promised that next time around, he'd return with a band. So perhaps a new generation of the Waterboys is just around the corner.

what to buy: Different eras of the Waterboys produced distinctly different music. Early Waterboys is best sampled on *A Pagan Place* ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1984, prod. Mike Scott) featuring the strumming acoustic majesty of the title cut. *This Is the Sea* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1985, prod. Mike Scott, Mick Glossop) is a fully realized epic that showcased the Scott-Wallinger partnership and included the shimmering "This is the Sea," "The Whole of the Moon," "Spirit," and "Old England." Late Waterboys is captured in all its glory on *Fisherman's Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1988, prod. John Dunford, Mike Scott) with its embrace of the Celtic tradition. Commencing with the luminous title cut, the album includes a stirring cover of Van Morrison's "Sweet Thing," and the last recorded song written by Scott and Wallinger (with Hutchinson), "World Party." A masterpiece from start to finish.

what to buy next: *Best of the Waterboys* ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1991, prod. Mike Scott) is a good retrospective of the band, with the addition of "Killing My Heart" an early electric version of "When Ye Go Away" and live "Old England." *The Secret Life of*

linda waterfall

the Waterboys ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1994, prod. Mike Scott) is a collection of unreleased Waterboys studio recordings, radio sessions, live tracks, and "lost" b-sides recorded between 1981 and 1985.

what to avoid: *Dream Harder* ♪♪ (Geffen, 1993, prod. Mike Scott, Bill Price) is a lackluster attempt to do the Waterboys without the Waterboys and is hopefully Scott's last attempt to become a guitar god.

the rest:
The Waterboys ♪♪♪½ (Ensign, 1983)
Room to Roam ♪♪♪ (Ensign, 1990)
Pagan Place (Alliance, 1997)
Best Of '81–'90 (Alliance, 1997)

worth searching for: A variety of CD singles and 12-inch releases exist, most prominently from the *Fisherman's Blues* era on forward. They include: *And a Bang on the Ear/Raggle Taggle Gipsy* (1989); *The Whole of the Moon/Golden Age Medley* (1991); *Fisherman's Blues/Medicine Bow* (Radio 1 Session/Lost Highway, 1991); *Bring 'Em All In* (with three previously unreleased songs), all on Chrysalis; and *The Return of Pan/Karma/Mister Powers* (Geffen, 1993).

solo outings:
Mike Scott:
Bring 'Em All In ♪♪♪♪ (Chrysalis, 1995)

Anthony Thistlethwaite:
Aesop Wrote a Fable ♪♪♪ (Rolling Acres, 1993)

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Patti Smith, Beatles, Bruce Springsteen, Van Morrison, Chieftains

▶▶ U2, Sinead O'Connor, World Party

see also: *Sharon Shannon*

Martin Connors

Linda Waterfall

Born c. 1950s, in Chicago, IL.

Before the grunge years of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Seattle's folk community created the greatest variety of original music. Linda Waterfall (the surname is an anglicized version of the Swiss, Wasserfallen) has been an active participant in that milieu since the mid-1970s, when she arrived with a freshly minted degree in visual art from Stanford. Raised in a suburban musical family and formally trained as a classical pianist, Waterfall's father actively discouraged her interest in music. Thus goaded in exactly that direction she came to Seattle and first formed Entropy Service, then played bass in a country-rock bar band called the Skyboys. Since release of her first LP in 1977, Waterfall has pursued her own vision as a solo artist. Typically her music is folk only in the broadest sense. That is, she writes her own material and swaddles it in gentle acoustic sounds that reflect interests in soft jazz, world music, and choral composition. That last interest has led to a series of grants from the Seattle Arts Commission and composition of a half-dozen more ambitious choral works.

what to buy: Most of Waterfall's eight releases have been self-released or are now out of print; many of them may still be available from the artist; try her Internet site at http://www.nwlink.com/~bsearle/biogra.htm. *A Little Bit at a Time* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1991; prod. Linda Waterfall, Cary Black) is a fair summation of her strengths and weaknesses. The years have made her voice less airy, and given it a rich, pleasing tone. Her songs are full of adult political "correctitude" and are, therefore, either cloying or profound.

what to buy next: As most of Waterfall's work is to be found amid dusty stacks of old vinyl, it's a bit catch as catch can. *Body English* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987; prod. Linda Waterfall, Steve Heinke) is most easily found, and includes one movement in Waterfall's ambitious setting of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass." *My Heart Sings* ♪♪♪ (Trout, 1979, prod. Linda Waterfall, Chip Hayward, Joe Hadlock) has an innocent charm that led one reviewer to suggest her smile could melt ice cubes. The final track, a lovely cover of "Blue Moon," precedes the Cowboy Junkies' rehabilitation of that classic by a good decade.

what to avoid: *Everything Looks Different* ♪ (Trout, 1983, prod. Linda Waterfall, Scott Nygaard) is a collaboration between Waterfall and Scott Nygaard, a Northwest new-ageish jazz guitar noodler.

the rest:
Bananaland ♪♪♪½ (Trout, 1981)
Flying Time ♪♪ (Trout, 1994)

worth searching for: *Mary's Garden* (Windham Hill/Trout, 1977) is notable if only for being one of Windham Hill's earliest releases. A self-titled four-song EP from Entropy Service (1974) is of some interest as an historical artifact.

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez

Grant Alden

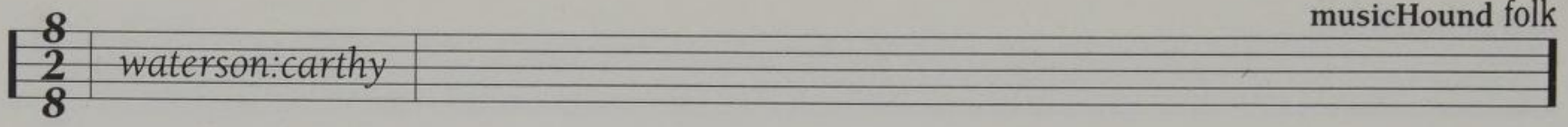
Muddy Waters

Born McKinley Morganfield, April 4, 1915, in Rolling Fork, MS. Died April 30, 1983, in Chicago, IL.

Muddy Waters was and ever will be the grand overlord of blues. Of regal mien, with voice deep and commanding, his body of work is a fundament of the idiom. Though mentored by an archetype—Delta patriarch Son House—he was a stone revolutionary when he hit Chicago, his music slamming the coffin lid on the waning wartime old guard with ruthless finality. Waters's first city recordings were surprisingly subtle and countrified, but soon he was cutting with his kick-ass band, issuing classic after intense classic for Chess. In the ranks of his band James Cotton, Little Walter, Peewee Madison, Otis Spann, Jimmy Rogers, Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, and others served formative stints. Incredible as it seems, by the mid-1960s he was on lean times. The Texas singer Angela Strebli met him in Chicago around that time and recalls that he felt strapped enough to ask her for a loan. Chess's answer to the slump was to jump on the hippie bandwagon with the famously ill-contrived *Electric Mud*, which came replete with a booklet that (God only knows why) included snapshots of Mud getting his hair conked. Though this LP stiffed decisively, Chess issued yet another attempt at psychedelizing Mud, the obscure *After the Rain*, the cover of which inexplicably showed Mud clutching a frog, and against all odds, has some—not many—good bits. (On the closing cut, "Bottom of the Sea," Mud gets really revved; his voice and the fuzz-toned guitars start sounding eerily alike, and the song achieves an incantatory power that makes it the most unlikely gem in the Great One's canon.) By the 1970s Waters was doing well again, not because of Chess (far from it, actually) but by fielding bands of such excellence that he was in constant demand at blues fests and in clubs. Example: in 1972 he took to the road with Louis Myers, Peewee Madison, Mojo Buford, Pinetop Perkins, and the drum/bass team of Fuzz Jones and Willie Smith, a unit as highly charged as even those he led in the 1950s. He continued cranking out LPs for Chess, and though he was generally in good voice himself, the projects were usually scuttled by lame sidemen (like the execrable rhythm guitarist whose unvarying skank-space-skank ruined *Can't Get No Grinding*) or gratuitous rock stars (*London Sessions*). In the mid-1970s Chess was inoperable, and there was an ominous window of time when Mud's music for the label was out of print. Which made it all the more welcome for him to reprise some of it for Blue Sky, a CBS-distributed label for which Johnny Winter sat at the soundboard. With Winter as his producer, Mud sounded more exciting than he had on any LP he'd done for Chess since the under-rated *Fathers and Sons* of 1969. It was an impressive career revival, expedited by the Texan eschewing celebrity sessions and/or other crap, and just letting Mud be Mud, backed by his working bands and old buds like James Cotton and Jimmy Rogers. In his latter years Mud was revered throughout the world. His road bands were still strong, his voice majestic, and when he played a slide solo on his trademark red Telecaster, the sound chilled your nape and rippled your blood. In 1983 he took leave of us, but his music and personality will forever be the bedrock of blues.

what to buy: "Long Distance Call," "I Just Want to Make Love to You," "I'm Ready," "She Moves Me," and other history-makers comprise *His Best 1947–55* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1997, prod. Leonard Chess). *Fathers and Sons* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1989), initially released as a two-LP set, has been long undervalued despite an entirely credible studio "side" and a devastating live set on which Mud's henchmen include Paul Butterfield, Mike Bloomfield, "Duck" Dunn, Otis Spann, and the deadly drummer Sam Lay. "Same Thing" is one of the most darkly passionate readings ever of a Willie Dixon tune (and check Mud's poison slide!), while the two-part "Mojo" fairly explodes from one's speakers in what may well be the most frantic, hell-bent, riproaring blues performance ever recorded. Made on Stovall's Plantation in Mississippi, *Complete Plantation Recordings: The Historic 1941–42 Library of Congress Field Recordings* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1993, prod. Alan Lomax, John Work) shows Muddy's debt to Delta masters Son House and Robert Johnson while still evincing his nascent mojo. Fine music from before he hit the city.

what to buy next: Anyone who thought Mud's latter-day dross on Chess meant he was past it gets comeuppance on *Muddy "Mississippi" Waters Live* ♪♪♪♪♪ (CBS/Blue Sky, 1989, prod. Johnny Winter), as the Great One goes ballistic. Accompanied by Winter, Cotton, Bob Margolin, and other seasoned cronies, Mud pounds out a relentless "Mannish Boy" glorious in its vigor and braggadocio. On his patented "She's 19 Years Ago" he plays a vicious slide solo, and other cuts similarly threaten the rafters. Pinetop Perkins shouldn't be so low in the mix but otherwise this is an exemplary recording of Mud tearing a place up good. *They Call Me Muddy Waters* ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1990) comprises two early 1950s obscurities ("Howling Wolf" and "They Call Me Muddy Waters") and some little-known, mid-period Chess work. Dixon's rollicking paean to payday, "When the Eagle Flies," is a highlight, as are the woebegone "County Jail" and a very lowdown "Crawling Kingsnake." Some very fine stuff here.



what to avoid: Save your pennies for the above and pass these up even if they're in cheapo bins: *Super Blues* ♪ (MCA/Chess), *Muddy—Brass and the Blues* ♪ (MCA/Chess, 1966/1989), *Can't Get No Grinding* ♪ (MCA/Chess, 1973), *The Muddy Waters Woodstock Album* **woof!** (MCA/Chess, 1975), *London Sessions* **woof!** (MCA/Chess, 1972/1989), and *Electric Mud* **woof!** (MCA/Chess, 1968/1996). See above for just a few of the reasons.

best of the rest:
Muddy Waters at Newport ♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1960/1986)
Sings Big Bill Broonzy ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1960/1986)
Folk Singer ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1964/1987)
The Real Folk Blues ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1966/1987)
The Real Folk Blues Volume II ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1967/1988)
Live at Mr. Kelly's ♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1971)
The Chess Box ♪♪♪♪½ (MCA/Chess, 1989)
Hard Again ♪♪♪♪ (CBS/Blue Sky, 1989)
I'm Ready ♪♪♪♪ (CBS/Blue Sky, 1989)
King Bee ♪♪♪ (CBS/Blue Sky, 1989)
His Best 1956–64 ♪♪♪♪ (MCA/Chess, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Son House, Robert Johnson, Scott Bohanna
▶▶ Rolling Stones, Big Daddy Kinsey, Bob Margolin, Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan

Tim Schuller

Waterson:Carthy

Formed c. 1994.

Norma Waterson, vocals; Martin Carthy, guitar, vocals; Eliza Carthy, fiddle, vocals.

Martin Carthy's notes for *Common Tongue* describe Waterson:Carthy as having "clitzpah"—and indeed, the feminine side of the family group are in the forefront of their recordings. Carthy generally stays in the background, while wife Norma Waterson and daughter Eliza Carthy shape the group's distinctive sound. The guiding spirit of the group is Waterson, whose deep, resonant voice suggests centuries of toil and more than a little pleasure.

what's available: *Waterson:Carthy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1994, prod. Tony Engle) features strong lead vocals by Waterson; though the Carthy father and daughter each get a place at the microphone as well. Eliza Carthy's fiddle blends well with her father's guitar on "Ye Mariners All," which Martin Carthy sings. *Common Tongue* ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1997, prod. Tony Engle), a more specifically English album than its predecessor, is helped by the presence of various Watersons on backing vocals. Saul Rose's melodeon duetting with Eliza Carthy's fiddle on "Valentine Waltz" is a sweet addition to the first track. Norma Waterson's solo effort, *Norma Waterson* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1996, prod. John Chelew), includes Martin and Eliza Carthy, as well as Roger Swallow (percussion), Danny Thompson (bass), and Richard Thompson (guitar). It emphasizes the work of a wide range of songwriters, including Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter, Richard Thompson, Billy Bragg, and Lal Waterson. The mother-daughter vocal harmonies on "There Ain't No Sweet Man That's Worth the Salt of My Tears" are exquisite.

influences:
◀◀ Copper Family
▶▶ Marianne Faithfull

see also: *Martin Carthy, Eliza Carthy*

Pamela Murray Winters

Norma Waterson

See: Waterson:Carthy

The Watersons

Norma Waterson (born August 15, 1939), vocals; Mike Waterson (born January 16, 1941), vocals; Elaine (Lal) Waterson (born February 15, 1943), vocals; John Harrison (born 1966), vocals; Bernie Vickers (born 1972), vocals; Martin Carthy (born May 21, 1940), vocals (1972–present); Rachel Waterson (born April 3, 1966), vocals (1985–?).

The Watersons are one of England's great musical families. The group specializes in four-part harmony singing of both traditional and original material. Since its heyday in the 1960s and 1970s, several of its members have gone on to release solo albums or participate in other projects. Norma Waterson's marriage to Martin Carthy added a new dimension to the group, as Carthy joined them on many occasions. Waterson:Carthy is an instrumentally oriented offshoot featuring Norma and Martin's daughter Eliza Carthy.

what's available: Carthy joins bride Norma's family on *For Pence and Spicy Ale* ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1975, prod. Tony Engle), which contains wassails, work songs, and other traditional fare. The presentation is *a capella*, in a style similar to that of Young Tradition, though more elaborate. The reissue also includes some tracks by individual Watersons.

influences:
◀◀ Copper Family, Young Tradition

Steeleye Span, Richard and Linda Thompson, Cordelia's Dad

see also: *Waterson:Carthy, Martin Carthy*

Pamela Murray Winters

Doc Watson /The Watson Family /Doc & Merle Watson

Born March 2, 1923 in Deep Gap, NC.

It's difficult to grasp the far reaching influence of Doc Watson on traditional American music; since his "discovery" by folklorist Ralph Rinzler and a subsequent appearance in New York as part of Clarence Ashley's String Band, he has bestrode the traditional music world like the colossus he is. A multi-instrumentalist (guitar, banjo, autoharp, harmonica, mandolin), a wonderful singer with a rich, easy baritone voice, a treasure trove of traditional songs learned from family and friends, and an influence whose reach is incalculable (he popularized the practice of flatpicking fiddle tunes note for note on the guitar, for instance), nearly all Watson's recordings are worthwhile. He has recorded in a wide variety of styles and with a mind-boggling diversity of accompanists and partners, from family members—particularly son Merle (born 1949; died 1986), who became an accomplished slide guitarist and old-time banjo player in his own right—to Flatt and Scruggs, Chet Atkins, Jean Ritchie, and many more. Doc's participation in the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* in 1972 exposed him to an ever widening audience.

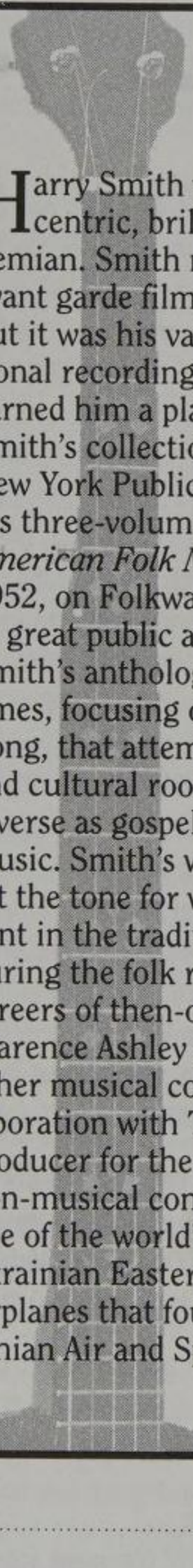
what to buy: Where to begin? *Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley: The Original Folkways Recordings: 1960–62* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1994, prod. Ralph Rinzler) contains material from the period when Watson was first becoming known in the world of traditional music. Contains 20 tracks previously unreleased. *Doc Watson: The Vanguard Years* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1995, prod. Mary Katherine Aldin), four CDs worth of material from Vanguard's holdings recorded between 1963 and 1968, includes much unissued live material in various contexts. An example? Six duets with Watson's idol, Merle Travis, and three tracks with Clarence White, the young bluegrass guitar whiz whom Doc influenced greatly. *The Doc Watson Family* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994, prod. John Delgatto) contains material recorded live during the 1960s and early 1970s and features Watson surrounded by talented family members, including father-in-law, fiddler Gaither Carlton, son Merle, wife Rosa Lee, brother Arnold, his mother, and others in a festival of traditional Appalachian material for the most part. *Watson Country: Doc and Merle Watson* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1995, prod. Mitch Greenhill) is a sampling of Doc and Merle's work together for Flying Fish during the 1980s.

what to buy next: The reissue of 1963's *The Watson Family* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990, prod. Ralph Rinzler) with 11 new tracks makes it just as good as the Sugar Hill release that features Doc amid his talented family members. *Old Timey Concert: Doc Watson, Clint Howard, and Fred Price* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1977, prod. Manny Greenhill)is a 1967 concert recorded live featuring Watson and frequent collaborators guitarist Clint Howard and fiddler Fred Price in a program of mostly traditional material. *Docabilly* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1995, prod. T. Michael Coleman), which shows off Doc's rock and commercial-country roots, features guests Marty Stuart, Duane Eddy, and Junior Brown. *Riding the Midnight Train* ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1986, prod. Barry Poss) finds Doc right at home surrounded by many of the best young bluegrass pickers in the business, displaying his bluegrass chops. *Remembering Merle* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1992, prod. T. Michael Coleman) features Doc and son Merle in informal settings through the years. Although Watson and Monroe often performed duets live, the material on *Bill Monroe and Doc Watson: Live Duet Recordings 1963–80 off the Record, Volume II* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993, prod. Ralph Rinzler) was not available—except on a couple of rare bootlegs—until recently. Watson proves that he is a worthy duet partner for anyone, even the Father of Bluegrass Music.

what to avoid: With the caveat that Doc has never really made a bad record, he seems less comfortable with the mainstream country hotshots of the day in *Good Deal! Doc Watson in Nashville* ♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1968, prod. Jack Lothrop) than in nearly any other context.

the rest:

Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson at Folk City ♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1963)
Doc Watson ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1964)
(With Merle Watson) *Doc Watson and Son* ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1965)
Southbound ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1966)
Home Again! ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1966)
Ballads from Deep Gap ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1967)
(With Flatt and Scruggs) *Strictly Instrumental* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1967/County 1995)
Doc Watson on Stage ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1970)
The Elementary Doc Watson ♪♪♪½ (Poppy, 1972/Sugar Hill 1993)
(With Merle Watson) *Then and Now/Two Days in November* ♪♪♪ (Poppy, 1973, 1974/Sugar Hill, 1995)
The Essential Doc Watson ♪♪♪♪ (Vanguard, 1973)



harry smith (1923–1991)

Harry Smith was an American original, eccentric, brilliant, and unapologetically bohemian. Smith made lasting contributions in avant garde film, visual art, and anthropology, but it was his vast collection of early traditional recordings, and how he used them, that earned him a place in folk music history. Smith's collection, which is now housed in the New York Public Library, formed the basis of his three-volume, six-record *Anthology of American Folk Music*, which first appeared in 1952, on Folkways, and was recently reissued, to great public acclaim, on compact disc. Smith's anthology was grouped in three volumes, focusing on Ballads, Social Music, and Song, that attempted to link the emotional and cultural roots of American music forms as diverse as gospel, country blues, and mountain music. Smith's work was vastly influential and set the tone for what was considered significant in the traditional American repertoire during the folk revival, as well as reviving the careers of then-obscure musicians like Clarence Ashley and Dock Boggs. Smith's other musical contributions include a film collaboration with Thelonius Monk and serving as producer for the first album by the Fugs. His non-musical contributions to culture include one of the world's largest collections of Ukrainian Easter eggs and a collection of paper airplanes that found its way into the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum.

Michael Parrish

Memories ♪♪♪ (United Artists, 1975/Sugar Hill, 1995)
The Watson Family ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977)
(With Merle Watson) *Red Rocking Chair* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1981)
(With Merle Watson) *Pickin' the Blues* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1983)
(With Merle Watson) *The Guitar Album* ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish, 1983)
(With Merle Watson) *Down South* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1984)
Portrait ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1987)
On Praying Ground ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Sings Songs for Little Pickers ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Doc Watson and Family ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1991)
My Dear Old Southern Home ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1992)

worth searching for: *Favorites of Clint Howard: Doc Watson and the Blue Ridge Mountain Boys* ♪♪♪♪ (Rutabaga, 1988) presents Doc playing the traditional repertoire he seldom tackles these days with a sympathetic band. *Reflections* ♪♪♪ (RCA Victor, 1980), an interesting pairing of Doc and Chet Atkins, doesn't always work.

influences:
◀◀ Monroe Brothers, Merle Travis
▶▶ Clarence White, Tony Rice

Randy Pitts

Gillian Welch

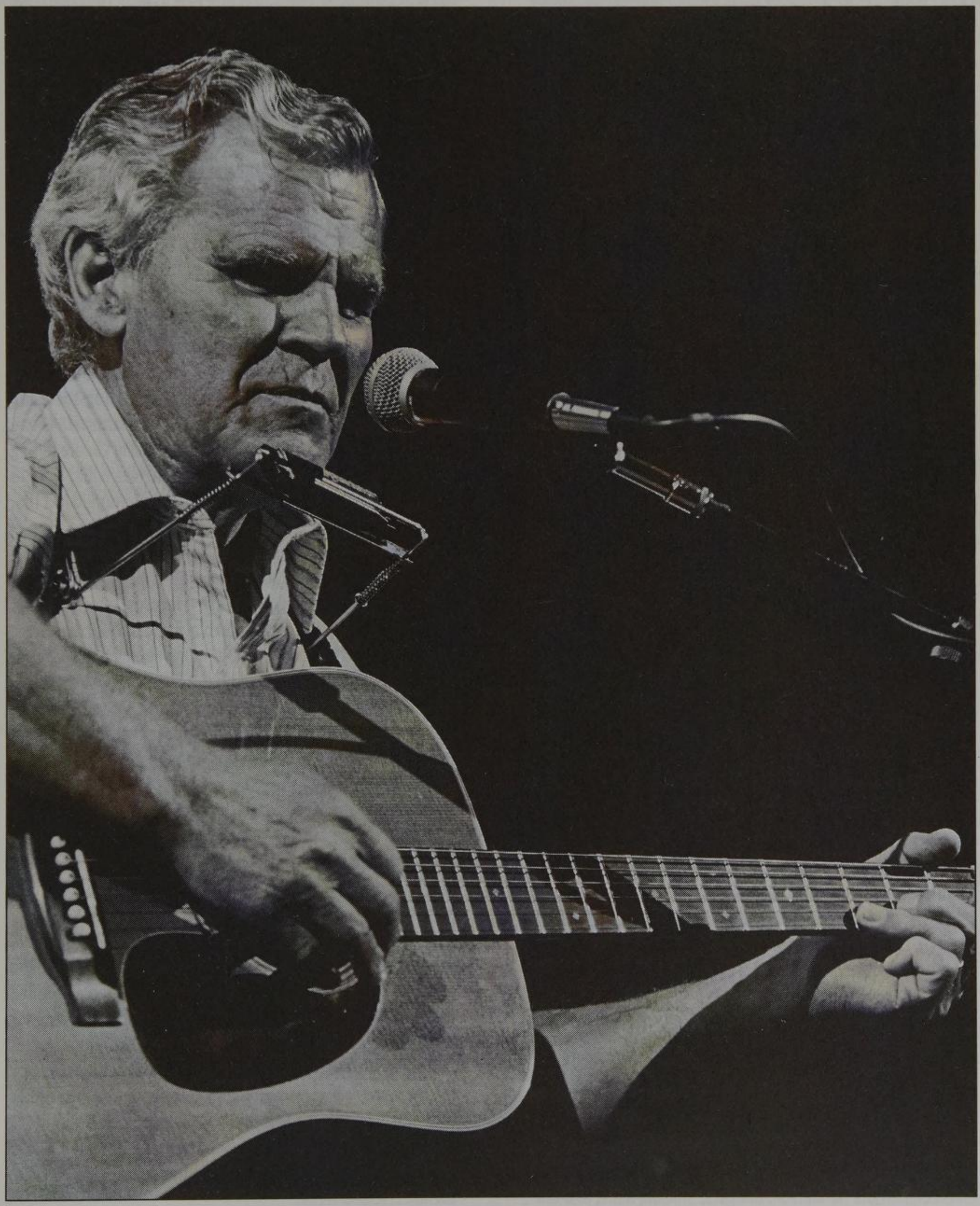
Born October 2, 1967, in New York, NY.

With her Carter Family values, melancholy voice, and gothic imagery, Gillian Welch stands out from the country music mainstream like a black-and-white photograph in a Jackson Pollock exhibit. Mournful but never morose, the haunting originals that she pens with partner/guitarist David Rawlings recall old-timey country ballads, backwoods blues, and traditional gospel hymns while her lyrics offer the soul-purging proclamations of emotionally spent, hard-luck cases unsure if they can muster the strength for one last stand. Emmylou Harris's cover of "Orphan Girl" on 1995's *Wrecking Ball* set the stage for Welch's 1996 debut album, *Revival*, and her songs have also been recorded by Kathy Mattea. Her relentless touring with Rawlings—headlining club shows and opening for such stalwart troubadours as Guy Clark and Townes Van Zandt—has refined the forlorn harmonies and tortured textures of her music and produced one ringer for her forthcoming follow-up album, "Caleb Meyer," the spooky tale of a farmer's wife who kills her would-be rapist with a broken bottle.

what's available: *Revival* ♪♪♪♪½ (Almo Sounds, 1996, prod. T-Bone Burnett) is the riveting, relentless sound of hope draining out. But the darkness is tempered by striking imagery ("The night came undone like a party dress/and fell at her feet in a beautiful mess"), a knowing wink to country's roots ("Paper Wings" could pass for a Patsy Cline outtake) and the stark but comforting beauty of Welch's singing. The repeat button on

Doc Watson **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

gillian welch



kevin welch

your CD player was designed for the hymn-like "By the Mark" and the chilling "Tear My Stillhouse Down," the deathbed-plea of a cirrhosis-stricken bootlegger.

influences:

Townes Van Zandt, Carter Family, Stanley Brothers

Parlor James

David Okamoto

Kevin Welch

Born August 17, 1955, in Long Beach, CA.

Born in California and raised in Oklahoma, Kevin Welch's alternative-leaning music has more to do with the sound of the Great Plains and left-coast country rock than it does with Nashville. Still, he made his reputation in the Music City song mills, cranking out hits for Gary Morris, Moe Bandy, the Judds, Don Williams, Ricky Scaggs, and others before stepping to the microphone himself. Welch's songs carry a feeling of restlessness that's also conveyed in the term often used to describe them, "Western Beat." Also the name of his second album, Welch has said that it's meant to convey not just an image of cowboys and campfires, but also "beat" in the sense of Jack Kerouac's constantly on-the-move Beat generation. A critical darling, Welch has yet to taste popular acclaim. But rather than play the game in the usual fashion, he has joined with fellow musicians Kieran Kane, Tammy Rodgers, and Harry Stinson to form the artist-run record label, Dead Reckoning.

what to buy: Getting off of the major-label treadmill has been good for Welch. On his first effort recorded for his own imprint, *Life down Here on Earth* ♪♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1995, prod. Harry Stinson, Kevin Welch), you can almost hear him relax, playing music he knows is good without having to write to whatever style or topic is currently in fashion. Welch draws on a wealth of sources, including Celtic music ("Pushing up Daisies"), gospel ("Life down Here on Earth"), folk ("Wilson's Tracks"), bluegrass ("The Love I Have for You"), and hard-bitten country ("Troublesome Times"). The cast includes fellow Dead Reckoners Rodgers, Stinson, and Kane, Mike Henderson, former NRBQ guitarist Al Anderson, and gospel group the Fairfield Four.

the rest:

Kevin Welch ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1990)
(With the Overtones) *Western Beat* ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1992)

worth searching for: On the Dead Reckoners' *A Night of Reckoning* ♪♪♪ (Dead Reckoning, 1997, prod. Harry Stinson) Welch joins compatriots Henderson, Rodgers, Stinson, Kane, and others for an album-length guitar pull that defines the label's raison d'être as well as anything.

influences:

Gram Parsons, J.D. Souther, Eagles, Guy Clark, Billy Joe Shaver

Daniel Durchholz

Kitty Wells

Born Muriel Deason, August 30, 1919, in Nashville, TN.

The undisputed "Queen of Country Music," Kitty Wells (the name comes from an old folk song) took the role of women in country music to a then-unexplored level during the early 1950s, and became country's first genuine female star. As one half of the Deason Sisters with her cousin Bessie Choate during the 1930s, Wells worked on WSIX radio in Nashville. In 1938 she married Johnny Wright, with whom she performed in a trio, along with his sister, Louise. When Jack Anglin entered the picture, forming a duo with Wright (backed by a band that featured a young fiddler by the name of Chet Atkins), Wells sang with the pair occasionally. Wells's first records, released at the same time Johnnie and Jack were enjoying lots of success, were gospel records that didn't sell. Although she planned to retire to raise a family, Decca executive Paul Cohen asked her to record a song that he felt would be an answer to Hank Thompson's hit, "The Wild Side of Life." In a move that would change the course of musical history for women, Kitty released the playful indictment of the male species, "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels," which spent six weeks at the top of the country chart in 1952. During the eight-year history of the *Billboard* charts up to that time, Wells was the first woman to have a solo Number One hit. She wouldn't have another chart-topper until 1961, with "Heartbreak, U.S.A," while her second-biggest hit, "Makin' Believe" (Number Two, 1955), spent 15 weeks trailing Webb Pierce's "In the Jailhouse Now." While the 1960s saw a steady decline in her record sales (Decca dropped her in 1975), Wells remained active, touring and recording for smaller labels. She was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1976 and remains one of the artists most often cited by female country acts as both an inspiration and a pioneer. In 1988, for a cut on her *Shadowland* CD, k.d. lang brought together producer Owen Bradley and three of the women whose classic music he produced through the years: Loretta Lynn, Brenda Lee, and Wells.

what to buy: *Country Music Hall of Fame* ♪♪♪♪♪ (MCA, 1991) features the absolute best-of collection of the indomitable Kitty.

what to buy next: *Dust on the Bible* ♪♪♪♪ (MCA Special Products, 1994) is one of the few original (non-greatest hits) albums still in print from Kitty. It's a thoroughly enjoyable gospel collection, usually available at a bargain price.

what to avoid: The best thing you can say about *Country Spotlight—Kitty Wells* ♪♪ (K- Tel, 1991)? It's only 25 minutes long.

the rest:

Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1987) (cassette only)
The Golden Years ♪♪♪ (Rounder Special Series, 1989) (cassette only)
Greatest Hits Volume I ♪♪♪ (Step One, 1989)
Greatest Hits Volume II ♪♪ (Step One, 1989)
Queen of Country Music ♪♪ (Laserlight, 1992)
Greatest Songs ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1995)
20 Hits ♪♪♪ (TeeVee, 1995)
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (King, 1995)
It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels ♪♪♪ (MCA Special Products, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Queen of Country Music* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family, 1993) is a four-disc box set that Wells fanatics will find indispensable.

influences:

◀◀ Carter Family, Johnnie & Jack

▶▶ Loretta Lynn, Iris DeMent

Stephen L. Betts

Paula Joy Welter

Born July 1, 1951, Cook County, IL.

A northern California songwriter who only began songwriting during the early '90s, Paula Joy Welter sounds as if she's been writing all her life. The six-time winner of the "Best Song" competition at monthly Northern California Songwriters Association open mike competitions, writes lovely sentimental songs with straightforward rhymes on a diversity of subjects. Some topics are introspective and extremely personal, but she is also capable of writing a song with universal appeal ("A Sky with No Blue"). Her lyrics are emotionally moving and it's easy to simply close your eyes and let her paint a vivid picture in your mind. Welter's intriguing guitar finger picking style is an excellent accompaniment to her resonant alto voice and adds to the appeal of her music.

what's available: *Morning Light* ♪♪♪♪ (Starry Sky Music, 1995) is Welter's debut recording and consists exclusively of songs she has written. The 10 ballads include "Joanna's Gift," describing a stranger's kindness; "No Matter If," a parent's encouragement to a child about to leave home; and "Calling You Home," which describes the dreaded phone call about a loved one in an accident and how love can overcome the terror. "A Sky with No Blue," is a wishful love song that is expressively accompanied by piano (Barbara Higbie) and soprano saxophone (Jim Rothermal). Nina Gerber produced the album and her touch is evident throughout. A cast of 13 talented musicians including Cary Black, Laurie Lewis, Sally Van Meter, and Gerber on guitar, weave superb support around Welter's beautiful voice. This is an incredible effort for a debut recording and will make you reach for the repeat button for another listen. *Morning Light* is available from Starry Sky Music, 2850 Mace Road, Placerville, California 95667.

influences:

◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Peter, Paul & Mary

▶▶ Cheryl Wheeler, Joni Bishop

Heidi Cerrigione

Susan Werner

Born c. 1965 in Iowa.

Susan Werner has been playing in the big leagues of folk since the early 1990s. Acclaimed by such critics as the *New York Times'* Stephen Holden, she's toured with Richard Thompson and Joan Armatrading and enjoys steady airplay on AAA radio. Werner's background is distinctly non-folky: She played piano and saxophone in her native Iowa and studied opera at Temple University. Her jazz background informs her guitar playing as well as her singing. Her cabaret-style vocal delivery sounds forced to some, gorgeous to others. She's a hard worker and a consistently entertaining live performer, and she's beginning to take more chances with her music.

what's available: *Midwestern Saturday Night* ♪♪♪ (Susan Werner, 1993, prod. Grant MacAvoy) suffers from an excess of tremolo but contains some great songs, notably "Born a Little Late (The Baby Boomer Song)." *Live at the Tin Angel* ♪♪♪½ (Susan Werner, 1993) provides a taste of Werner in a guitar/vocal setting, and it's a rewarding taste. A couple of her best compositions ("My Mother's Garden" and "Ain't I Lonely Tonight") appear only here, as does an appropriately overdone "La Vie en Rose." *Last of the Good Straight Girls* ♪♪♪♪ (Private

kelly werts

Music, 1995, prod. Fernando Saunders) represents a creative breakthrough; it's as if the tragicomic masks are slipping. The lush instrumentation stands up to Werner's bold voice, and Paul Simon's "Something So Right" represents an inspired match of song and singer.

influences:

◀◀ Maura O'Connell, Nanci Griffith, John Prine

Pamela Murray Winters

Kelly Werts

See: The Plaid Family

Camille West

Born in 1956, in NY.

The self-styled "Suburban Mother from Hell" is a living example of the classic arrested career: no matter how brilliant you are, your rise to stardom will tend to stall if you have to fix dinner and pick up the kids from soccer practice. Despite having been a protégé of the late Lena Spencer (queen of one of folkdom's most venerable venues, Caffe Lena in Saratoga Springs, New York), and despite having produced one of the most cutting, cohesive programs of funny songs ever released, Camille West remained largely anonymous until two things happened: First, National Public Radio broadcast a feature spot on her album, and in the process created a particular buzz for her sea-chantey sendup "The Nervous Wreck of Edna Fitzgerald"; and early in '97, songwriter/funny girl Christine Lavin retired from the "Four Bitchin' Babes" road show, creating a vacancy West was invited to fill.

what's available: *Mother Tongue* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mother Tongue, 1995, prod. Tony Markellis) is the one full album exclusively to West's name, and it may be hard to top. Subtitled "Maternal Madness by Month," the album's 12 songs each correspond to a month in the year, and to a different feminine character. An involved conceit, but the songs are skillfully crafted and relentlessly funny. "Edna Fitzgerald" is here; a paean of unrequited love to a dentist titled "Root Canal of the Heart," a twisted Edith-Piaf-meets-Greenpeace spoof, "Save the Snails," and more. The impeccable production, roster of all-star sidemen, and consistent "stylistic correctness" serve only to make these songs even more funny.

worth searching for: *Gabby Road–Out of the Mouths of Babes: Life According to the Bitchin' Babes* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1997, prod. Sally Fingerett, Debi Smith) is West's debut with this popular quartet of funny women, currently consisting of West, Debi Smith, and alumni Megan McDonough and Sally Fingerett. West's songs here are all duplicated on the *Mother Tongue* album, but the live ambiance is refreshing and the foursome's interplay makes it a worthwhile listen.

influences:

◀◀ Christine Lavin, Peter & Lu Berryman

▶▶ Emily Caitz, John Forster, Dar Williams

see also: *Four Bitchin' Babes*

Chris Rietz

Cheryl Wheeler

Born July 10, 1951, in Baltimore, MD.

Straddling the line between folk and country, Cheryl Wheeler's biggest challenge has been squeezing both of her musical personalities—sensitive songwriter and sinister satirist—onto one album. In concert, the husky-voiced vocalist relies on a wry, raucous sense of humor that sends fans in search of her CDs, only to discover that much of her recorded repertoire consists of introspective ballads. Wheeler's move out of the coffeehouse circuit began in 1986 when Jonathan Edwards hired her to play in his band and produced her self-titled debut album. After releasing *Half a Book* (featuring the adult contemporary chart-grazer "Emotional Response") on the now-defunct Cypress label, Wheeler signed with Capitol's Nashville division in 1990. But even the Midas touch of noted Randy Travis producer Kyle Lehning couldn't help the label figure out how to promote *Circles and Arrows*, which ranged from the beautiful "Aces" (a 1992 hit for Suzy Bogguss) to the weird "Estate Sale," a riotous tune about the joys of rifling through dead people's houses in search of bargains. Wheeler has found a more supportive home with Rounder's Philo subsidiary, where she finally hit her stride in 1995 with *Mrs. Pinocci's Guitar*, the first album that makes her multi-faceted personality come across as a complex human being, not some guitar-toting Jekyll and Hyde.

what to buy: *Mrs. Pinocci's Guitar* ♪♪♪♪ (Philo, 1995, prod. Jonathan Edwards, Cheryl Wheeler) mixes playful full-band arrangements with spare, demo-like acoustic guitar performances. It also offers the ideal balance of moods and material: in between such love songs as "Further and Further Away" and "So Far to Fall" and the disarmingly vulnerable demo of "One Love," Wheeler copes with a mid-life crisis on "Is It Peace or Is It Prozac?," mocks right-wing conservatism on the Jonathan Swift-like "Makes Good Sense to Me" ("In whose sick mind did it ever

occur/that a choice like that should be up to her?"), and rocks with surprising conviction on "Does the Future Look Black?"

what to buy next: *Circles and Arrows* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1990/ Rounder, 1995, prod. Kyle Lehning) is her most polished and country-sounding album, thanks to such guests as Mark O'Connor, Vince Gill (who sings harmonies on "Aces"), Pam Tillis, and Jerry Douglas. Given the seamless sound and emotional clout of such acoustic ballads as "Don't Wanna," "Miss You More Than I'm Mad," and "Arrow," the irreverent "Estate Sale" might have worked better as a hidden bonus track.

what to avoid: Her debut album, *Cheryl Wheeler* ♪♪ (North Star, 1986, prod. Jonathan Edwards) includes "Quarter Moon" and her original versions of "Arrow" and "Addicted" (later a hit for Dan Seals), but the cheesy production lends a goopy sentimentality to songs that are already pushing the emotional envelope.

the rest:
Half a Book ♪♪♪ (North Star, 1987)
Driving Home ♪♪♪ (Philo, 1993)

worth searching for: *Christine Lavin Presents: Laugh Tracks, Volume I* ♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996, prod. Steve Rosenthal, Christine Lavin) collects live performances of neo-novelty songs by the Chenille Sisters, Vance Gilbert, Chuck Brodsky, and others. Wheeler contributes "Potato," a silly ode to the starchy vegetable sung to the tune of "The Mexican Hat Dance."

influences:
◀◀ Phoebe Snow, Tracy Chapman, Christine Lavin
▶▶ Mary Chapin Carpenter, Don Henry, Maura O'Connell

David Okamoto

Erica Wheeler

Born in MD.

Erica Wheeler is one of the promising newer acoustic musicians on the American folk scene. A self-taught vocalist and guitarist, she began writing songs in high school. After graduating from Hampshire College in Massachusetts, she became a mainstay of the Iron Horse, the renowned club in Northampton, Massachusetts. She released her first full-length CD in 1992 and her first album for the Signature Sounds label in 1996. Her conversational alto is a warm, engaging vehicle for her pensive lyrics and melodies.

what's available: *The Harvest* ♪♪♪♪ (Signature Sounds, 1996, prod. Laurie Lewis) shows a strong bluegrass influence courtesy of producer-fiddler Laurie Lewis. The collection of Wheeler's compositions (and one Claudia Schmidt cover) also features Darol Anger, Barbara Higbie, and Todd Phillips.

influences:
◀◀ Nanci Griffith, Ferron, Bonnie Raitt, Bill Morrissey
▶▶ Salamander Crossing

Pamela Murray Winters

Dan Wheetman

See: Marley's Ghost

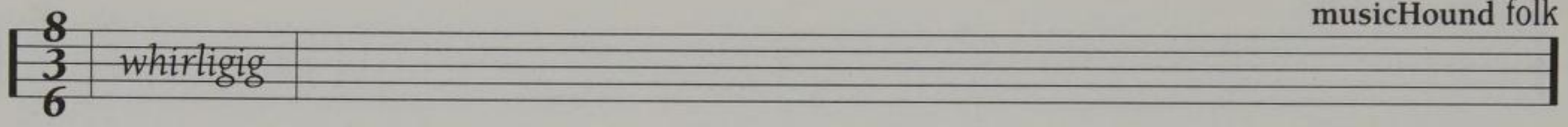
John Whelan

Born June 14, 1959, in Luton, England.

Accordion player John Whelan has been a fixture in the American Irish music scene for the past several years. His personal and musical openness has made him a popular addition to many different musical projects. A rhythmic, driving player with an ear for a good tune, Whelan got his first lessons from his father and from the great Clare fiddler Martin Mulkere. A multiple winner of All-Ireland Titles, he has been a professional player since recording his first album, *The Boy from Wexford*, at the tender age of 14. Whelan has performed in a duo with Eileen Ivers, as a member of the folk rock Kips Bay Ceili Band, and with fiddlers Seamus Connolly and Ruthie Dornfeld. He currently performs with fiddler Liz Knowles and guitarist Robin Bullock, as well as with the Kips Bay Ceili Band.

what to buy: On *Fresh Takes* ♪♪♪ (1987 Green Linnet, prod. Mick Moloney), Whelan and Ivers take traditional Irish music and bend it, twist it, and shape it to their own desires. Accompanied by guitarist Mark Simos, the duo tear through traditional tunes and their own compositions, stretching a note or phrase here, throwing in a blues or old-time lick there. In the hands of musicians less deeply schooled in the tradition, this kind of approach could destroy the music, but these masters can walk the tightrope between tradition and innovation without falling off. Highlights include the sweet hornpipe "Desuanay," written for a French accordion player, and the killer version of "Darach deBruin's Reel." Both musicians have since gone on to push the Irish/Celtic envelope even further, Ivers with *Riverdance* and her own recordings and John with his own albums and the Kips Bay Ceili Band.

what to buy next: *Celtic Crossroads* ♪♪♪ (Narada, 1997, prod. John Whelan) finds our man recording on the Narada label. Formerly the domain of a bunch of boring, new-agey schlockmeis-



ters, Narada has sensed gold in the hills of Erin and begun to release a range of "Celtic" music recordings focusing on the more sedate side of the music. In keeping with this program Whelan never breaks loose on this album, but instead explores the more lyrical side of his music, focusing on his own compositions. Joined by a stellar cast including Irish musicians, a string quartet, and Nashville stalwarts Tim O'Brien, Kinny Landrum, and Kathy Mattea, Whelan has made a record straddling, maybe even crossing, the commercial line. What saves this record is his innate sense of a good tune. Even if he doesn't tear through "Miss Monaghan's" or "The Bucks of Oranmore" as we crusty traditionalists would like, he plays good solid tunes that fit within the tradition and maybe push it forward a little bit.

what to avoid: *Celtic Reflections: Misty-Eyed Morning* ♪♪♪ (Narada, 1996, prod. John Whelan) is just a little too sleepy, and lacking the bluegrass touches that made *Celtic Crossroads* more lively. The highlight is a new recording of his waltz "My Ballingarry Lady" written for his mother.

the rest:
Flirting with the Edge N/A (Narada, 1998)

worth searching for: *From the Heart* ♪♪♪♪ (Oenoke, 1990, prod. John Whelan), now sadly out of print, was an Irish musician's delight. Strong playing, great settings, and a brace of new tunes by Whelan and others mixed with some old standards. Guests Jerry O'Sullivan and Seamus Connolly keep things hopping, but there's room for a couple of sweet waltzes as well. It's a shame Narada won't go out on a limb and release this fine example of traditional Irish music alongside Whelan's more recent recordings.

solo outings:
Kips Bay Ceili Band:
Digging In ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1993)
Into the Light ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ Seamus Connolly, Brendan Mulkere, Paddy O'Brien
▶▶ Karen Tweed, Seamus Egan, Sharon Shannon

see also: *Eileen Ivers, Helicon*

Tony Ziselberger

Whirligig

Formed in NY.

Greg Anderson, bouzouki, cittern, mandolin, bass, vocals; Lisa Gutkin, fiddle, baritone violin, vocals; Paul Kovit, guitar, mandolin, vocals; Shannon Anderson, vocals (left group in 1996); Matt Darriau, flute, saxes, clarinets, whistles, kaval, gaida; Jerry O'Sullivan, pipes (left group in 1997), Yves Duboin, flute, soprano sax (left group in 1997); Lisa Moscatiello, vocals (1996–present); Cillian Vallely, uilleann pipes, flute, whistle (1997–present).

Sometimes miscast as a Celtic band, Whirligig's style incorporates jazz and klezmer as well as the expected Celtic influences. Like British cousins Fairport Convention, the New York-based group adds and subtracts excellent musicians with diverse pedigrees without ever losing its musical essence. (Another Fairport connection: Paul Kovit produced the Fairport documentary "It All Comes 'round Again.") Something is missing that would make the group into something more than a group of folk whiz kids. The change may come with the arrival of Lisa Moscatiello (formerly of the New St. George), who replaced Shannon Anderson on vocals in 1996.

what's available: In *The Wheel* ♪♪♪♪ (Quarktet 1996, prod. Greg Anderson), the single "Down to the Sea in Ships" suits Shannon Anderson's dramatic, nearly histrionic vocal style, though she oversells "Mr. Fox" just a bit. The saxophones add diversity to many of the numbers, including the opener, "Open the Door/Maid at the Spinning Wheel."

influences:
◀◀ Altan, Fairport Convention

Pamela Murray Winters

Whistlebinkies

Formed in the late 1960s in Glasgow, Scotland.

Peter Anderson, Scottish side-drum, bodhrán, bongos; Stuart Eydmann, fiddle, concertinas, vocals; Mark Hayward, fiddle; Eddie McGuire, flute, piccolo, clàrsach; Judith Peacock, clàrsach, vocals; Robert (Rab) Wallace, Lowland pipes, Scottish smallpipes.

When a group of musicians formed a bar band in the Scotia Bar in Glasgow, they were joining the latest '60s craze, the Celtic revivalist movement. This early incarnation of the Whistlebinkies became something special when they decided to concentrate on traditional Scottish music. When Eddie McGuire joined in the early '70s, followed soon after by Rab Wallace, the band's identity stood on a more solid foundation as an acoustic, traditional Scottish band. McGuire brought not only high-quality flute and piccolo lines, but composition skill that has been acknowledged across Scotland. Wallace was one of the first to revive the Lowland pipes, and his skill as a piper of all sorts is evidenced in an amazing list of piping awards. Once these two had joined the band, a record contract with

Claddagh records soon followed. Now, more than 20 years later, the group has established themselves as one of the cornerstones of Scottish music. Clinging much more diligently to the traditional heritage than most Scottish bands, they have put their emphasis on acoustic sound, striving to play without amplification or the use of reverb. The effect is stunning. The Binkies show themselves to be Scottish music scholars, digging deep to the roots of their musical ancestors, often to unearth music totally new to the modern ear. This sense of history is also portrayed in their choice of instruments, using the three traditional instruments of Scotland—the bagpipes, the clàrsach (Scottish harp), and the fiddle. Using simple arrangements, the Whistlebinkies bring Scottish music alive. It is this gift that has led them to be asked to provide music for a variety of documentaries, films, and theatrical productions. Their reputation has also brought them to numerous special projects, including tours with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and a production with the Glasgow Festival Strings and Scottish Ballet of Eddie McGuire's ballet *The Spirit of Flight*.

what's available: *A Wanton Fling* ♪♪♪½ (Greentrax, 1996, prod. Jim Sutherland) is a recording marvel, featuring the acoustic sound for which the Binkies are best known. This laid-back recording features an almost chamber music quality to it, featuring a wonderful mix of concertina, flutes, harp, fiddle, pipes, and voices. The tunes are not as fast and driving as is typical of Scottish music these days, allowing the listener to pick up on nuances easily missed when presented with a driving beat. Among the unusual and exciting tracks is "Ho-Ro My Young Girl," a waulking song, characteristically sung a capella, but instead of using women's voices, the soloist is backed by a chorus of men. Others include the emotional "Farewell to Muirhead's" and the toe-tapping opening track "The Pipers' Jigs," both featuring the phenomenal piping of Robert Wallace. This album includes more vocals than their other offerings.

worth searching for: The best place to get introduced to the band is *Anniversary* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1991, prod. Whistlebinkies, Cy Jack, John Wood), a best-of album featuring selected cuts from their first five albums, which are now only available on cassette. Perhaps their most outstanding recording is *Inner Sound* ♪♪♪♪ (Klub, 1991, prod. Whistlebinkies, Cy Jack), which displays an amazing showcase of Scottish music of all sorts. From the lamenting pipes on "Oran Mor" to the joyful pipes on "The Piper's Controversy," from the journey from sea to land and back again depicted on the opening track "Inner Sound" to the Scottish ballad "The Tryst," this album shows the depth of intensity and emotion this group is capable of, with virtuosic performances from all of the members. Solo piping fans should look for *Pipers of Distinction: Robert Wallace* ♪♪♪½ (Klub, 1991, prod. Cy Jack), which is an unusual and excellent collection of pipe tunes, beautifully performed on Great Highland Bagpipes. The Binkies also have a number of releases which are available on cassette only in the United Kingdom. These include: *Whistlebinkies* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1977), *Whistlebinkies 2* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1980), *Whistlebinkies 3* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1982), *Whistlebinkies 4* (Claddagh, 1986), and *Whistlebinkies 5* ♪♪♪ (Claddagh, 1989).

influences:

◀◀ Garech Browne, Chieftains

▶▶ Ceolbeg, Sileas, Tannahill Weavers

Jo Hughey Morrison

Buck White

See: The Whites

Bukka White

Born Booker T. Washington White, November 12, 1906, in Houston, MS. Died February 26, 1977, in Memphis, TN.

Let Bukka White tell you he was "Fixin' to Die" (or anything else, for that matter) and you'd be likely to believe him. A big man, White always sang about the big things in life—sex, doing time (in prison and on earth), trains, and good gin—with a searing intensity. Somewhere in all that is a hint that a rambling life might make the rambler sing a worried blues. White belted the blues and literally belted his steel-body guitar in his idiosyncratic, rhythmically jagged style. Over that quirky guitar he sang his moody, plain blues melodies. Legends surround his first recording session for Vocalion because he was supposed to be doing time at Parchman Farm for a shooting. Did someone secure his release for the session? Or did he jump bail? Regardless, he recorded more when the prison sentence was up, but the blues world that had made a hit of "Shake 'Em on Down" in 1937 had changed. Despite the brilliance of his 1940 recordings, White's fortunes faded. A boxer and baseball player before he settled into the blues, White began working in a defense plant to avoid combat during World War II. Music gigs were something he did on the side until folkies Ed Denson and John Fahey found and recorded him in 1963. White played with as much fire as he had two decades earlier and recorded more tunes in his second career than he had in the period when he established himself as a major voice.

clarence white

what to buy: As if White's emotional directness wasn't scary enough, the sonic clean-up on *The Complete Bukka White* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia Legacy, 1994, prod. Frank Briggs), which collects all 14 sides White recorded for Vocalion and OKeh, puts White in the room with you; it supplants a number of other collections, even the vinyl-only *Parchman Farm* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia, 1970). This is as deep and personal as Robert Johnson's recordings.

what to buy next: Chris Strachwitz says in his liner notes to *Sky Songs* ♪♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie, 1963, prod. Chris Strachwitz) that White improvised all of these songs for him. It's an impressive, energetic collection that touches all his usual bases and includes the improbably touching "Jesus Died on the Cross to Save the World," which has a "skip" in it. (Did they record the CD master from a turntable?)

what to avoid: *1963 Isn't 1962* ♪♪½ (Genes, 1994, prod. John Fahey, Ed Denson) features White recorded live in 1963 in another fine sonic cleanup, but the producers should have listened a little harder to the way they put it together. The pacing drags, and no White album should DRAG! Even so, many individual cuts, such as "1963 Isn't 1962 Blues," are worthwhile.

the rest:
Memphis Hot Shots ♪♪♪½ (Blue Horizon, 1968)
Baton Rouge Mosby Street ♪♪♪½ (Blues Beacon, 1972)
Big Daddy ♪♪♪½ (Biograph, 1974)
Shake 'Em on Down ♪♪♪½ (ROIR, 1993)

worth searching for: *Legacy of the Blues* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Sonet, 1969, prod. Ed Denson, John Fahey) features White's energetic return to the recording studio. *The Complete Sessions* ♪♪♪½ (Travelin' Man, 1976) is an import that features all the Vocalion and OKeh sessions and White's earliest, religious recordings.

influences:
◀◀ Charley Patton, Big Bill Broonzy, Tampa Red
▶▶ Bob Dylan, Captain Beefheart

Salvatore Caputo

Clarence White

See: Kentucky Colonels

Josh White

Born February 11, 1908, in Greenville, MS. Died September 5, 1969, in Manhasset, NY.

Though Josh White's influence never took on the stature of, say, Muddy Waters or Sonny Boy Williamson, he was present at two distinct key periods of blues development. At the beginning of his career, the singer-guitarist befriended Blind Blake, Blind Lemon Jefferson, and other important proponents of the rhythmic, playful East Coast "Piedmont" blues style; his songs, from religious hymns to pre-rock standards like "Milk Cow Blues," were excellent supplements to the sound. He outlasted blues' popularity, fronting the Josh White Singers and the Carolinans, but, like his peers Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, found new life in the 1960s folk revival. With Terry, McGhee, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and others, he changed his image to a folkie showman and played lucrative gigs at coffeehouses and festivals and appeared in films. White was a major player in both phases: other acoustic bluesmen learned from his early songs, and young 1960s folk musicians, such as Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, helped transfer his ideas to modern-day folk and rock 'n' roll. His son, Josh White Jr., keeps his father's tradition alive by performing his songs.

what to buy: *Blues Singer 1932–36* ♪♪♪♪½ (Columbia/Legacy, 1996, prod. various) thoroughly samples White's "first career" as he shifts easily between hymns and playful Piedmont blues numbers.

what to buy next: *Complete Recorded Works, Volumes I-IV* ♪♪♪½ (Document, 1993, prod. various) fills in the gaps from the Legacy set; it includes absolutely everything White recorded between 1929 and 1941, and if anything it's far too thorough.

the rest:
The Legendary Josh White ♪♪♪ (MCA)
Plays the Blues and Sings ♪♪♪ (Collectables, 1995)

worth searching for: Josh White Jr. leads a trio through his father's standards (including "House of the Rising Sun") on *Jazz, Ballads, and Blues* ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1986).

influences:
◀◀ Blind Blake, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie
▶▶ Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, Cephas & Wiggins, Washboard Sam

Steve Knopper

Josh White Jr.

Born 1940, in New York, NY.

Josh White Jr. is the son and namesake of one of folk music's most influential performers. At the age of four, he began joining his father on stage. They continued to perform together throughout the '50s and '60s. Although he recorded several

albums of traditional folk and blues tunes, he has concentrated more on his thespian interests and has acted in many Broadway and Off-Broadway productions. His 1949 acting debut, in the Broadway cast of *How Long 'til Summer,* earned him a Tony Award as "best child actor." Between 1950 and 1963, he made many television guest appearances. In 1967 he wrote the music for a documentary, *The Freedom Train.* Throughout the 1960s, White was a regular on the college circuit, performing an average of 150 concerts a year. Although he cut back his schedule in the mid-'70s to spend more time with his children, he has periodically returned to the recording studio. His 1978 album, *Josh White Jr,* included the FM radio hit, "Marco Polo." White's involvement with children's music was launched in December 1990 when he collaborated with playwright Randi Douglas on a theme song, "My Favorite Toy," composed for a toy exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum. In addition to writing a children's play, *Buster, the Bodacious Bear,* White Jr. appeared on Nickelodeon's *Eureka's Castle* and a special for Detroit public television, *Josh and Ron's Family Adventure,* featuring Detroit-based folksinger Ron Coden. He released an album of children's music, *My Favorite Toy*, in 1995. White has presented a lecture and demonstration, "In Role Teaching," that teaches history and civics to children. White returned to more adult programming with his 1996 album, *Live at the Soft Rock Cafe*.

what to buy: On *Jazz, Ballads, and Blues* ♪♪♪ (Rykodisc, 1986), White joins forces with violinist, guitarist, and tenor singer Robin Batteau (of folk-pop duo Buskin and Batteau). The result is a treasure chest of tradition-rooted music and includes stirring renditions of "Frankie and Johnny," "Strange Fruit," "St. James Infirmary," "Miss Otis Regrets," and "The House of the Rising Sun."

what to buy next: The intimacy of White's 1970s concerts was captured on *Sing a Rainbow* ♪♪♪ (Mountain Railroad, 1979, prod. Josh White Jr.). Songs include Michael Smith's "The Dutchman," "St. James Infirmary," and Josh White Sr.'s "One Meat Ball."

the rest:
Josh White, Junior ♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1978)

worth searching for: Along with James Earl Jones and Josephine Premice, White provided narration and sang on *The Dream Awake* (Spoken Arts, 1970), an album-length interpretation of Owen Dodson's epic poem in which "the Black man tells his own story."

influences:

- Josh White, Leadbelly, Sleepy John Estes, Mississippi John Hurt
- Guy Davis

Craig Harris

Roland White

See: Kentucky Colonels

The Whites /Buck White & the Down Home Folks

Family group, originally from TX.

Buck White (born H.S. White, December 13, 1930, in OK), piano; Sharon White (born December 17, 1953, in Abilene, TX), guitar; Cheryl White (born January 27, 1955, in Abilene, TX), bass.

For 30 years, the Whites have functioned as a recording act, and even more amazingly, as a close-knit family, in spite of the obvious perils. Their bluegrass/gospel blend, enhanced by close family harmony, has remained relatively unchanged in those years, providing moments of pure pleasure for fans of fresh, acoustically based music. Buck White grew up in Texas, where he met his wife, Pat, who participated in the music until retiring in the early 1970s. In 1966, with the entire family involved, Buck and Pat, along with Arnold and Peggy Johnston, were the Down Home Folks, and the White and Johnston children formed the Down Home Kids. When the Whites moved to Nashville in 1971, they became Buck and the Down Home Folks, and made their first recording the following year. By the mid-'70s they had made a few more records, and in 1979 recorded with Jerry Douglas, Roland White, and the man who would later marry Sharon, Ricky Skaggs. They followed the album with a live record made in Japan, then soon embarked on a tour with Emmylou Harris, who had Ricky Skaggs in her Hot Band at the time. The group's Capitol debut in 1981 didn't make much noise, but the next year had the first of five Top 10 records with "You Put the Blue in Me" (Number 10, 1982). In 1983, the year they hit the Top 10 for the final time, the Whites became members of the Grand Ole Opry, where they remain a top attraction. Skaggs continues to be involved in their recordings, and they contribute to his, as well as those of other artists from time to time. Whether it's a bluegrass tune, a gospel number, or a country standard, the Whites have made some great music through the years. But, sadly, too little of it remains in print.

the whitstein brothers

cecil sharp (1859–1924)

At the close of the eighteenth century, British folk songs and dance were passed down almost entirely in the oral tradition. Late in life, beginning in 1903, Cecil Sharp undertook a vigorous campaign to preserve and document the traditions of British folk culture. Traveling around England on his bicycle, Sharp began writing down the songs and dances of different regions of the country and released a series of books, beginning with *Folk Songs from Somerset* in 1904, that made the fruits of his collections available to the masses. In 1911, Sharp founded the English Folk Song and Dance Society, an organization that remains a potent force in preserving British folk traditions today. In 1916, Sharp traveled to America, where he spent two years in rural areas of southern Appalachia and collected nearly 2,000 songs and dances that reinforced the strong cultural links between the folk cultures of that region and those of Great Britain. Today, Sharp's archives are housed in Cecil Sharp house in North London, a mecca for traditional folkies that also served as a wellspring of material and inspiration for contemporary neo-traditionalists like Ashley Hutchings (who presented a one-man tribute to Sharp in the mid-1980s) and Richard Thompson.

Michael Parrish

influences:

Emmylou Harris

Ricky Skaggs

Stephen L. Betts

The Whitstein Brothers

Brother vocal duo from LA.

Robert Whitstein (born March 16, 1944, in Pineville, LA); Charles Whitstein (born December 11, 1945, in Pineville, LA).

Bringing the Louvins and the Delmores clear into the 1990s, the Whitstein Brothers have put an old spin on some new music. That's because, along with standards like "Pitfall," and "Knoxville Girl," they've recorded things like Simon and Garfunkel's "Sounds of Silence" and recent tunes by Nashville writers like Dave Olney, although each time they've tackled a tune they've given it the feel of an old-time brother duet. Raised in central Louisiana, the brothers' dad, R.C., had a weekly radio show in Alexandria. His sons began appearing, winning local talent contests at 11 and 12 years old, and then moved to local TV. Their first record, a single called "Louisiana Woman," was enough of a success during the early 1960s to encourage the duo's move to Nashville. As the "Whitt Brothers," Robert and Charles appeared on the Opry and toured with the likes of Faron Young and Porter Wagoner. Both were drafted into the Marines and eventually returned home, where they recorded a gospel album of Louvin Brothers songs (re-released by Rounder in 1994). A contract with Rounder was offered when label head Ken Irwin received a tape via bluegrass artist Jesse McReynolds. Their 1992 release earned the duo a Grammy nomination. The next year Charles made an album with Charlie Louvin, then in 1994 reunited with Robert, which led to several Opry appearances, and their most recent album. In 1997, due to the distance between their respective homes the brothers split again, and Charles returned to performing and recording with Charlie Louvin.

what to buy: *Sweet Harmony* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1996, prod. Ken Irwin) and *Rose of My Heart* ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1986/1994, prod. Ken Irwin) show the Whitsteins holding to a grand tradition and instilling it with new and exciting life.

what to buy next: *Sing Gospel Songs of the Louvins* ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1994) is a delightfully pure, full-filled Louvins tribute, recorded in 1969 (using the alternate spelling of their family name—Whitstine).

what to buy: The place to start is definitely *Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪½ (Curb/MCA, 1986, prod. various).

what to buy next: After *Greatest Hits*, *Give a Little Back* ♪♪♪♪ (Step One, 1996, prod. Ray Pennington) is the group's best in-print album.

the rest:

Doing It by the Book ♪♪♪½ (Word/Epic, 1988)

solo outings:

Buck White:

Poor Folks Pleasure ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1978)

More Pretty Girls than One ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1980)

the rest:
Trouble Ain't Nothin' but the Blues ♪♪♪½ (Rounder, 1987)
Old Time Duets ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1990)

solo outings:
Charles Whitstein:
(With Charlie Louvin) *Hoping That You're Hoping* ♪♪♪½ (Copper Creek, 1992)

influences:
◀◀ Louvin Brothers, Blue Sky Boys
▶▶ Charlie Louvin

Stephen L. Betts

Wilco

See: Uncle Tupelo

David Wilcox

Comparing David Wilcox with James Taylor is much like comparing a new Martin with a vintage Gibson—the compliment is mutually inclusive. And the accolades for Wilcox are lush and well deserved: Wilcox is "a superb guitarist whose sparkling acoustic accompaniments are anchored in a deep ringing vibrancy," according to the *New York Times*. Although Wilcox credits Joni Mitchell for inspiring his fluid open-tuning guitar stylings, perhaps Mitchell's greater contribution is the awakening of poetic muse—Wilcox's lyrics speak elegantly of life, love, and spiritual quest. To follow his sojourn through six recordings is to witness a blooming of human spirit, as early expressions of plaintive introspection give rise to later celebrations of hope. Although A&M eventually dropped Wilcox, this "songwriter's songwriter" continues to produce staple nourishment for folk connoisseurs worldwide. Like a favorite flannel shirt, his soft, cotton-texture repertoire provides warmth and comfort. And for the aspiring folk artist, Wilcox leaves an ironic encouragement "it's hard to starve in these United States."

what to buy: A moody artist exorcises some personal demons in the resonant triumph *Home Again, for the First Time* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1991, prod. Ben Wisch). "Chet Baker's Unsung Swan Song" details some last thoughts of a legendary drug-addicted trumpet player, as the "tiny boat" of his recovery sinks one last time. "She's Just Dancing" tells of one woman's solution to being hunted like meat. John Gorka's "Let Them In" preserves a soldier's scribbled poem found in a Philippine hospital during World War II. Wilcox exceeded the success benchmark of an esoteric genre when *How Did You Find Me Here* ♪♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1989, prod. Pat McCarthy) sold more than 100,000 copies. In "Jamie's Secret," Wilcox's signature poetics are set to a traditional melody, leaking devastating rumors about a woman who headed west to study poetry and evergreens. "Leave It like It Is" establishes Wilcox in the elite company of acoustic guitar titans like Michael Hedges and Phil Keaggy. As the paint jar tips and splashes the table with random perfection, we are reminded that good life imitates art.

what to buy next: Wilcox describes *Big Horizon* ♪♪♪♪ (A&M, 1994, prod. Richard Gottehrer, Jeffrey Lesser) as "coming to terms with what comes next." "Show the Way" perks the discouraged agnostic with, "Look, if someone wrote a play to glorify what's stronger than hate, would they not arrange the stage to look as if the hero came too late?" In an expression of maturing faith, Wilcox "plays against the reasons not to try," "keeping just what we're born with . . . only what I remember and believe." This album is a treasure for anyone seeking clean refreshing spirituality, without the proselytizing aftertaste. *East Asheville Hardware* ♪♪♪ (KOCH International L.P./Fresh Baked, 1995, prod. Nance Pettit, David Wilcox) showcases a repertoire of whimsical crowd pleasers not normally found on Wilcox's studio albums. Even if you think humor is best the first time around, these will grow on you like a spare tire. You'll find yourself wanting to turn your mom on to Chuck Brodsky's "Blow 'Em Away," where an old lady's little poodle (Fifi) falls victim to a drive-by shooting. (Apologies in advance to the animal rights activists.) *The Nightshift Watchman* ♪♪♪ (Song of the Woods, 1987, prod. Jerry Read Smith) is a snapshot of Wilcox's artistic puberty, a good-looking addition to the junior-high yearbook of debut recordings. And the artist already shows a propensity for successful opening lines as an underground worker in a nuclear missile silo breaks the ice with "I'm the nightshift watchman for the planet."

what to avoid: *Turning Point* ♪♪♪ (KOCH, 1997, prod. David Wilcox, Ric Hordinski) features the debut of electric guitar in a repertoire that provides shelter for victims of hard-rock warfare. This "big boring middle of my book of life" collection marks a turning point; but Wilcox will likely turn back after sowing some plugged-in oats. You won't be disappointed if it's a bargain purchase: Look for this disk in the neighborhood recycled shop.

worth searching for: *(Mostly) Live—Authorized Bootleg* (A&M, 1991) shows up occasionally at used record stores, with the marking "promotional copy, not for retail sale." Owning an "authorized bootleg" is a little like not inhaling; if you're hooked on Wilcox you have to find this one.

wild jimbos

influences:

Joni Mitchell, John Martyn, Nick Drake, Richie Havens

Just about every aspiring folk star who owns a CD player

Art Wojtowicz

Wild Jimbos

See: Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Wildcats

See: Rafe Stefanini, Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Robert Wilkins

Born January 16, 1896, in Hernando, MS. Died May 26, 1987, in Memphis, TN.

His blues life was a nearly-forgotten phase when the Rev. Robert Wilkins learned in 1968 that one of his old tunes had found new life. His 1929 dirge, "That's No Way to Get Along," had been resurrected by the Rolling Stones as "Prodigal Son" for *Beggars Banquet*. What Mick Jagger and Keith Richards may have seen as a tribute Wilkins bitterly perceived as a suspicious entreaty from the secular world he had rejected years earlier. Like Ishmon Bracey and other Delta singers who turned away from the earthly pursuit of the blues to join the church, Wilkins came to see his early career as a wayward path—even if, like Bracey, he remained proud of his accomplishments. Because of the many years he spent in Hernando, a Mississippi town just south of Memphis (for many years home to Jerry Lee Lewis), Wilkins's work bore traces both of the rhythmic Delta style and the more rag-tinged urban path of Frank Stokes. But Wilkins was his own man, as his dark one-chord moan, "Rollin' Stone," showed. After his rediscovery in the mid-1960s he told interviewers that he was steeped in the blues from infancy. The legendary Jim Jackson, author of "Kansas City Blues," is said to have often cradled the young Wilkins. After serving with the American Expeditionary Force in World War I, Wilkins started up his blues around Memphis, for a time rivaling Stokes, Jackson, and the young Memphis Minnie. Known for awhile as "Tim Wilkins" (using his middle name), he did some rambling, as far as Chicago for the World's Fair in 1933, but always returned to the Memphis area. Recording between 1928 and 1935, he explained years later, he quit the blues after a bloody brawl interrupted a Hernando performance. He became a gospel singer and minister with the Church of God in Christ, dabbling in extracurricular work as a root doctor. His life remained suspended in time until 1964, when he was found by a new generation of blues researchers. Wilkins refused to play the blues again, but he grudgingly overhauled several of his blues tunes into gospel pieces, including "Prodigal Son." Hurt when the Rolling Stones did not accord him the royalties he thought he deserved from their use of his song, Wilkins withdrew back into the spiritual world. Yet even long after his death in 1987, Wilkins is still being rediscovered by Stones fans intrigued by the band's influences.

what to buy: *The Original Rolling Stone* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo, 1989, prod. Richard Nevins) includes Yazoo's masters of these 14 Wilkins classics and a superbly-researched history by blues writer Steve Calt that fleshes out Wilkins's melancholy tale.

what to buy next: A 1971 concert recording, *Remember Me* ♪♪♪♪ (Genes, 1971, prod. David Evans), displays Wilkins in the service of the Lord, his guitar mastery slightly frayed but still suffused with the scent of the Delta. Wilkins would not play the blues, but in a way, it played him—or through him. *Memphis Blues 1929–35* ♪♪♪♪ (Document, 1991) has all 14 of Wilkins's sides, along with tracks by Memphis figures Allen Shaw and Tom Dickinson, but the liner notes are sketchy.

influences:

Jim Jackson, Garfield Akers, Buddy Taylor

Little Son Joe, Rolling Stones

Steve Braun

Brooks Williams

Born in Statesboro, GA.

Acoustic guitar wizardry and James Taylor-like vocals combine with poetic lyricism in Northhampton, Massachusetts-based singer-songwriter Brooks Williams. Balancing sensitive songs with inventive instrumentals, Williams weaves a tapestry of emotion. The son of an opera singer/organist and an Anglican priest, Williams is a product of the Suzuki approach to music education. Playing violin by the age of three, he switched to guitar three years later after a summer-camp cook showed him some blues chords. Initially inspired by the acoustic guitar-based songs played by Southern rock bands like the Allman Brothers Band and Marshall Tucker, Williams became more absorbed with the instrumental mastery of guitar stylists ranging from British folk guitarists John Renbourn, Bert Jansch, and Martin Carthy to distinctive Bahamian guitarist and vocalist Joseph Spence. Williams spent his teenage years living, with his family, in New Haven, Connecticut. He moved to western Massachusetts in 1985. In addition to five solo albums, Williams has released an all-instrumental album, *Ring Some Changes*, with guitarist Jim Henry. He produced Maria

Sangiolo's *Eyes of the World* and Salamander Crossing's *Passion Train*.

what to buy: Williams's fourth album and his first national release, *Back to Mercy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1993, prod. Johnny Cunningham) remains a celebration of musical diversity. Accompanying himself on acoustic and bottleneck guitars, Williams sets his songs to the unobtrusive playing of Kent Allyn (fretless and fretted bass, piano) and Doug Plavin (drums, percussion) and the vocal harmonies of Jonatha Brooke and Jennifer Kimball. In addition to showcasing his songwriting skills with seven originals, he shows off his guitar mastery on five innovative instrumentals.

what to buy next: With the release of *Jack Knife*, his follow-up to *Back to Mercy* ♪♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1995, prod. Colin Linden), Williams takes a further step. Recorded in Ontario with Canadian session players Gary Craig (drums, percussion) and Johnny Dymond, Williams allows his songs to breathe with deep emotion. Much darker than its predecessor, the album offers a journey into Williams's psyche.

the rest:
Red Guitar Plays Blue ♪♪♪ (Red Guitar Blue Music, 1989)
North from Statesboro ♪♪♪ (Red Guitar Blue Music, 1990)
How the Night-Time Sings ♪♪♪ (Red Guitar Blue Music, 1991)
Inland Sailor ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994)
(With Jim Henry) *Ring Some Changes* ♪♪♪½ (Signature Sounds, 1996)
Seven Sisters ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1997)

worth searching for: Williams's heartfelt playing was featured on a treasured compilation, *Motherless Children: A Bottleneck Gospel Blues Collection* (Time and Strike, 1996).

influences:
◀◀ Allman Brothers Band, Dickie Betts, Marshall Tucker, Joseph Spence, Bert Jansch, Martin Carthy, John Renbourn, Ry Cooder

▶▶ Greg Greenway, Maria Sangiolo, Peter Keane, Salamander Crossing

Craig Harris

Dar Williams

Born Dorothy Snowdon Williams, April 19, 1967, in Mount Kisco, NY.

Dar Williams is the quintessential female folk singer of the '90s, capturing society's awkward social transitions as well as the timeless "big questions" with graceful melodies and intelligent, often wry, lyrics. The daughter of a Yale-educated medical writer and a Vassar grad who raises funds for Planned Parenthood, Williams enjoyed a cozy childhood in an upscale Manhattan suburb. A sensitive soul with a crystalline alto voice and a keen eye for the comical, she wrote her first song at age 11 but shied away from performing until, at age 23, she managed to overcame a serious case of stage fright and hit the Boston coffeehouses. Gender roles, relationships, and stereotypes—from the innocence of childhood androgyny to a sexist boyfriend with roving eyes—are prime targets for Williams's lyrical twists. But she just as easily spins metaphorical tales about the deeper, more subtle tensions and pleasures of life, with either a delicate tug at the heartstrings or a humorous elbow in the ribs. Arrangements are generally kept simple, focusing on Williams's silky voice underpinned by her acoustic guitar, although some tunes feature a full band and, on one, you'll even hear a didgeridoo.

what to buy: Her second release, *Mortal City* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1996, prod. Steven Miller), is her best, offering a brilliant balance of depth and levity, delicacy and strength. On the boisterous "As Cool As I Am," the narrator dumps her lecherous boyfriend and regains her pride. "This Was Pompeii" likens one of history's most deadly, unforeseen disasters with the ashes of a failed relationship.

what to buy next: Williams's debut, *The Honesty Room* ♪♪♪½ (Burning Field Music, 1994/Razor & Tie, 1995, prod. Dar Williams, Adam Rothberg, David Seitz, Brooks Williams), has charm and wit but is much more straightforward and less ambitious than *Mortal City*.

the rest:
End of the Summer ♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez

David Yonke

Don Williams

Born May 27, 1939, in Floydada, TX.

Don Williams rode his velvety smooth tenor to the top of the country charts during the late 1970s and early 1980s, a time when his gentle, breezy songs about love and devotion fit in comfortably alongside the pop stylings of lesser singers such as Kenny Rogers and the more aggressive, rocked-up country of upstarts like Alabama. The soft-spoken Texan is a throwback to country's simpler days, but his sound was commercial enough to cross over to the pop charts on occasion, particularly with his biggest hit, the buttery "I Believe in You," which

topped the country charts and cracked pop's Top 30 in 1980. Not that Williams was a stranger to pop music; as a member of the Texas folk trio the Pozo Seco Singers, he'd visited the charts a few times during the 1960s folk boom. Their hits included mid-1960s nuggets "Time," "I Can Make It with You," and "Look What You've Done." But the group broke up after moving to Nashville during the early 1970s. Williams returned to Texas to work in his father's furniture business but made the Music City trek soon after when former Pozo Seco member Susan Taylor invited him to write songs for her. He launched a solo career soon after and scored his first hit with "The Shelter in Your Eyes" in 1972. He went on to become one of Nashville's classiest, most laid-back singers. He's also a fine writer whose songs have been recorded by artists as diverse as Johnny Cash ("Down the Road I Go"), Eric Clapton ("Tulsa Time"), and the Who's Pete Townshend ("'Till the Rivers All Run Dry"). His hitmaking ways continued through the 1980s, but country's growing emphasis on younger, faceless singers in the 1990s left little room for a guy like Williams, who moved to independent American Harvest in 1994 after more than 20 years with majors MCA, Capitol, and RCA. Though forgotten in his native country, where many of his albums are no longer in print, Williams's popularity in Europe, particularly England, thrives.

what to buy: With so few of his studio albums available, the anthology *20 Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1987, prod. various) encapsulates the years he was with MCA, one of his most successful and consistent periods. The song selection is pretty obvious, with "I Believe in You," "Tulsa Time," and the beautiful "Amanda" among them, but there's a timelessness to the material and a sincerity in Williams's voice that's hard to find in today's climate.

what to avoid: The performances on Williams's first live album, *An Evening with Don Williams: Best of Live* ♪♪ (American Harvest, 1995, prod. Don Williams) pale before the studio versions of recent and past hits.

the rest:
Don Williams Volume I ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1972)
Don Williams Volume III ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1974)
Greatest Hits, Volume I ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1975)
The Best of, Volume II ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1982)
The Best of, Volume III ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1984)
The Best of, Volume IV ♪♪♪½ (MCA, 1986)
Greatest Country Hits ♪♪♪½ (Curb, 1993)
The Ultimate Don Williams ♪♪ (Bransounds, 1995)
Borrowed Tales ♪♪♪½ (American Harvest, 1995)
Flatlands ♪♪♪ (American Harvest, 1996)

influences:
Bob Dylan, Hank Williams
John Anderson

Doug Pullen

Hank Williams

Born Hiram King Williams, September 17, 1923, in Mount Olive, AL. Died January 1, 1953.

Though Hank Williams died before he turned 30 and recorded for barely six years, he created a mythology as large as those of Elvis Presley or the Beatles in rock. Every songwriter covets his ability to pierce the soul with minimally drawn lines. Every performer craves the kind of charisma that would get them a half-dozen encores at the Grand Ole Opry. And every singer with self-destructive tendencies uses Williams as the measuring glass against which he compares his ability to drink himself to death. The Alabama-born son of a railroad engineer, Williams became a star of the Grand Ole Opry between 1949–52 after stints with radio shows in Shreveport, Louisiana, and Montgomery, Alabama. He has been inducted into both the Country Music and Rock 'n' Roll Halls of Fame. He also recorded as Luke the Drifter.

what to buy: Every single—and then some—in Williams's catalog has become a standard in its genre, making *40 Greatest Hits* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1978, prod. Fred Rose) the best place to start delving into Williams's material, both musically and contextually.

what to buy next: It's up for grabs, depending on what you want, because most of Williams's compilations will include some cuts from *40 Greatest Hits*. *The Original Singles Collection . . . Plus* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1990, comp. prod. Colin Escott) expands the Williams oeuvre to three discs but, deceptively, doesn't include many of his singles with wife Audrey. *Health and Happiness Shows* ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1993) contains eight radio performances from 1949.

what to avoid: *24 Greatest Hits* ♪♪ (PolyGram, 1976) and *24 Greatest Hits Volume II* ♪♪ (Polydor, 1977), two collections of posthumously overdubbed recordings. The original versions of all these songs are available elsewhere, rendering these collections superfluous. Mercury targeted the alternative-rock crowd with *Alone and Forsaken* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1995), which features Williams's most angst-ridden tunes. British rocker Matt Johnson, who had recorded a Williams tribute album, *Hanky Panky* ♪♪♪½ (Epic, 1995, prod. Matt Johnson, Bruce Lampcov), opened *Alone and Forsaken* with a monologue that insulted the many

country fans who didn't need to have Williams's greatness explained to them.

the rest:
Greatest Hits ♪♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1963)
Beyond the Sunset ♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1963)
Very Best Of ♪♪♪½ (Polydor, 1963)
I Saw the Light ♪♪♪♪ (Polydor, 1968)
Rare Demos: First to Last ♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1990)
I Saw the Light ♪♪♪ (PolyGram Special Markets, 1994)
The Hits Volume I ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1994)
The Hits Volume II ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1995)
Best Of—American Legends ♪♪♪ (PolyGram Markets, 1995)
Legend Lives Anew ♪♪♪ (PolyGram Special Markets, 1996)
Low down Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1996)

worth searching for: *The Collectors' Edition* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1987), an eight-disc, limited-edition set available only through Tower Records, collected the individual volumes that contained almost every recording Williams made for MGM in chronological order. *The Legend of Hank Williams* ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1996, prod. Joseph Wilson) is an abridgment of Colin Escott's Williams biography read by Sammy Kershaw and includes Williams's music.

influences:
◀◀ Carter Family, Roy Acuff
▶▶ Hank Williams Jr., Jimmie Dale Gilmore, every male country singer since

Brian Mansfield

Lucinda Williams

Born January 26, 1953, in Lake Charles, LA.

Unfortunately, the same qualities that make Lucinda Williams's music so great also ensure that there isn't more of it available for public consumption. The daughter of a poet/university professor, Williams is notoriously headstrong and has an artistic temperament ill-suited to issues of career logistics—stories of her clashes with labels and producers are legendary in the music business. Yet she is also one of the finest songwriters of her generation, with a gift for nailing a character or situation with the perfect detail. Her earthy voice also makes Williams her own best interpreter; if only we got to hear more of her songs! At the time of this writing, she has released just four full-length albums in 17 years. Her oft-delayed fifth album, *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road*, is scheduled to be released in 1998 on American Records.

what to buy: Williams made two early albums before she found her own voice, both as a writer and singer, and they're most notable as acts of homage to her country and Delta blues roots. Her third album *Lucinda Williams* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rough Trade, 1988, prod. Lucinda Williams, Gurf Morlix) is one of the signpost albums of post-punk Americana. Drawing on Williams's failed marriage (to Long Ryders drummer Greg Sowders) and eight years of pent-up career frustrations, these songs cut with an unbelievable intensity. The tough-minded feminine perspective of "I Just Wanted to See You So Bad" and "Passionate Kisses" rings absolutely true, and it's as unusual as it is emotionally rich. A triumph. One measure of this album's songcraft is that other singers frequently raid it for material: Mary Chapin Carpenter had a pop hit with "Passionate Kisses" and Patty Loveless a country hit with "The Night's Too Long," while Tom Petty covered "Changed the Locks" on his soundtrack for the 1996 movie *She's the One*.

what to buy next: The follow-up *Sweet Old World* ♪♪♪♪ (Chameleon, 1992, prod. Lucinda Williams, Gurf Morlix, Dusty Wakeman) is more self-conscious than its predecessor, but still damned fine. It's also grim, coursing with images of suicide, death, and despair. Fitting, then, that it closes with a cover of the late English cult folkie Nick Drake's "Which Will."

the rest:
Ramblin' on My Mind ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1979/1991)
Happy Woman Blues ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1980/1990)
Passionate Kisses ♪♪♪ (Rough Trade, 1989)

worth searching for: Williams's "Main Road" is one of the high points of the Victoria Williams tribute *Sweet Relief* ♪♪♪½ (Chaos, 1993, prod. various). Her most recent recorded work is as duet partner with others—with Steve Earle on "You're Still Standin' There," from his 1996 album *I Feel Alright*; and on two tracks on Terry Allen's 1996 album *Human Remains*.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Flannery O'Connor, Emmylou Harris, Robert Johnson, Rosanne Cash, Bonnie Raitt
▶▶ Victoria Williams, Joe Henry, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Iris DeMent, Amy Rigby

David Menconi

Mason Williams

Born August 24, 1938, in Abilene, TX.

Something of a modern-day renaissance man, Mason Williams is an entertainment triple threat. Best known as a recording

artist and composer, his most popular work is the enduring "Classical Gas," a piece which combines intricate guitar picking with sweeping orchestral accompaniment. But he's also a comedy writer who won an Emmy for his work on the groundbreaking '60s TV show *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* (it was Williams who conceived the satirical "Pat Paulson for President" gag). Finally, he has written many books of prose and poetry, and is also a conceptual artist whose work includes a short film in which a biplane draws a stem and leaves beneath the sun, turning it into the "world's largest sunflower."

what to buy: A compilation of tracks from his five Warner Bros. records, *Music 1968–71* ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard, 1992) shows the range of Williams's work, from "Classical Gas" and "Greensleeves" to more whimsical material such as "The Smothers Brothers Theme" and the wonderfully titled "I've Heard That Tear Stained Monologue You Do There by the Door Before You Go."

what to avoid: Proving there's no accounting for taste, *Classical Gas* ♪½ (American Grammaphone, 1987)—recorded with new-age techno-wienies Mannheim Steamroller and including a synthesized version of the title track—has proven to be one of Williams's most popular releases.

the rest:
The Mason Williams Phonograph Record ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1968)
A Gift of Song ♪♪½ (Real Music, 1992)

worth searching for: Williams has recorded a dozen or so albums, most of which are out of print. You're welcome to dig them up, but you might also want to stop by the New York's Museum of Modern Art, where his "Bus," a life-sized photographic poster of a Greyhound bus, is in the permanent collection.

influences:
◀◀ Andres Segovia, Flatt & Scruggs
▶▶ Mannheim Steamroller, Ottmar Liebert

Daniel Durchholz

Nathan Williams

See: Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas

Robin & Linda Williams

Formed 1973.

Robin Williams (born March 16, 1947), vocals; Linda Williams (born July 7, 1947), vocals.

The folk/country husband-and-wife duo began recording together in 1973 and first gained national exposure through their frequent guest appearances on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*. They specialize in a cross between folk and acoustic country, drawing heavily on bluegrass and classic country sources, including the Carter Family and Hank Williams.

what to buy: *All Broken Hearts Are the Same* ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1988) is a superb collection of originals highlighted by the duo's intricate arrangements and electrifying harmony vocals. "Rollin' and Ramblin'" is a poignant tale about the death of Hank Williams.

what to buy next: *Turn toward Tomorrow* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1993) is toe-tapping country featuring pure, full-country production, including a pedal steel guitar. Included is the honky-tonk drinking song "On the Day the Last Tear Falls."

the rest:
Rhythm of Love ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1990)
Robin and Linda Williams and Their Fine Group ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)
Live ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill, 1994)
Good News (Sugar Hill, 1995)
Sugar for Sugar ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1996)
Close As We Can Get/Nine 'till Midnight ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill)
Devil of a Dream N/A (Sugar Hill, 1998)

worth searching for: *Harmony* (June Appal, 1981) was the couple's first album together.

influences:
◀◀ Hank Williams, Ian & Sylvia, the Carter Family
▶▶ Tim & Mollie O'Brien, Barry & Holly Tashian

Douglas Fulmer

Victoria Williams

Born 1959, in Forbing, LA.

With her unusual, high-pitched voice and obviously quirky sensibility, Victoria Williams might seem at first like another indie-pop novelty. A few spins of her records, however, indicate a major artist. A superb songwriter and distinctive vocalist, Williams achieved a great deal of press coverage in 1993 and 1994 when she battled multiple sclerosis. Though her struggle against the disease has been an inspiring one—some major rock artists contributed versions of her songs to the tribute/benefit album *Sweet Relief* in 1993—her work has been somewhat overshadowed by the story. She grew up in Louisiana and attended college there. After trekking around the country, playing her songs for hikers, punks, and anyone else who'd listen, she made her way to Los Angeles, where she waited tables and performed when she could. At last she

Robin & Linda Williams **(© Jack Vartoogian)**

signed with Geffen, but her debut album sold poorly, as did her subsequent critically acclaimed effort with Rough Trade. It wasn't until the release of *Sweet Relief*—featuring contributions from Lou Reed, Pearl Jam, Soul Asylum, and many others—that she became better known in the pop world. Her subsequent albums have enjoyed greater attention, though she has remained a bit too unique for the mainstream. Even so, her version of the standard "What a Wonderful World" graced a commercial for Microsoft computer software. She is the subject of the song "Miss Williams' Guitar," by the Jayhawks, of which her husband Marc Olson was a member. A progressive, homespun Christian, Williams spins compassionate tales of friends, family, and nature that evince both childlike wonder and old-soul wisdom. Musically, she draws from an extraordinary pool of influences—gospel, country, folk, acid rock, pop—to create works that never seem derivative. Her live performances reach levels of intimacy and spontaneity that are rare in contemporary music.

what to buy: *Loose* ♪♪♪♪ (Mammoth, 1994, prod. Paul Fox) is Williams's most engaging collection—which is saying something. While it is governed, like the earlier albums, by her luminous world view, her experiences with illness and loss give everything greater heft.

the rest:
Happy Come Home ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1987)
Swing the Statue! ♪♪♪½ (Rough Trade, 1990)
This Moment: Live in Toronto ♪♪♪½ (Mammoth, 1995)

influences:
Joni Mitchell, Kate Bush, the Roches

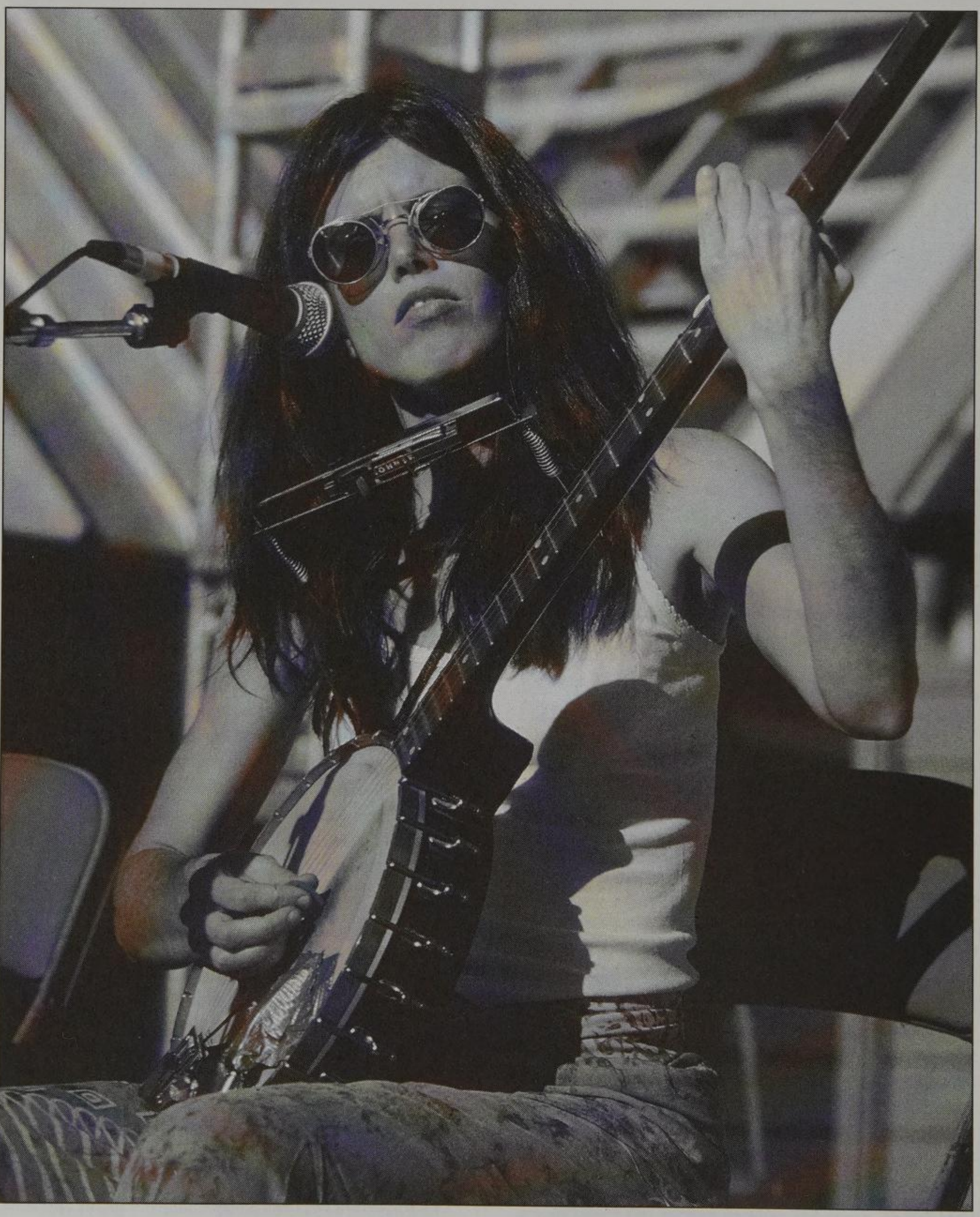
Simon Glickman

Cris Williamson

Born 1955, in SD.

Cris Williamson has been a major influence on the spread of

cris williamson



Women's Music. Her self-produced, all-female 1975 album, *The Changer and the Changed*, ranks as one of the top-selling independent releases of all time. An American tour with Women's Music innovator Meg Christian in 1982, and a double-LP recorded during their Carnegie Hall concerts, helped to solidify her position in Women's Music. Founder of her own record company, Olivia, in 1978, Williamson recorded 14 albums during the label's 16 years in existence and became one of the first women to write, produce, record, and issue her own music. Many of her songs focus on inner-spirit and the natural beauty of the plains and open spaces of the American West. Waterfalls, horses, and plateaus are recurring images. Other songs take a darker look at modern societal woes including homelessness, aids, hunger, and environmental issues. The daughter of a forest ranger, Williamson grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota, Colorado, and Wyoming; as a child, her home had no electricity and she listened to music on an old, wind-up, phonograph. Recorded shortly after her 16th birthday, Williamson's self-titled 1971 debut album sold a respectable 11,000 copies. A year later, she rose to prominence with *The Changer and the Changed*. Williamson's song "Don't Lose Heart" was used as the theme song in the film *New Year's Day*. A science-fiction fable for children that she wrote, produced, and narrated, *Lumiere*, received a prestigious award from *Parents' Choice*. In 1991 Williamson and long-time musical collaborator and romantic interest Tret Fure organized an all-volunteer pediatric AIDS organization, In The Best Interests of the Children.

what to buy: Recorded during a Berkeley, California, concert celebration of the 15th anniversary of the release of Williamson's ground-breaking 1974 album, *The Changer and the Changed*, *Circle of Friends: Cris Live* ♪♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1991, prod. Cris Williamson) retains the passionate elegance of the original recording. In addition to heartfelt renditions of songs from *The Changer and the Changed*, the album includes several previously unrecorded originals and memorable interpretations of James Taylor's "Millworker" and Hank Williams's "Hey, Good Lookin'."

what to buy next: The original spark that ignited the women's music revolution, *The Changer and the Changed* ♪♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1974, prod. Cris Williamson) continues to be a powerful experience.

the rest:
Artistry of Cris Williamson ♪♪ (Avanti, 1964)
A Step at a Time ♪♪ (Avanti, 1965)
Cris Williamson ♪♪ (Ampex, 1971/Olivia, 1981)
Cris Williamson ♪♪ (Kickback, 1972, EP)
Live Dream ♪♪ (Dream Machine, 1978)
Strange Paradise ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1978)
Lumiere ♪♪♪ (Pacific Cascades, 1982)
Blue Rider ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1982)
(With Meg Christian) *Meg and Cris at Carnegie Hall* ♪♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1983)
Portrait ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1983)
Prairie Fire ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1984)
Snow Angel ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1985)
Wolf Moon ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1987)
(With Teresa Trull) *Country Blessed* ♪♪♪ (Second Wave, 1989)
The Best of Cris Williamson ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1990)
(With Tret Fure) *Postcards from Paradise* ♪♪♪ (Olivia, 1993)
(With Tret Fure) *Between the Covers* ♪♪♪ (Wolf Moon and Goldenrod, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Meg Christian, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert
▶▶ Teresa Trull, Ferron, Phranc, Sinead O'Connor

see also: *Tret Fure*

Craig Harris

Victoria Williams **(© Ken Settle)**

Robin Williamson

Born November 24, 1943, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Rather than ask what Robin Williamson does, it might be more appropriate to ask what he doesn't do. Besides his skills on guitar, Celtic harp, smallpipes, pennywhistle, fiddle, and other instruments, Williamson's talents have been showcased through his songwriting, storytelling, theater work, and even in a collaboration on a spy novel. Perhaps best known for being half of the Incredible String Band, Williamson's career has transformed many times since the ISB broke up in 1974. He has a vast amount of material, from traditional tunes to original work, and from solo to group efforts, including his work with Robin Williamson and His Merry Band between 1977 and 1979. His storytelling and bardic style are highly regarded, and concert-goers reminisce about his one-man shows which frequently included one set-long story backed by music. Williamson has been all but ignored by the harping community; this is a little difficult to understand considering his obvious dexterity and complete understanding of Celtic ornamentation. Perhaps his musical diversity has made him difficult to classify.

Williamson's songwriting is legendary, his talent in this arena unquestionable. However his voice, which is included in most of

alan lomax (1915—)

Ethnomusicologist and visionary Alan Lomax literally learned his craft in the field, working with his father, John, one of the first people to collect songs and make field recordings of traditional music. In 1933, the younger Lomax curtailed his studies at Harvard to accompany his father on the first of several recording expeditions in the deep south. During that expedition, the Lomaxes discovered Lead Belly (Huddie Ledbetter), then an inmate at Angola prison. In 1934, Ledbetter became their driver and assistant, and was later brought up north and managed for a brief time by John Lomax. Alan graduated from the University of Texas in 1936, and became the first funded "Assistant in Charge" of the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress in 1937. In that position, which he held until 1942, he made essential recordings of Jelly Roll Morton and Lead Belly, as well as more than 3,000 discs of field recordings. In 1942, he made the first recordings of Muddy Waters, who shortly thereafter electrified and spearheaded the Chicago blues phenomenon. Lomax was one of the first broadcasters to bring folk music to a national audience. After spending much of the fifties overseas making field recordings, Lomax worked at Columbia University developing a statistical study of patterns of folk music forms termed cantometrics. Lomax has released dozens of recordings culled from his field recordings, as well as influential books like *Mister Jelly Roll* and *The Land Where the Blues Began.* In recent years, Lomax has worked on a CD-ROM project titled the Global Juke Box, intended to tie together his far-flung interests in music, dance, and folk culture.

Michael Parrish

his recordings, leaves a lot to be desired. He has been nominated for several Grammy awards, credited as an influence on a wide variety of songwriters working today, and has worked on a variety of scores for television and movies, including *Willow.*

Williamson might best be described as creativity in action. Constantly exploring new realms in music and the art of storytelling, he has woven Celtic harp with electronic keyboards, story with song, and world beat with traditional material. All of this results in quite an eclectic collection of solo work, including *The Mabinogi*, a multimedia theatrical production based on ancient Welsh stories, and *Songs for Children of All Ages*, a creative arrangement of children's songs. Williamson is truly a bard of our time.

what to buy: *Celtic Harp Airs and Dance Tunes* ♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax, 1997, prod. Robin Williamson) is a well-chosen collection of Celtic tunes, representing much of Celticdom, including Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Williamson's harping skills are most fully represented on this album, showing off his feeling for the fine nuances of ornamentation and his gift for simple but effective harp arrangements. From the eerily moody "Mwynen Mon" and the sultry "The Rocks of Pleasure" to the upbeat and catchy "The Scholar," he brings the tunes alive. *Wheel of Fortune* ♪♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1993, prod. Mitch Greenhill) is a live album with guitarist John Renbourn. This shows Williamson at his best, playing rhythm guitar, Celtic harp, and whistle, as well as providing vocals to some of the tracks. Renbourn and Williamson blend beautifully, and seem to have an electricity together. Particularly lovely tracks include "Port Patrick," "Bunyan's Hymn/I Saw Three Ships/English Dance," and "The Snows."

what to buy next: *Legacy of the Scottish Harpers, Volume I* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984, prod. Robin Williamson) and *Legacy of the Scottish Harpers, Volume II* ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1986, prod. Robin Williamson) contain a fine collection of traditional Scottish tunes performed beautifully by Williamson on solo Celtic harp. He even performs several tunes on a rare Bray harp, which has a distinctive and slightly harsh sound.

what to avoid: *Ten of Songs* **woof!** (Flying Fish, 1988, prod. Robin Williamson) has been described as "word jazz," and that seems as good a term as any. The backing music is exciting, but the almost-spoken, almost-sung stream of consciousness is very grating.

the rest:

Journey's Edge ♪♪♪ (Edsel, 1977)
Songs of Love and Parting ♪♪ (Pig's Whisker Music/BMI 1981)
Music for the Mabinogi ♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1984)
Winter's Turning ♪♪ (Pig's Whisker Music/BMI 1986)
Songs for Children of All Ages ♪♪♪ (Flying Fish, 1987)

influences:

Mike Heron, Joe Heaney, Sylvia Woods

Jay Ansill, Robert Plant, Chris Caswell, Eurythmics, John Lennon, Bob Dylan

see also: *The Incredible String Band, John Renbourn*

Jo Hughey Morrison

Bob Wills

Born James Robert Wills, March 6, 1905, near Kosse, TX. Died May 13, 1975.

Inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1968, Bob Wills never cared much for the fiddle as a youth—that is, until he stood before an anxious crowd. His father was late for the gig, and somebody had to play. So "Jim Rob" did what he could: repeated the same six songs until his dad showed up. The audience responded to the 10-year-old, and an entertainer was born. In 1931 Wills founded the Light Crust Doughboys, named after the sponsor of the group's radio show. Founding member Milton Brown couldn't take Wills's bawdy demeanor and was replaced by Tommy Duncan. Both Wills and Duncan left the Doughboys in 1933 and created the first of many incarnations of the Texas Playboys. Wills blended electric steel with standard guitar for a thrilling new sound, while Duncan supported his reputation as perhaps the greatest of the Playboys' vocalists. Oklahoma farmers and Texas ranch hands packed dance halls throughout the region to see the Playboys, and at the end of the Depression Wills was among the most famous musicians alive. The band had broadened to 18 members under the supervision of guitarist Eldon Shamblin. A revamped vocal version of "New San Antonio Rose," the group's signature tune, swept the country.

World War II threatened to end all their careers, however. Duncan enlisted in the Army shortly after Pearl Harbor, and other members followed right behind him. Wills temporarily disbanded the Playboys and joined the army himself in late 1943. Taking orders was never his strong suit, though, and he and Duncan were soon discharged. The two reunited and formed a smaller, tighter version of the Playboys. In 1943 Wills also married for the sixth time, to Betty Anderson; that union would last until his death. Though Wills outsold the pop-oriented Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman for the next decade, the advent of television decimated the dance hall crowds. Poor health, due to his fondness for cigars and drink, kept Wills out of the spotlight as well (he would lead his last sessions from a wheelchair, after suffering a stroke in 1970). Country radio didn't play Wills much, either, but he never considered himself a country artist. Instead, he was "the King of Western Swing"; to him, they were two separate styles of music. Merle Haggard had the opportunity to play fiddle on Wills's final project, and the singer championed the innovator with the 1982 album *Tribute to the Best Damn Fiddle Player in the World (Or My Salute to Bob Wills)*. Asleep at the Wheel paid similar tribute in 1994 with *Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys*.

what to buy: Assembled with Rhino's usual flair and passion, the two-disc *Anthology, 1935–73* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, comp. prod. James Austin, Bob Fisher) spans nearly 40 years of Wills's recordings, from his early days on the Vocalion label to his final sessions in December 1973, just a year and a half before his death. The compilation includes most of the Playboys' biggest hits, but it tends (probably rightly) to concentrate on the years when Duncan was the group's vocalist.

what to buy next: *Encore* ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1994, comp. John Johnson) surveys Wills's career another way. This three-disc box set compiles studio recordings made for Liberty between 1960–63, seven cuts from 1963–64 Ft. Worth, Texas, radio shows and Wills's final recordings, made in December 1973. (Wills had a stroke the night of the first session and remained in a coma for 15 months until his death; Haggard plays fiddle on the final four tracks, recorded the next day.) It's a fascinating look at the latter days of a legend. *Columbia Historic Edition* ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1982) is an excellent one-disc collection of hits from the group's commercial heyday.

what to avoid: Bob Wills and the McKinney Sisters' *Tiffany Transcriptions* ♪ (Rhino, 1991), a largely pop-oriented outing with yodeling sisters Dean and Evelyn McKinney.

best of the rest:

21 Golden Hits ♪♪♪ (Hollywood)
The Best of Bob Wills ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1973)
The Best of Bob Wills, Volume 2 ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1975)
King of Western Swing/Wills and His Playboys ♪♪♪ (MCA)
24 Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Mercury, 1977)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume I ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1982)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume II ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1984)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume III ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1984)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume IV ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1985)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume V ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1986)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume VI ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1987)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume VII ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1987)
The Golden Era ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia, 1987)
Fiddle ♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation, 1987)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume VIII ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1988)
The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volume IX ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1990)

Greatest Hits ♪♪♪ (Curb, 1990)
Country Music Hall of Fame ♪♪♪ (MCA, 1992)
The Essential Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys (1935–47) ♪♪♪ (Legacy, 1992)
For the Last Time ♪♪♪ (Capitol, 1994)
Classic Western Swing ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1994)

worth searching for: Only the misleadingly named *21 Greatest Hits* collects Wills 1960s recordings for Dallas, Texas' Longhorn label. *The Longhorn Recordings* ♪♪♪♪ (Bear Family) does a much better and more complete job.

influences:
◀◀ Milton Brown, Adolf Hofner
▶▶ Asleep at the Wheel, Merle Haggard, Spade Cooley, Johnny Gimble

Craig Shelburne and Brian Mansfield

Joemy Wilson

Born September 1, 1945, in Fort Worth, TX.

Joemy Wilson has been hailed by critics on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the world's foremost interpreters of the music of Turlough O'Carolan, the legendary blind eighteenth-century Irish harper and composer. Raised in a musical family in New Haven, Connecticut, Wilson studied piano and violin as a child and began voice lessons in high school. While at Barnard College in New York, she received her first fretted dulcimer, using it to accompany her singing, and then she took up the hammered dulcimer in 1979. She toured for several years as the musical half of Mime Musica, a performing duo featuring her husband, Jon Harvey. In 1984 they created their independent label, Dargason Music. "Dargason," an English country dance tune, is the title track of Wilson's debut album, *Dargason: A Dulcimer Sampler*, which features fretted dulcimer and vocals. Her 10 subsequent recordings showcase her brilliant hammered dulcimer playing, with a splendid ensemble of Celtic harp, classical guitar, flute, violin, and bodhrán. As one of the pioneers of the dulcimer renaissance and the Celtic revival of the early 1980s, Wilson calls her style "Baroque Irish chamber music." Irish critic John Paddy Browne writes, "Now, at last, we have a new interpreter who has converted the great man's exquisite music to the hammered dulcimer and restored it to its natural classical setting." In addition to the four Celtic titles, Wilson has recorded three Christmas albums, an album of Beatles tunes, and a recording of lullabies. The *Dulcimer Lullabies* recording was showcased on the ABC special *In a New Light* starring Arsenio Hall and Paula Abdul.

what to buy: *Carolan's Cup* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1984, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser) is the first in a series of Celtic recordings and is exclusively works of O'Carolan, from the well-known "Sheebeg and Sheemore" to the lesser known "Number 171" from a collection of numbered O'Carolan tunes without titles. The Carolan Consort of musicians that accompany Wilson's hammered and fretted dulcimer includes Anisa Angarola (guitar), Valarie King (flute, piccolo, alto flute, bass flute), Miamon Miller (violin), and Sylvia Woods (Celtic harp). *Carolan's Cottage* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1986, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser) is the second recording devoted to the music of O'Carolan and includes a beautiful version of "Morgan Megan." The third recording of O'Carolan's tunes, *Celtic Dreams* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1989, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser), also includes other tunes from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, such as "Coilsfield House." *Celtic Treasures* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1994, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser) includes four O'Carolan pieces as well as works by two other Irish harpers, Cornelius Lyons, and Rory Dall O'Cahan. This recording includes an assortment of jigs, reels, airs, and a hornpipe which is a treasure-chest of Celtic delights. The CD liner notes on each of these recordings are exceptionally well presented with the complete history/background for each tune.

what to buy next: *Beatles on Hammered Dulcimer* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1989, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser) is a fun collection of 12 Lennon/McCartney masterpieces played on the hammered dulcimer as instrumentals. Wilson is accompanied by the same talented musicians as in her Celtic recordings. *Dulcimer Lullabies* ♪♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1991, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser) is subtitled "Quiet-time Music for Children on Hammered Dulcimer." These lullabies come from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Holland, Germany, and the United States and include a lovely Wilson original, "Naya's Song." All of these recordings are available from Dargason Music, P.O. Box 189, Burbank, California 91503 or through e-mail at dargason@earthlink.net.

the rest:
Gifts ♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1985)
Gifts, Volume II ♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1987)
Gifts III ♪♪♪ (Dargason Music, 1990)

worth searching for: Joemy Wilson's cassette-only debut recording, *Dargason: A Dulcimer Sampler* ♪♪♪ (Back Lot Recordings 1982/Dargason Music, 1986, prod. Joemy Wilson, Scott Fraser), features her fretted dulcimer skills and also includes some nice vocals that are not heard on any of her subsequent recordings.

influences:

Chieftains, Derek Bell, Sean O'Riada, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Madeline MacNeil, Carrie Crompton

Heidi Cerrigione

Jesse Winchester

Born May 17, 1944, in Shreveport, LA.

Early in his career, Jesse Winchester was known as much for his conscientious objection to the Vietnam War that sent him up to Canada during the late 1960s as for the sweet, finely edged country/folk songs, often invoking the American South, that he wrote and recorded beginning in 1970. His first album, produced by Robbie Robertson of the Band and engineered by Todd Rundgren, signaled the emergence of a sensitive and literate tunesmith with a lot on his mind. By the time of his third album, the appropriately titled *Learn to Love It* (1974), Winchester was familiar with expressing the complexities and frustrations of his exile from the States and his Memphis home, but with his gentle bluesy style, he articulately told the story, sometimes even with a touch of humor, without complaining about it. He became a Canadian citizen in 1973 and still lives in Canada, but was able to return to the States and tour here after President Carter's amnesty for draft resisters in 1977. Though he recorded most prolifically between 1970 and 1981, Winchester's songs continued to be recorded by artists ranging from Wynonna ("Let's Make a Baby King") and Emmylou Harris and Chris Smither ("Thanks to You") to dance-floor proponents Weather Girls ("Well-a-Wiggy"). Canadian label Stony Plain reissued the Winchester album catalog, originally released on Ampex and Bearsville, in 1994, 1995, and 1996.

what to buy: *The Best of Jesse Winchester* ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1988, prod. various), compiled by Bill Flanagan, collects highlights from the seven albums Winchester recorded between 1970 and 1981 and includes his only Top 40 hit, "Say What" from 1981's *Talk Memphis* album.

what to buy next: *Jesse Winchester* ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1970, prod. Robbie Robertson) and *Learn to Love It* ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1974, prod. Jesse Winchester), his first and third album respectively, both recently reissued, were originally critical favorites by the tasteful, then reclusive folk/blues songwriter whose songs have gracefully withstood the test of time.

the rest:

Third Down, 110 to Go ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1972)

Let the Rough Side Drag ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1976)
Nothing but a Breeze ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1977)
A Touch on the Rainy Side ♪♪♪½ (Stony Plain, 1978)
Talk Memphis ♪♪♪ (Stony Plain, 1981)

worth searching for: His most recent recording, 1988's *Humour Me* ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill, 1988, prod. Jesse Winchester) is Winchester at his most relaxed. Recorded in Nashville, the album features 12 tracks and includes his laid-back readings of "Thanks to You," "Let's Make a Baby King," and "Well-a-Wiggy" with stellar accompaniment by Sam Bush, Béla Fleck, Jerry Douglas, Mark O'Connor, and other top players.

influences:

Bob Dylan, Band

John Prine, Lyle Lovett

David Sokol

Chubby Wise

Born Robert Russell Wise, October 2, 1915, in Lake City, FL. Died January 6, 1996.

A fiddle player's fiddle player, Chubby Wise's music associations read like a who's who of country music. Performing and recording with the likes of Hank Snow (as a member of Snow's Rainbow Ranch Boys), Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, Mac Wiseman, Connie Gay, Howdy Forrester, and Ervin Rouse (composer of "Orange Blossom Special"), Wise certainly left his mark on country music.

what's available: Wise's final album, *An American Original* ♪♪♪♪ (Pinecastle, 1995, prod. Sonny Osborne), features backing by the Osborne Brothers, plus guitarist David Crow and bassist Terry Smith. Wise's unique choice of songs makes this album stand out; in addition to public-domain fiddle favorites like "Cotton-Eyed Joe," "Little Liza Jane," and "Under the Double Eagle," Wise also lends his distinctive fiddle tone to the country ballads "I Can't Stop Loving You" and "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry," plus the beautiful gospel melody of "It Is No Secret (What God Can Do)." Wise's first album for Pinecastle, *Chubby Wise in Nashville* ♪♪♪½ (Pinecastle, 1994) is almost as good, joined as he is by the Osbornes and members of the Del McCoury Band. The album was recorded in three days in a Nashville house in which Patsy Cline once lived.

worth searching for: There's not much to lead you on the trail to finding Wise and Mac Wiseman's *Chubby Wise and Mac Wiseman* ♪♪♪—a live recording from Gilley's in Texas—except for the song titles. It's a double-length cassette filled with such

country tunes as "Faded Love," "Wabash Cannonball," "The Wreck of the Old '97," and "The Prisoner's Song."

influences:

Bill Monroe, Howdy Forrester

Jimmy Campbell, Stuart Duncan

Randall T. Cook

Mac Wiseman

Born May 23, 1925, in Cremora, VA.

Known as "The Voice with a Heart" because of his distinctive warm, burred tenor voice, renowned bluegrass singer and guitarist Malcolm "Mac" Wiseman began his career playing bass with mountain singer Molly O'Day. An early member of Flatt and Scruggs's Foggy Mountain Boys, Wiseman spent most of 1949 playing guitar with Bill Monroe before launching his own band in 1950. He signed with Dot the following year; that association was long and fruitful, producing a number of best-selling singles and the recordings that earned Wiseman his enduring reputation. Working as a sometimes A&R man for Dot, Wiseman was a prolific recording artist during his career, cutting also for Capitol, Vetco, MGM, RCA Victor, and CMH. One of the few bluegrass singers who didn't maintain a regular band, Wiseman often worked with the Osborne Brothers during the 1980s and 1990s. His pioneering contributions to bluegrass were officially acknowledged in 1994 with his induction into the International Bluegrass Music Association's Bluegrass Hall of Honor.

what to buy: *Early Dot Recordings, Volume III* ♪♪♪♪½ (County, 1992, reissue prod. Gary B. Reid), drawn from Wiseman's early-1950s Dot material, gives a good feel for the singer's unique and highly enjoyable take on bluegrass. It includes such Wiseman favorites as "Don't Let Your Sweet Love Die," "Goin' like Wildfire," and "I'll Still Write Your Name in the Sand." Volumes one and two also come highly recommended but are unavailable on CD.

what to buy next: *Classic Bluegrass* ♪♪♪ (Rebel, 1989, prod. Lou Ukelson, Fred Bartenstein), which reissues mid-1970s Vetco recordings, displays Wiseman's facility with sentimental "heart" songs like "Mary of the Wild Moor," "Letter Edged in Black," and "Black Sheep," along with excellent backup from the Shenandoah Cutups. *The Mac Wiseman Story* ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1991, prod. Arthur Smith), a slightly stronger set also drawn from mid-1970s recordings, includes solid remakes of many of Wiseman's biggest songs, including "'Tis Sweet to Be Remembered," "Love Letters in the Sand," "I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home," and "Jimmie Brown, the Newsboy." The backing band includes Billy Edwards and Tater Tate from the Shenandoah Cut-Ups.

what to avoid: *Teenage Hangout* **woof!** (Bear Family, 1993, prod. Richard Weize) is a bizarre reissue that brings together Dot singles from the 1950s aimed at the newly developing teen rock 'n' roll market. It's difficult to imagine a more ill-conceived or badly executed marketing ploy—and the music is bad, too.

the rest:

The Osborne Brothers and Mac Wiseman ♪♪♪½ (CMH, 1979)
24 Greatest Hits ♪♪½ (Deluxe, 1987)
Grassroots to Bluegrass: A Very Special Collection ♪♪♪ (CMH, 1990)

influences:

Bradley Kincaid, Blue Sky Boys, Wilf Carter

Glenn Yarbrough, Bobby Osborne, Charlie Waller, Peter Rowan

Randy Pitts and Jon Hartley Fox

Kate Wolf

Born Kathryn Louise Allen January 27, 1942, in San Francisco, CA. Died December 10, 1986, in San Francisco, CA.

A prolific songwriter whose career was just starting to blossom when she died tragically in 1986 of complications from a bone marrow transplant to treat leukemia, Kate Wolf was arguably one of the best songwriters of her generation. She spent her formative years in Berkeley, California, later re-locating to Sonoma County, and her music always reflected her California roots. Although she had musical training in her youth, she did not begin to write and perform seriously until she was almost 30, taking her inspiration from a recording of Rosalie Sorrels singing songs of "Utah" Phillips. She was among the earliest and most successful of independent artists, choosing to produce her recordings on her own Owl label (all have now been re-released on Rhino), rather than sign with a major recording label. She began touring nationally in 1977. Her first studio album was released in 1979 and marked the beginning of a very successful collaboration with talented guitarist Nina Gerber, whose accompaniment provided an excellent complement to Wolf's lyrics. Wolf's songs were intimate and autobiographical, yet always seemed to be speaking directly to each listener. She was at the peak of her powers at the time of her death. During her lifetime, she received several critical awards from the National Association

of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers (NAIRD) and in 1987, she became the first musician inducted into the NAIRD Independent Hall of Fame.

what to buy: *Gold in California* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1986/Rhino, 1994, prod. Kaleidoscope), a two-CD retrospective, is an excellent overview of Wolf's music and also showcases Nina Gerber's remarkable talent.

what to buy next: *Give Yourself to Love* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1985/Rhino, 1994, prod. Kate Wolf, Tom Diamant) is another two-CD set recorded live in concert. *Close to You* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1981/Rhino, 1994, prod. Bill Griffin, Tom Diamant) is perhaps Wolf's best studio album.

what to avoid: Wolf's family, in collaboration with Nina Gerber, has released several projects of previously unreleased material since her death. Production values and technical quality are marginal at best although the material is worth the attention of dedicated Wolf fans. These include: *The Wind Blows Wild* ♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1988/Rhino, 1994, prod. Nina Gerber), *Looking Back at You* ♪♪ (Rhino, 1994, prod. Bill Griffin), and *Carry It On* ♪♪ (Flat Rock, 1996, Nina Gerber). *Breezes* ♪ (Gadfly, 1995, prod. Lionel Kilberg), is a re-release of a 1973 album called *We Walked by the Water* on Shoestryng Records. An early and not-ready-for-prime-time collaboration with lyricist Lionel Kilberg, for which Wolf provided only the music, it is thoroughly unrepresentative of her later work. It should be of interest to Wolf "completists" only.

the rest:
Back Roads ♪♪♪ (Owl, 1976/Kaleidoscope, 1976/Rhino, 1994)
Lines on the Paper ♪♪♪ (Owl, 1977/Rhino, 1994)
Safe at Anchor ♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1979/Rhino, 1994)
Poet's Heart ♪♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1985/Rhino 1994)
An Evening in Austin ♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope, 1989/Rhino, 1994)

influences:
◀◀ Bruce "Utah" Phillips, Rosalie Sorrels, Gil "Jellyroll" Turner
▶▶ Nanci Griffith

Neal Walters

Wolfstone

Formed 1988, in Scotland (mostly from the east coast of Sutherland).

Duncan Chisholm, electric fiddle; Ivan Drever, vocals, acoustic guitar; Stuart Eaglesham, acoustic and electric guitars, vocals; Struan Eaglesham, keyboards; Mop Youngson, drums; Wayne MacKenzie, bass; Stevie Saint, bagpipes, whistles.

Sounding like a collision between a traditional dance band and a grungy rock outfit, Wolfstone merged the old with the new, the acoustic with the electric, and in so doing breathed new life into old tunes, energized their fans, and made traditional music accessible to rock and pop audiences. Wolfstone took Scottish traditional music, melded with the youthful exuberance of contemporary rock, and carved a significant niche for themselves. The seven members of Wolfstone are from the highlands of Scotland, but eschew the commonly romanticized version of their homeland, presenting a more realistic picture through their music. Portraits of the everyday joys and struggles of the resilient and musically rich people of Scotland are central to Wolfstone's music. Wolfstone began during the late '80s when Duncan Chisholm and some friends formed a professional dance band to play music for ceilidhs. The potent combination of fiddle, bagpipes, and a rock rhythm section played to an audience wanting more from traditional music. The original Wolfstone, including Struan Eaglesham on keyboards and brother Stuart Eaglesham on guitar, subsequently welcomed accomplished guitarist and songwriter, Ivan Drever, into the fledgling group. Wolfstone's first album, Unleashed, released on Iona Records in Scotland, quickly became the label's biggest seller, earning the band a Silver Disc Award by the Scottish Music Industry Association. With the release of The Chase in 1992, Wolfstone's touring schedule expanded to include Europe and North America. Their success at the international Tonder Festival in Denmark caused them to be the only band ever to be invited to perform for three consecutive years. The excitement generated at Wolfstone concerts has been much discussed and is almost legendary among their fans. Unfortunately due to a combination of management problems and record company squabbles, the band called it quits at the end of 1997. Individual members will continue as solo performers and in different ensembles.

what to buy: *The Chase* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Iona 1992/Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Phil Cunningham), the group's groundbreaking second album, garnered rave reviews from critics all over the world. "Tinnie Run," starting with an in-your-face electric guitar riff and segueing into pumped up traditional tunes, perhaps best exemplifies the Wolfstone sound. The Chase also includes one of the band's most requested songs, "The Prophet." Stuart Eaglesham rocks passionately as he sings of a mysterious sage of Scottish legend. "The Appropriate Dipstick" is a showcase for piper Dougie Pincock on this recording. The album ends with "Cannot Lay Me Down," a set that includes the title song writ-

ten and sung by Drever and ends with the gorgeous "Lady of Ardross," written by Eaglesham.

what to buy next: *The Half Tail* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1996, prod. Chris Harley). Working with Chris Harley, a producer for bands like Runrig, this album shows a more rocked up and polished Wolfstone, with more emphasis on the rhythm section. Included is the standout "Bonnie Ship the Diamond" which exquisitely combines a well-known traditional whaling song with "The Last Leviathan" a song from the dying whale's point of view. The album begins with an ethereal wash of synthesizer and percussion followed by the exuberant piping of Stevie Saint. Other standouts are "Gillies," another pipe infused stomper, and "Glenglass" a bit more laid back mix of keyboards and fiddle. From the opening drum roll to the final pipe drone, *Year of the Dog* ♪♪♪♪ (Green Linnet, 1994, prod. Phil Cunningham) kicks with frenetic fiddling, sparkling piano, and spirited flutes, whistles, and pipes, paired with a grungier background than *The Chase* and *Unleashed*. *Year of the Dog* broke the band out of the earlier more acoustic mode and represented a change to a rockier sound while still appealing to Celtophiles and rock enthusiasts alike; hard-core traditionalists could be found dancing along with rock fans to the tunes from this album. The original songs range from pithy social and political commentary to tender love songs. The tunes are a combination of new and old, but all are derived from the long-ago tradition with a contemporary spin. Producer Phil Cunningham has once again contributed several tunes and placed his well-known production stamp on the project.

what to avoid: *Wolfstone I* and *Wolfstone II* are very early versions of the band that even the band would rather not have in circulation. The owner of the master tapes began re-releasing them when Wolfstone began getting worldwide attention.

the rest:
Unleashed ♪♪♪♪ (Iona, 1991/Green Linnet, 1992)
Burning Horizons ♪♪♪½ (Iona, 1993) (EP)
Pick of the Litter ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet, 1997)
This Strange Place N/A (Green Linnet, 1998)

worth searching for: *Wolfstone: Captured Alive Video* (Grampian Television/Wolfstone Partnership, 1992) This 68-minute video shot at a concert in Aberdeen, Scotland, is a good look at the band's live shows and you can get a sense of the energy that is talked about so much.

influences:
◀◀ Silly Wizard, Battlefield Band, Runrig, Bothy Band, Planxty

▶▶ Burach, Paperboys, Rock Salt and Nails, Rawlins Cross

Denise Sofranko

Wooden Leg

See: Blood Oranges

Sylvia Woods

Born May 23, 1951, in Oak Ridge, TN.

Largely responsible for the growing popularity of the folk-harp in folk music today, Sylvia Woods got her start the way many folk-harpers do, playing the pedal harp while in college. Soon after graduation, she discovered the lure of the folk harp, and traveled to Ireland and Brittany to learn more. Her enthusiasm for an instrument little known at the time led her to develop teaching material and methods particular for this type of harp. Her book *Teach Yourself to Play the Folk Harp* is the most-used instruction manual for the instrument. Woods's credits as a performer are long and impressive. She started her career largely through her work with Robin Williamson and His Merry Band, from 1976–79. In 1980 she won the prestigious All-Ireland Harp Championship. She has worked with a wide variety of musicians, including Caswell/Carnahan, Al Stewart, Joemy Wilson, and Jimmy Messina. She has shared her expertise of the folk harp with budding harpers world-wide through workshops, instructional videos, master-classes, and judging of competitions. The focus of her work today seems to be the promotion of the folk harp to the music world.

what to buy: Sylvia's first recording, an original work, *The Harp of Brandiswhiere: A Suite for Celtic Harp* ♪♪♪♪ (Tonmeister, 1982, prod. Don Snyder, Sylvia Woods) is a ground-breaking recording. It tells the heroic tale of a harper who saves his world with his music. Entirely instrumental, this recording demonstrates Woods's adept handling of her instrument, amazing the listener with the fluidity of the folk harp. Winner of several awards, including *Best Fantasy Album*, this music has a history of causing radio stations to be swamped with calls when it is played on the air.

what to buy next: Both of Sylvia's Christmas recordings *Three Harps for Christmas* ♪♪♪½ (Tonmeister, 1985, prod. Don Snyder) and *3 Harps for Christmas Volume II* ♪♪♪ (Tonmeister, 1989, prod. Don Snyder) are filled with masterfully performed holiday material. Each recording contains a nice mix of familiar, contemporary, and traditional carols and songs for the season, as played on three different types of folk harp.

influences:

Alan Stivell

Joemy Wilson, Ruth Barrett

Jo Hughey Morrison

Woodshed All-Stars

See: Mac Benford & the Woodshed All-Stars

The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Formed 1973, in Woodstock, NY. Disbanded 1978.

Happy Traum; Artie Traum, Jim Rooney, guitar, vocals; Bill Keith, banjo; John Herald, guitar, vocals; Maria Muldaur; Roly Salley; Pat Alger; others.

The hills of Woodstock, New York, a small artistic town 90 miles north of New York City, came alive during the 1970s with the communal spirit of the Woodstock Mountain Revue. With Happy and Artie Traum setting the pace, the group came together in a sense of fun and musical camaraderie. While traditional material served as the major source for their repertoire, the Revue showcased the folk-like original songs of John Herald, Roly Salley, and Pat Alger and offered unique interpretations of songs by Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams, Flatt and Scruggs, the Delmore Brothers, James Taylor, and Bobby Charles. While the nucleus of the Woodstock Mountain Revue featured the Traums, banjo player Bill Keith and guitarist-vocalists Jim Rooney and John Herald, other musicians, including Maria Muldaur, Eric Andersen, John B. Sebastian, Rory Block, Eric Kaz, and the late Paul Butterfield, made important contributions to their albums.

what to buy: *Music from Mud Acres* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1977, prod. Happy Traum, Artie Traum) includes tracks from the four albums recorded by the Woodstock Mountain Revue. In addition to memorable renditions of tunes by Woody Guthrie, James Taylor, Lester Flatt, and Doc Watson, the collection showcases the original songs of revue members John Herald ("Warm Rain" and "Starry Eyed Song"), Roly Salley ("Killing the Blues," "The First Waltz," and "Pretty Lucky") and Artie Traum ("Barbed Wire" and "Cold Front").

what to buy next: The first album by the Woodstock Mountain Revue, *Mud Acres: Music among Friends* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1974, prod. Happy Traum, Artie Traum) captures like-minded musicians getting together to jam and have fun. The emphasis is on traditional folk music and bluegrass with songs including "Darlin' Corey Is Gone," "Titanic," and "Jackhammer John."

the rest:

Pretty Lucky ♪♪ (Rounder, 1978)

Back to Mud Acres ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1981)

influences:

Bob Dylan, Band, Greenbrier Boys

Old and in the Way, Peter Rowan

see also: *Happy Traum, Artie Traum*

Craig Harris

Glenn Yarbrough

Born January 12, 1930, in Milwaukee, WI.

Glenn Yarbrough was something of a folk music anomaly, wielding a lyrical tenor voice instead of a more rough-hewn, working-class style. His distinctive tone helped make him a focal point of the Limeliters, the enormously popular folk group Yarbrough joined in 1959. Yarbrough became transformed by music while studying in the Great Books program at St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. There, in 1951, he heard a performance by the legendary Woody Guthrie. After the show, Guthrie joined Yarbrough and his roommate, Jac Holzman, in their dorm room, and the three spent all night talking and singing. "Guthrie taught me that music could help change the world," Yarbrough later commented. He headed for New York City and the ultra-happening folk scene in 1955. But the thrill of performing in Greenwich Village gave way to financial realities, and he landed a steady-paying job at Chicago's Gate of Horn Club in 1956, for a weekly salary of $150. The Limeliters discovered his talents when Yarbrough played the Cosmo Alley folk club in Los Angeles in 1959. During Yarbrough's time with the Limeliters (1959–63), the group became one of the best-known folk acts in the country. Led by Lou Gottlieb, who earned a Ph.D. in musicology from UCLA, and Paris-born Alex Hassilev, they were a smash with the smart set, mixing an intellectual brand of humor with traditional and international folk songs. Yarbrough left the Limeliters in 1963 to strike out on his own, signing with RCA the same year. His first album was titled, appropriately, *Glenn Yarbrough: Time to Move On*, and included

the title song, "You Know My Name," and "Four Strong Winds." He followed that in 1964 with *One More Round* and *Come Share My Life*. Yarbrough's breakthrough year occurred in 1965, when the single "Baby the Rain Must Fall," from the motion picture starring Steve McQueen, went to Number 12 on the *Billboard* pop chart. The album of the same name is generally considered his best, featuring such tracks as "Lonesome, Long Time Blues," "She," and "I've Been To Town." Between 1964 and 1968, Yarbrough recorded 12 albums for RCA and was nominated for several Grammy awards. But he was growing tired of the music business. In 1967 he took the bulk of his earnings from RCA and built a school for underprivileged children in the San Bernadino Mountains of California. After leaving RCA in 1968 with a final album, perhaps aptly titled *We Survived the Madness*, Yarbrough devoted considerable energies to other facets of the business, mainly on the publishing end. He and poet/author Rod McKuen founded their own publishing firm, Stanyan Music Co., around the same time Yarbrough signed with Warner Bros. in 1968. That venture produced a pair of minor anthology albums, with McKuen providing the liner notes. Yarbrough continued to record throughout the 1970s and 1980s, although without a good deal of commercial success. During the late 1980s, he briefly re-formed the Limeliters with new members. Presently, he lives in southern California—mostly on his boat (he's an expert and avid long-distance sailor), and continues to record, both as a solo act and with vocalist daughter Holly as accompanist. Yarbrough performs regularly on the concert tour trail and is involved with two major projects: *Through a Lighthouse Window* for public radio, and *The Forgotten Carols*, a solo holiday concert.

what to buy: *Baby the Rain Must Fall* ♪♪♪♪ (RCA, 1965/Folk Era, 1997, prod. Neely Plumb) remains the finest example of Yarbrough's range and sensibilities.

the rest:
Glenn Yarbrough: Time to Move On ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1964)
Come Share My Life ♪♪♪ (RCA, 1965)
Yarbrough Country ♪♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1969)
Live at the Troubadour ♪♪♪ (Brass Dolphin, 1978)
The Forgotten Carols ♪♪♪ (Calabasas, 1994)
Live at Harrah's Reno ♪♪♪ (Calabasas, 1995)
(With Holly Yarbrough) *Family Portrait* ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1995)
Live at the Troubadour ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1995)
(With Holly Yarbrough) *Sing Annie Get Your Gun* ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1996)
All-Time Favorites ♪♪♪ (Folk Era, 1997)

influences:
◀◀ Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger

▶▶ Paul Simon, Neil Young

Bob Paxman

Peter Yarrow

See: Peter, Paul & Mary

Young Tradition

Formed 1964. Disbanded 1969.

Heather Wood, vocals, whistle; Royston Wood (died in 1990), vocals, percussion; Peter Bellamy (died in 1991), vocals, guitar, whistle, concertina.

The Young Tradition suits the seeming oxymoron of its name. Drawing on the simple, unaccompanied folk singing of the Copper Family, the group infused the tradition with its members' influences and ideas, including blues and rock elements and a cheerful irreverence. The group had a short life together, but its influence endured in England as the link between finger-in-the-ear traditional singing and electrified rave-ups. The members' lives were touched by tragedy; Royston Wood was killed in a 1990 auto accident, and Peter Bellamy, who embarked on a solo career but never found his comfortable place in the folk world, committed suicide in 1991. Heather Wood still lives and works in New York City as a writer, lecturer, and musician with the group Poor Old Horse.

what's available: *The Young Tradition/So Cheerfully Round* ♪♪♪♪♪ (1966, 1967/Transatlantic, 1996, prod. Nathan Joseph) containing largely unaccompanied vocals, highlights the group's strong, creative harmonies. *Galleries* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1968, prod. Bill Leader), a fascinating mix, has instrumental backing from Young Tradition and guests Dave Swarbrick (fiddle), Dolly Collins (portative organ), Sandy Denny (piano), and the Early Music Consort, and the Royston Wood and Heather Wood project *No Relation* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Transatlantic, 1977, prod. Royston Wood, Tony Platt) were released on a single CD in 1997. *No Relation*, which features Bellamy along with the unrelated Wood and Wood and thus might as well be a Young Tradition album, is an eclectic group of songs, including a medieval plainchant and an American traditional song, with various musicians providing simple backing. The 1997 combined recording also contains three chanteys known as the "Chicken on a Raft" EP.

worth searching for: Young Tradition and Shirley and Dolly Collins recorded *The Holly Bears the Crown* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Fledg'ling, 1969/1995, prod. John Gilbert) shortly before the group broke up. It's a wonderfully English holiday recording, featuring pas-

sages from Shakespeare and Virginia Woolf and songs sacred and secular, Christian and pre-Christian. "Is It Far to Bethlehem?," with its simple vocals by Shirley Collins and Heather Wood, raises goosebumps.

solo outings:

Peter Bellamy:

Both Sides Then ♪♪♪♪½ (Topic, 1979/Fledg'ling, 1992, prod. Peter Bellamy)

influences:

◀◀ Copper Family, Everly Brothers, Ewan MacColl

▶▶ Sandy Denny, Albion Band, Cordelia's Dad

Pamela Murray Winters

Jesse Colin Young

Born November 22, 1941, in New York, NY.

Like many a folkie who frequented the acoustic circuit of the Village during the early '60s, Jesse Colin Young eventually caught the rock bug, switched to bass, and formed the Youngbloods, a band that lasted a half-dozen years and produced a handful of enduring tracks ("Darkness, Darkness," "Sunlight"). Out on his own again by the early '70s, Young slipped into a smooth-rock persona, writing tunes that reflected the serenity of his Colorado mountain home ("Ridgetop"), his love of family life ("Song for Juli"), and general bliss ("Light Shine"). Though pleasant and well-recorded, a lot of these songs are of their time—the mellowness just doesn't transfer all that well into the modern era. Nevertheless, Young maintains a loyal fan base, and he remains active as a performer to this day.

what to buy: Rather than getting caught in the laid-back bedrock of any single Young album, *The Best of Jesse Colin Young: The Solo Years* ♪♪♪ (Rhino, 1991, prod. Jesse Colin Young) extracts the occasional highlights—and taken in this form shows that the man knew how to put together a good light pop song. *Best* includes "Four in the Morning," "Sugar Babe," and "Morning Sun," in addition to his own live (if less effective) version of the Youngbloods classic "Sunlight." Young gets stellar backing along the way from the likes of Hank DeVito, Timothy B. Schmit, John Sebastian, and Mike Porcaro.

the rest:

Together ♪♪½ (Warner Bros., 1972)
Song for Juli ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1973)
Light Shine ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1974)
Songbird ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1975)
On the Road ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1976)

influences:

◀◀ Bob Dylan, Beatles

▶▶ Dan Fogelberg, Pure Prairie League

David Simons

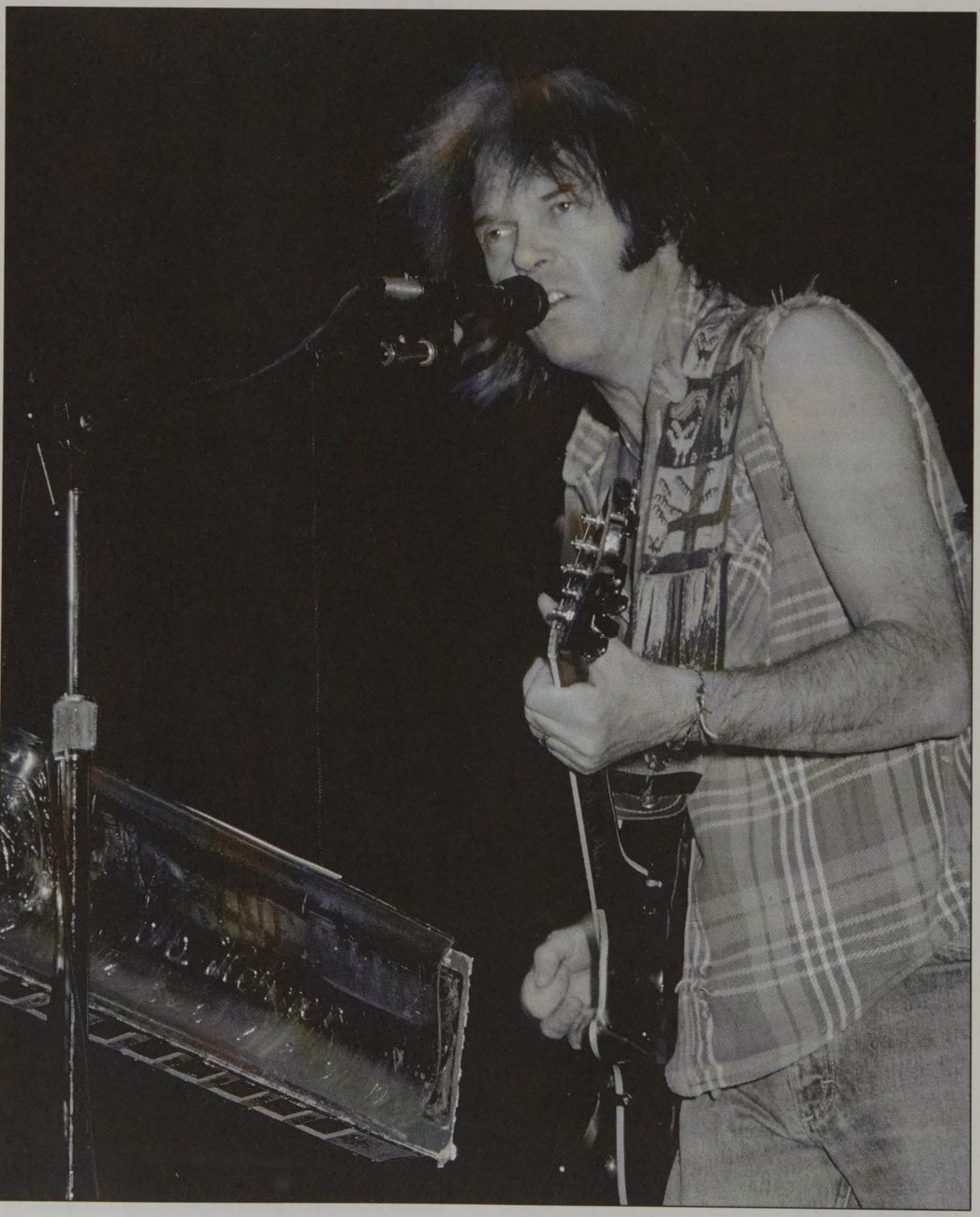
Neil Young

Born November 12, 1945 in Toronto, Canada.

Because Neil Young is an extremist who never sticks with any one extreme for very long (not to mention that he's a brilliant artist), the length and breadth of his influence is enormous. Who else can claim Sonic Youth as well as Uncle Tupelo as his spiritual progeny? Of course, the rather profound downside is that many of his stylistic shifts seem about as well-thought-out as drunken mood swings. From style to style, the consistent thread in Young's work is his catalog of ongoing obsessions—cars, highways, Indians, ch-ch-changes—with his own stylistic restlessness serving as musical metaphor for his thematic variations on motion. Like an erratic home run hitter, even Young's whiffs are at least somewhat entertaining. His initial impact in the country field was as lead guitarist in the pioneering California country-rock band Buffalo Springfield during the mid-'60s. Since then, he has never gone too long in his wandering without returning to some variation of roots rock. Unfortunately, his folksy singer-songwriter side tends to be less interesting than his primordial guitar-mangling side. His best work comes on those occasions when he unites both halves. Someday, if Young really does put out *Decade II* (the much-rumored mullet-disc retrospective that has been in the works since the late '80s), maybe it will all make sense.

what to buy: *Tonight's the Night* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1975, prod. David Briggs, Neil Young) is the spookiest album Young (or anyone else) has ever made. Haunted by images of death and decay, this is macabre honky-tonk music that lands in a pitch-black nether world somewhere between Robert Johnson and Hank Williams. The best albums Young has made since then are all, in some way, Young battling the ghosts he conjured up on *Tonight*. *After the Gold Rush* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1970, prod. Neil Young, David Briggs, Kindle Paces) goes down smoother and is almost as powerful as *Tonight*. *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1969, prod. David Briggs, Neil Young) is in the same mold as Buffalo Springfield, just with the guitars turned up to 11. *Rust Never Sleeps* ♪♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1979, prod. Neil Young, David Briggs, Tim Mulligan) is folklore, yet was also the album that cemented Young's credibility with the punk generation. It has one of his best songs ever, "Pocahontas."

neil young



what to buy next: *Harvest* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1972, prod. Elliott Mazer, Neil Young, Jack Nitzsche, Henry Lewy) is one of the landmarks of '70s-vintage West Coast folk-rock, and also Young's most popular album. *Harvest Moon* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1992, prod. Neil Young, Ben Keith) is the sequel to the original *Harvest*. It's surprisingly successful, in part because of the dark imagery lurking within the music's pretty placid surfaces. Of Young's handful of live albums, country/folk fans will probably get the most mileage out of *Unplugged* ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1993, prod. David Briggs), which offers a career-spanning lineup of songs.

what to avoid: Of all Young's schizoid '80s genre experiments, *Old Ways* ♪♪ (Geffen, 1985, prod. Neil Young, Ben Keith, David Briggs, Elliott Mazer) is the one that should've worked. His live shows from the period with his band International Harvester were great, and Young has a better feel for straight country than the technopop and blues he was dabbling with before and after. Instead, it's slick and lifeless (although *Old Ways* is notable because it's the album that got Young sued by his record label for making non-commercial records). Even worse is the rockabilly caricature *Everybody's Rockin'* ♪♪ (Geffen, 1983, prod. Elliott Mazer, Neil Young), which sounds like Young flailing around in desperate search of God only knows what.

the rest:
Neil Young ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1969)
Journey through the Past ♪♪ (Warner Bros., 1972)
Time Fades Away ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1973)
On the Beach ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1974)
Zuma ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1975)
Long May You Run ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1976)
American Stars 'n Bars ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1977)
Decade ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1978)
Comes a Time ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1978)
Live Rust ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1979)
Hawks & Doves ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1980)
Re-ac-tor ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1981)
Trans ♪♪½ (Geffen, 1982)
Landing on Water ♪♪½ (Geffen, 1986)
Life ♪♪♪½ (Geffen, 1987)
This Note's for You ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1988)
Freedom ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1989)
Ragged Glory ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1990)
Arc ♪♪ (Reprise, 1991)
Weld ♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1991)
Lucky 13 ♪♪♪ (Geffen, 1993)
Sleeps with Angels ♪♪♪♪ (Reprise, 1994)
Mirror Ball ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1995)
Broken Arrow ♪♪½ (Reprise, 1996)
Year of the Horse ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1997)

Neil Young **(© Ken Settle)**

worth searching for: Among the best of Young's array of "lost albums" is *Chrome Dreams* ♪♪♪♪½, a bootleg made from an acetate copy of an album Young worked on during 1975–76. The album never came out, but the songs—including "Pocahontas," "Too Far Gone," "Sedan Delivery," and "Powderfinger"—later turned up on other albums.

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Byrds
▶▶ Uncle Tupelo, Jayhawks, Bruce Springsteen, T-Bone Burnett, Joe Henry, R.E.M., Sidewinders, Beat Farmers

see also: *Crosby, Stills & Nash*

David Menconi

Steve Young

Born July 12, 1942, in GA.

Steve Young's songs have bolstered the careers of others—notably the Eagles, Hank Williams Jr., and Waylon Jennings—but the southern singer/songwriter has never come close to tasting fame on his own. That's hardly surprising, since Young's eclectic style draws on blues, folk, country, rock, and mountain styles: it's simply too diverse to package and sell to the masses. Which is not to say it's not worth checking out. A native southerner, Young moved to the West Coast during the late 1960s, where he was an integral part of the California country-rock movement (Gram Parsons, Chris Hillman, Bernie Leadon, and Gene Clark all appeared on Young's 1969 debut, *Rock Salt & Nails*). From there he has gravitated toward Austin, Texas, Nashville and, once again, Los Angeles, with varying degrees of success. His songs alone make him well worth checking out, but he's also an agile guitarist and an expressive singer.

what to buy: A *de facto* best-of release, *Solo/Live* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1991, prod. Heinz Geissler) contains acoustic performances of Young's songs that have been made famous by others, including "Seven Bridges Road" (the Eagles) and "Montgomery in the Rain" (Hank Williams Jr.), plus some that have influenced him—the traditional "Go to Sea No More" and Bob Dylan's "Don't Think Twice, It's Alright." Young proves himself more than a great songwriter, though; he's also a terrific guitarist and vocalist.

diane zeigler

what to buy next: *Switchblades of Love* ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon, 1993, prod. J. Steven Soles) puts him in a full-band setting with impressive results. Highlights include "Angel of Lyon," written with Tom Russell, and the harrowing title track.

the rest:
Honky Tonk Man ♪♪♪ (Mountain Railroad, 1975/Drive Archive 1994)
Seven Bridges Road ♪♪♪½ (Reprise, 1971/Rounder 1982)
To Satisfy You ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1982)

worth searching for: The best-of collection *Lonesome, On'ry & Mean: Steve Young, 1968–78* ♪♪♪♪ (Raven, 1994) is available as an Australian export. Of Young's older, out-of-print material, look for *Rock Salt & Nails* ♪♪♪½ (A&M, 1969/Edsel, 1994), *Renegade Picker* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1976), and *No Place to Fall* ♪♪♪½ (RCA, 1978).

influences:
◀◀ Bob Dylan, Hank Williams
▶▶ Steve Earle, Townes Van Zandt, Gary Stewart, Tom Russell

Daniel Durchholz

Z

Diane Zeigler

Born in VT.

Diane Zeigler may be the Greta Garbo of contemporary folk music. After releasing an impressive debut album, *Sting of the Honey Bee*, in 1995, she announced her retirement from music and headed to the seclusion of western Massachusetts, with her husband, Geoffrey Cary Sather, a private school dean and occasional guitar player, and their daughter. One of five children, Zeigler consistently has balanced her music with humanitarian activism. Shortly after an older brother succumbed to illness, she dropped out of college and traveled to the jungles of Venezuela to become the director of an orphanage. Returning to northern Vermont, Zeigler attracted attention as an actress. Music, however, proved a greater lure. Inspired by the early-1970s folk-pop of James Taylor, Dan Fogelberg, and Jackson Browne, Zeigler, who had taught herself to play guitar, moved to Boston with plans of becoming a singer-songwriter. Performing at open mics and coffeehouses, often with Sather on guitar, she became known for her well-crafted balladry and emotional vocals.

what to buy: *Sting of the Honeybee* ♪♪♪ (Rounder, 1995, prod. Artie Traum, Scott Petito), Zeigler's only album, documents her understanding and compassion for the "common" folk. Accompanied by a full, acoustic-based band, she offers an insightful glimpse at such memorable characters as a surviving spouse, a struggling artist, and an Atlantic fisherman, and provides uplifting hope with her songs "Leap of Faith" and "Walk on Water." The only non-original tune, James Taylor's "Millworker," fits snuggly into the album's theme.

influences:
◀◀ Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Dan Fogelberg
▶▶ Barbara Kessler, Maria Sangiolo, Jennifer Kimball, Catie Curtis

Craig Harris

Radim Zenkl

Born 1966, in Ostrova, Czechoslovakia

Imagine coming of age in the '70s and '80s in Cold War–era Czechoslovakia. You've already shown talent as a young child, and studied composition and classical guitar in school, but you find your attention drawn to something a little more elusive. Ever since Pete Seeger did a concert in Prague two years before your birth, and Czechs actually started constructing banjos based only on photos of that show, American string music has been something of an underground phenomenon. There are now over 100 bluegrass bands in your country—even some of your friends have defected to America and they're sending back tapes. You love the stuff, and you yearn to go to the source. Add to all that the fact that you're massively talented, possessed of a sheer creative will so powerful that no genre, not even a conventional instrument, can contain it. What then? Well, it means you're mandolin phenom Radim Zenkl, and in 1989, a mere three months before the communist government is toppled, you defect and head immediately to San Francisco to commingle with your musical heroes—among them the legendary David Grisman, who runs his own record label and has never heard anything like you in his life. Zenkl's insertion into the pantheon of American mandolin gods was swift. His first album on Grisman's Acoustic Disc label came out in 1991, the year he got to play for Vaclav Havel at a reception at UCLA. The following year he won the national championship at the prestigious Winfield, Kansas, festival. Now, with three albums to his credit, his reputation continues to grow, although Zenkl still specializes in the unexpected. When most mandolinists content themselves with fiddle tunes, bluegrass, or string-swing,

Zenkl writes music so innovative that he has to modify his instrument to near-unrecognizability just to accommodate it. He currently plays a mandolin of his own design, with a standard scale length but a fingerboard width of 3 7/8" (a mile wide for a mandolin), and a custom-designed bridge with adjustable tuners for each string. Needless to say, it's uncommon to see this sort of freewheeling creativity in any genre, and the mandolin world has its share of hidebound traditionalists. Upon hearing Radim's beguiling, unclassifiable music, one wonders if he would be any less a creative force had he taken up jazz, or electronic music, or anything else. Instead, the mandolin is his medium, although to listen to him play one hears not so much a "mandolinist" but a musician.

what to buy: Although he released an album in Czechoslovakia in 1989, *Galactic Mandolin* ♪♪♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc, 1991, prod. Radim Zenkl, David Grisman) is for all intents his debut album, and few first albums could have shattered expectations like this. It's all solo mandolin—no other instruments, no overdubs—with a peculiar unifying device: the first cut is played on a mandolin tuned in the normal fashion, on the second one each pair of strings is tuned to a minor second interval, the next a major second, the next a minor third and so on—13 cuts in all. In lesser hands this could be mere gimmickry, but this brilliant album is nothing less than an instrumental, compositional tour de force. The unaccompanied mandolin may never have delivered such sustained energy and variety of musical color as in the hands of this remarkable young master.

the rest:
Czech It Out ♪♪♪½ (Acoustic Disc, 1994)
Strings and Wings ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie, 1996)

influences:
◀◀ David Grisman, Dave Apollon, Jethro Burns
▶▶ Slavek Hanzlik, Evan Marshall

Chris Rietz

Zydeco Force

Formed 1987, in Lawtell, LA.

Jeffery Broussard, one-row and three-row accordions; Shelton Broussard, guitar; Kent Perre August, guitar; Robby "Mann" Robinson, bass; Herbert Broussard, frattoir; Raymond Thomas, drums.

Robby "Mann" Robinson, originally from Opelousas, Louisiana, got his chops working the northern California blues circuit with acts like Etta James. When he relocated back to his home town, he worked with local performers like Roy Carrier in Lawtell. It was there that he met Jeffery Broussard, the son of late great Creole accordionist Delton Broussard. The two joined forces and created Zydeco Force in 1987. While their best playing tends to emphasize the one-chord vamps and solid grooves similar to the great Lawtell Playboys with which Delton Broussard played for years, Robinson has fueled the transition into a slicker, urban brand of zydeco that distinguishes them from most other rural zydeco groups.

what to buy: *It's La La Time* ♪♪♪♪ (Flat Town, 1995, prod. Robby "Mann" Robinson) shows the almost schizo nature of Zydeco Force. The traditional tunes are there, including Leo Thomas's updating of Canray Fontenot's "Tit Monde" as "Why You Wanna Make Me Cry?," and "Broken Hearted" from the repertoire of John Delafose. The band sways between this and a more urban sound almost cut by cut.

what to buy next: What makes Zydeco Force unique is how they move between the urban and rural sounds of zydeco. The dominate sound in *Zydeco Push* ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1993, prod. Robby "Mann" Robinson) is the more urban sound. Maybe it's just that Robinson originals, which make up most of the songs, lack any of the grit and funk of the more rural side that this group shows in live performance.

the rest:
The Sun's Going Down ♪♪♪ (Maison de Soul, 1995)

worth searching for: *Zydeco Shootout at El Sid O's* (Rounder, 1991, prod. Scott Billington), a sampler of zydeco bands live at the famous El Sis O's club, features two classics by Zydeco Force. "Madeline" is a Cajun tune made popular by Cajun fiddler and songwriter Adam Hebert that is syncopated into a hard-driving zydeco dance tune by the group. "I'm on My Way" has that odd, old, blues waltz feel that shows up in Creole music like Canray Fontenot's "Bonsoir Moreau" or Beau Jocque's "Moreau." It's a hypnotic kind of groove that is worth the price of the recording.

influences:
◀◀ Rockin' Dopsie, Clifton Chenier, John Delafose
▶▶ Keith Frank, Geno Delafose, Chris Ardoin

Jared Snyder

Zydeco Hi-Rollers

See: Beau Jocque

musicHound

folk

Resources and Other Information

Compilation Albums

Publications

Web Sites

Record Labels

Radio Stations

Festivals and Workshops

musicHound compilation albums

If you're looking for some good folk or roots music by a variety of performers, these compilation albums would be a good place to start. (We've broken the list down by type of music to make your life a little easier.)

Bluegrass

Appalachian Stomp: Bluegrass Classics ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
The Best of Bluegrass: Preachin', Prayin' and Singin' ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury)
The Best of Bluegrass, Vol. 1: Standards ♪♪♪♪♪ (Mercury)
Blue Ribbon Bluegrass ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Bluegrass Class of 1990 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Bluegrass from Heaven: The Essential Gospel Collection ♪♪♪ (CMH)
Bluegrass Super Hits ♪♪♪½ (Columbia)
Bluegrass Suspects ♪♪♪ (Kaleidoscope)
Fifty Years of Bluegrass Hits ♪♪♪ (CMH)
Flatpicking '97 ♪♪♪ (FGM)
Hand-Picked: Twenty-Five Years of Rounder Bluegrass ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
The Minnesota Album ♪♪ (MBOTMA)
Mountain Music Bluegrass Style ♪♪♪½ (Smithsonian/Folkways)
Rounder Bluegrass Guitar ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Son of Rounder Banjo ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Steel Rails, Classic Railroad Songs, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Steel Rails, Classic Railroad Songs, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Top of the Hill Bluegrass: The Sugar Hill Collection ♪♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill)
True Life Blues: The Songs of Bill Monroe ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)
20 Bluegrass Originals: Hymns ♪♪♪½ (Deluxe)
Will the Circle Be Unbroken ♪♪♪♪ (United Artists)
Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (Universal)

Blues

Alabama Blues 1927–1931 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
The Copulatin' Blues ♪♪ (Jass Records)
Deep Blue: Rounder Blues Anthology ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Essential Blues ♪♪ (House of Blues)
Harmonica Masters ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
Jackson Blues 1928–1938 ♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
Mama Let Me Lay It On You 1926–1936 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
Masters of the Delta Blues: The Friends of Charlie Patton ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
Memphis Jamboree 1927–1936 ♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
Memphis Town ♪♪ (Memphis Archives)
Mississippi Moaners 1927–1942 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
News & the Blues, Tellin' It Like It Is ♪♪♪½ (Columbia)
Please Warm My Weiner ♪♪ (Yazoo)
Preachin' the Gospel—Holy Blues ♪♪ (Columbia)
Raunchy Business—Hot Nuts and Lollipops ♪♪ (Columbia)
St. Louis Blues 1927–1932 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
St. Louis Blues 1929–1935: The Depression ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
String Bands (1926–1929) ♪♪♪½ (Document)
Texas Music, Vol. 1: Postwar Blues Combos ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
You're Gonna Miss Me ♪♪ (TELARC Blues)
Roots of Rap ♪♪♪ (Yazoo)

Box (or Multi-CD) Sets

The Alan Lomax Collection: Southern Journey ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Anthology of American Folk Music ♪♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways)
Before the Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
Billboard Top Country Hits: 1959–1990 ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
The Blues ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways)
Blues Masters ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Classic Country Music ♪♪♪♪ (RCA/BMG)
Fifty Years of Bluegrass Hits ♪♪♪ (CMH)
Fifty Years of Country Music from Mercury, 1945–1995 ♪♪♪½ (Mercury)
From the Vaults: Decca Country Classics, 1934–1973 ♪♪♪♪ (MCA)
Prestige Folklore Years ♪♪♪ (Prestige/Folklore)
Roots and Blues: The Retrospective ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Sounds of the South ♪♪♪♪ (Atlantic)
The Sun Records Collection ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Troubadours of the Folk Era ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
White Country Blues, 1926–1938: A Lighter Shade of Blue ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)

8
6
8 *compilation albums*

Cajun/Zydeco

The Best of Louisiana Music ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Bon Temp Rouler ♪♪♪ (Swallow)
Cajun Dance Hall Special ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Cajun Dance Party: Fais Do-Do ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
Cajun Fais Do-Do ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Cajun Gems ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Cajun Honky Tonk ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Cajun Music: The Early 1950s ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Cajun Music: The First Recordings ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Cajun Music and Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Cajun Saturday Night ♪♪♪ (Swallow)
Cajun Social Music ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian Folkways)
Cajun Spice: Dance Music from South Louisiana ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Cajun String Bands—The 1930s: Cajun Breakdown ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie)
Cajun: Vol. 1, Abbeville Breakdown, 1929–1939 ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Gran Prairie, Vol. 3 ♪♪♪♪½ (Country Music Foundation)
J'ai Ete Au Bal Vol. 1 ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
J'ai Ete Au Bal Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
La Sacalaits Sont Pas Sale ♪♪♪ (Swallow)
Le Gran Mamou, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪½ (Country Music Foundation)
Louisiana Cajun from the Southwest Prairies, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Louisiana Cajun from the Southwest Prairies, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Louisiana Live from Mountain Stage ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Louisiana Spice: 25 Years of Louisiana Music on Rounder Records ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
More Cajun Music and Zydeco ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Pioneers of the Cajun Accordion ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Raise Your Window, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪♪½ (Country Music Foundation)
21 Cajun Classics ♪♪♪ (Swallow)
Zydeco Champs ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Zydeco "The Early Years" ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)

Celtic

Ballinasloe Fair: Early Irish Music in America, 1920–1930 ♪♪♪ (Traditional Crossroads)
Brave Hearts: New Scots Music ♪♪♪ (Narada)
Celtic Angels ♪♪♪½ (Amiata)
Celtic Christmas III ♪♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill)
Celtic Dance ♪♪♪½ (Calvert)
The Celtic Fiddle Festival ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet)
Celtic Graces: A Best of Ireland ♪♪♪½ (Hemisphere)
Celtic Legacy ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Celtic Love Songs ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Celtic Moods ♪♪♪½ (Virgin)
Celtic Mouth Music ♪♪♪½ (Ellipsis Arts)
Celtic Music Live from Mountain Stage ♪♪♪½ (Blue Plate)
Celtic Odyssey ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Celtic Planet ♪♪♪½ (Hearts of Space)
Celtic Portraits ♪♪♪½ (Green Hill)
Celtic Sessions ♪♪♪ (Gourd)
Celtic Spirit ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Celtic Tales and Tongues ♪♪♪½ (Iago)
A Celtic Tapestry ♪♪♪♪½ (Shanachie)
A Celtic Tapestry, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie)
Celtic Treasure ♪♪♪ (Narada)
Celtic Twilight ♪♪♪½ (Hearts of Space)
Celtic Twilight 2 ♪♪♪½ (Hearts of Space)
Celtic Twilight 3—Lullabies ♪♪♪ (Hearts of Space)
Celtic Visions ♪♪♪½ (Green Hill)
Celtic Voices ♪♪♪½ (Green Hill)
Celtic Voices ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Celtic Woman ♪♪♪½ (Celtic Woman)
Celtic Women in Music and Song ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet)
The Coolin'—Classic Irish Airs & Laments from the Topic Catalogue ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Dance of the Celts ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Faces of the Harp ♪♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Fiddlesticks ♪♪ (Nimbus)
Folk'n'Hell ♪♪♪♪½ (EMI Hemisphere/Metro Blue)
From Galway to Dublin—Early Recordings of Irish Traditional Music ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Gaelic Roots ♪♪♪½ (Kells)
The Gentlemen Pipers—Classic Recordings of Irish Traditional Piping ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Green Linnet 20th Anniversary ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet)
Happy to Meet, Sorry to Part—Classic Recordings of Traditional Irish Dance Music ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Harpestry ♪♪♪½ (Philips)
Heart of the Celts ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Holding Up Half the Sky: Voices of Celtic Women ♪♪♪ (Shanachie)
Hurry the Jug—Classic Recordings of Songs, Lilting & Storytelling in the Irish Tradition ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
I'm Leaving Tipperary—Classic Irish Traditional Music Recorded in America in the '20s and '30s ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
In the Smoke—Classic Traditional Irish Music Recorded in London in the '50s, '60s & '70s ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Ireland ♪♪♪♪ (World Network)
Ireland: Traditional Music of Today ♪♪♪½ (Auvidis-Unesco)
Irish Ballad Book ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie)
Irish Traditional Music ♪♪♪½ (ARC)
Jigs and Reels ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
The Jug of Punch ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Legends of Ireland ♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
A Living Thing—Contemporary Classics of Traditional Irish Music ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Maggie's Music Sampler ♪♪♪♪ (Maggie's Music)
Magic & Mystery—Magestic Music from Scotland and Ireland ♪♪♪♪ (Temple)
Milestones at the Garden—Irish Fiddle Masters from the 78RPM Era ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
The Music & Song of Greentrax ♪♪♪♪♪ (Greentrax)
My Love Is in America—The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet)
Piping Hot ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Playing with Fire ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Putting on Airs ♪♪♪ (Celtophile)
Rough Guide to Scottish Music (World Music Network) ♪♪♪♪½
The Rushy Mountains—Classic Music From Sliabh Luachra 1952–1977 ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
Season of Mists ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Songs from the Heart ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
The Taste of Atlantic Canada ♪♪♪½ (Ground Swell)
There Was a Lady ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Trad at Heart ♪♪♪½ (Dara)
Traditional Music from Cape Breton Island ♪♪♪ (Nimbus)
Traditional Music of Ireland ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)

Traditional Music of Scotland ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Treasure of My Heart—Classic Recordings from the Topic Catalog of Irish Traditional Music ♪♪♪ (GlobeStyle)
The Wheels of the World—Early Irish American Music, Classic Recordings from the 1920s & '30s, Vols. 1 and 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
A Woman's Heart ♪♪♪ (Dara)
A Woman's Heart 2 ♪♪♪ (Dara)
A Woman's Love ♪♪♪ (Clo Iar–Chonnachta)
Women of the World—Celtic ♪♪♪ (Putamayo)

Children's

The Best of Country Sing the Best of Disney ♪♪♪ (Walt Disney)
A Child's Celebration of Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Country Music for Kids ♪♪♪½ (Walt Disney)
Daddies Sing Good Night ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)
'Til Their Eyes Shine . . . The Lullaby Album ♪♪♪ (Columbia)

Christmas

Alligator Stomp, Vol. 4: Cajun Christmas ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
An Americana Christmas ♪♪♪½ (Winter Harvest)
Billboard Greatest Country Christmas Hits ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Celtic Christmas ♪♪½ (Orby)
Celtic Christmas III ♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill)
A Child's Celebration of Christmas ♪♪½ (Rhino)
Christmas at Mountain Stage ♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Christmas for the '90s, Vol. 3 ♪♪♪ (Capitol)
Christmas on the Range ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol)
Christmas Time Back Home ♪♪½ (Rebel)
A Country Christmas Vol. V ♪♪½ (RCA)
A Giant Country Christmas ♪♪♪ (Giant)
Heart of Christmas: 12 Favorites by Today's Country Stars ♪♪½ (Sparrow)
Hillbilly Holiday ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Must Be Santa: The Rounder Christmas Album ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Precious Child ♪♪ (Warner Bros.)
Star of Wonder ♪♪½ (Arista)
Sugar Plums: Holiday Treats from Sugar Hill ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill)
A Tejano Country Christmas ♪♪♪♪ (Arista/Texas)
Tinsel Tunes: More Holiday Treats from Sugar Hill ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)

Country Collections

All-Time Legends of Country Music ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
Austin Country Nights ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon)
Classic Country Music ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian)
Deep in the Heart of Country ♪♪ (Drive)
Dr. Demento's Country Corn ♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Golden Throats 3: Sweethearts of Rodeo Drive ♪½ (Rhino)
Hank Williams Songbook: 20 Songs by 11 Artists ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
Hillbilly Boogie ♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
Hillbilly Fever! Vol. 1: Legends of Western Swing ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Hillbilly Fever! Vol. 2: Legends of Honky Tonk ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Hillbilly Fever! Vol. 3: Legends of Nashville ♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Hillbilly Fever! Vol. 4: Legends of the West Coast ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Hillbilly Fever! Vol. 5: Legends of Country Rock ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Hillbilly Music, Thank God! ♪♪♪♪ (Capitol)
Memphis Ramble ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Red Hot + Country ♪♪♪♪ (Mercury)
Rhythm, Country and Blues ♪♪♪ (MCA)
Threadgill's Supper Session ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon)
When You're Hot You're Country ♪♪ (Drive)

Cowboy

Back in the Saddle Again ♪♪♪♪♪ (New World)
Cattle Call: Early Cowboy Music and Its Roots ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Cowboy Songs on Folkways ♪♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways)
Cowboy Super Hits ♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Don't Fence Me In: Western Music's Early Golden Era ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Home on the Range ♪♪♪ (Charly)
Howdy! 25 Hillbilly All-Time Greats ♪♪♪ (ASV)
Saddle Up! The Cowboy Renaissance ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Songs of the West ♪♪♪♪½ (four-CD box) (Rhino)
Songs of the West: Cowboy Classics ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Songs of the West: Gene Autry and Roy Rogers ♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Songs of the West: Movie and Television Themes ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Songs of the West: Silver Screen Cowboys ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Stampede! Western Music's Late Golden Era ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
When I Was a Cowboy ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo)

English

All through the Year ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet)
Beat the Retreat: Songs of Richard Thompson ♪♪♪ (Capitol)
Circle Dance ♪♪♪½ (Green Linnet)
English Ballad Book ♪♪♪½ (Shanachie)
Evolving Tradition ♪♪♪ (Mrs. Casey)
The Folk Collection 2 ♪♪♪½ (Topic)
Folk Heritage ♪♪♪ (Music Collection International)
Folk Routes ♪♪♪♪ (Island)
Georgia on Our Mind ♪♪♪½ (DeepSea Records)
Hard Cash ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet)
Old English Melodies ♪♪½ (Green Hill)
New Electric Muse ♪♪♪♪♪ (Essential/Transatlantic)
New Electric Muse II ♪♪♪♪♪ (Essential/Transatlantic)
Troubadours of British Folk: Vol.1/Unearthing the Tradition (Rhino) ♪♪♪♪♪
Troubadours of British Folk: Vol.2/Folk into Rock ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Troubadours of British Folk: Vol. 3/An Evolving Tradition ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)

General Folk

The Acoustic Edge ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
The Bob Dylan 30th Anniversary Celebration ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Bring It on Home ♪♪♪½ (Legacy)
Christine Lavin Presents: Big Times in a Small Town—The Vineyard Tapes ♪♪♪ (Philo/Rounder)
Christine Lavin Presents: Laugh Tracks, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (Shanachie)
Christine Lavin Presents: Laugh Tracks, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (Shanachie)
Christine Lavin Presents: On a Winter's Night ♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder)

The Early Years: Kerrville 1972–1981 ♪♪♪½ (Silverwolf)
Folk Music at Newport, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard)
Freedom Is a Constant Struggle ♪♪♪♪½ (Folk Era)
Greatest Folksingers of the Sixties ♪♪♪½ (Vanguard)
Heritage ♪♪♪♪½ (Island)
Hills of Home: 25 Years of Folk Music on Rounder Records ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
House on Fire: An Urban Folk Collection ♪♪♪ (Red House)
In Their Own Words, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Razor & Tie)
Legacy: New Folk Music ♪♪♪♪½ (Windham Hill)
Legacy II: A Collection of Singer Songwriters ♪♪♪♪½ (High Street)
The Long Walk to Freedom Reunion Concert ♪♪♪♪½ (Revoltin in Records)
The Names behind the Artists, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪½ (Silver Eagle)
The Names behind the Artists, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪♪½ (Silver Eagle)
Pastures of Plenty—An Austin Celebration of Woody Guthrie ♪♪♪ (DejaDisc)
Philo So Far: The 20th Anniversary Folk Sampler ♪♪♪♪ (Philo)
Storytellers: Singers & Songwriters ♪♪♪½ (Warner Special Products)
When October Goes ♪♪♪♪½ (Philo/Rounder)

Gospel/Religious

Amazing Grace: A Country Salute to Gospel ♪♪♪ (Sparrow)
The Best of Bluegrass: Preachin', Prayin' and Singin' ♪♪♪ (Mercury)
Bluegrass from Heaven: The Essential Gospel Collection ♪♪♪ (CMH)
Common Ground: Country Songs of Faith, Love & Inspiration ♪♪♪½ (Epic)
Every Time I Feel the Spirit ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)
Favorite Sacred Song ♪♪♪ (King)
The Gospel Tradition: The Roots and Branches, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
How Can I Keep from Singing? ♪♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
I Hear Music in the Air ♪♪♪♪½ (RCA)
Jubilation!—Great Gospel Performances ♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Jubilation! Vol. 3, Country Gospel ♪♪ (Rhino)
Meeting in the Air ♪♪♪♪ (I Sing Behind the Plow)
Peace in the Valley ♪♪♪♪ (Arista)
Preachin' the Gospel—Holy Blues (Columbia)
Silent Witness ♪♪♪½ (New Haven)
The Social Harp ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Something Got a Hold of Me: A Treasury of Sacred Music ♪♪♪♪♪ (RCA)
The Stained Glass Hour ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
20 Bluegrass Originals: Hymns ♪♪♪½ (Deluxe)
Way Down Deep in My Soul ♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)

Instrumental

Altamont: Black Stringband Music from the Library of Congress ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
The Banjos That Destroyed the World ♪♪ (CMH)
The Celtic Fiddle Festival ♪♪♪ (Green Linnet)
Echoes of the Ozarks, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (County)
Echoes of the Ozarks, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (County)
Faces of the Harp ♪♪♪½ (Narada)
Fiddlers of Eastern Prince Edwards Island ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Fiddlers of Western Prince Edwards Island ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Flatpicking '97 ♪♪♪ (FGM)
The Great Dobro Sessions ♪♪♪♪ (Sugar Hill)
Guitar Player Presents Legends of Country Guitar, Vols. 1 & 2 ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)
Harpestry ♪♪♪½ (Philips)
Hats Off! A Tribute to Garth Brooks by Country Music's Hottest Pickers ♪½ (CMH)
Klezmer Music: Early Yiddish Instrumental Music 1908–1927 ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie/Folklyric)
Minstrel Banjo Style ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Possum Up a Gum Stump ♪♪♪♪ (Alabama Traditions)
Playing with Fire ♪♪♪½ (Celtophile)
Rounder Fiddle ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Rounder Guitar ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Rounder Old Time Music ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Rural String Bands of Tennessee ♪♪♪ (County)
Rural String Bands of Virginia ♪♪♪ (County)
Son of Rounder Banjo ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
South Texas Polka Party ♪♪♪½ (Arhoolie)
Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky—Along the Kentucky River ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky—Up the Ohio and Licking Rivers ♪♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
24 Fiddle Favorites ♪♪♪½ (Rural Rhythm)
The World's Greatest Country Fiddlers ♪♪ (CMH)

Klezmer

Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler's House ♪♪♪♪♪ (Angel)
Klezmania: Klezmer for the New Millenium ♪♪♪♪ (Shanachie)
Klezmer Music: A Marriage of Heaven and Earth ♪♪♪♪♪ (Ellipsis Arts)
Klezmer Pioneers ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)

Live Recordings

The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 1 Live ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 2 Live ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 3 Live ♪♪♪½ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 4 Live ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 5 Live ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 6 Live ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
The Best of Mountain Stage, Vol. 7 Live ♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Celtic Music Live from Mountain Stage ♪♪♪ (Blue Plate)
Christmas at Mountain Stage ♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Folk Music at Newport, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard)
Live from Mountain Stage Rock ♪♪♪♪½ (Blue Plate Music)
Live from Mountain Stage, Vol. 8 ♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Louisiana Live from Mountain Stage ♪♪♪♪ (Blue Plate Music)
Nashville at Newport ♪♪♪♪½ (Vanguard)
Seedtime on the Cumberland ♪♪♪½ (June Appal)
The Sullivan Years: Country Classics ♪♪ (TVT)
Sunday Morning Sessions ♪♪♪ (Munich)
Texans Live from Mountain Stage ♪♪♪♪½ (Blue Plate Music)
Threadgill's Supper Session ♪♪♪♪½ (Watermelon)

Old Time

Altamont: Black Stringband Music from the Library of Congress ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Are You from Dixie? Great Country Brother Teams of the 1930s ♪♪♪♪♪ (RCA Heritage Series)
The Bristol Sessions ♪♪♪♪♪ (Country Music Foundation)
Echoes of the Ozarks, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (County)
Echoes of the Ozarks, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (County)
Fair and Tender Ladies: Mountain Music Collection, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (CMH)
Fresh Oldtime String Band Music ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
High Atmosphere ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Hills of Home: 25 Years of Rounder Records ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Hollerin' ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Land of Yahoe ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Library of Congress Field Recordings ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Minstrel Banjo Style ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Mountain Music of Kentucky ♪♪♪ (Smithsonian/Folkways)
The Music of Kentucky ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
The Music of Kentucky: Early American Rural Classics, 1927–1937, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
The Music Never Stopped—Roots of the Grateful Dead ♪♪♪ (Shanachie)
The Music of Kentucky: Early American Rural Classics, 1927–1937, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪ (Yazoo)
Old Time Mountain Ballads ♪♪♪½ (County)
Old Time Music on the Air, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Old Time Music on the Air, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Possum Up a Gum Stump ♪♪♪♪ (Alabama Traditions)
Ragged but Right: Great Country String Bands of the 1930s ♪♪♪ (RCA)
Roots and Branches ♪♪♪ (JMP Records)
The Rose Grew around the Briar, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
The Rose Grew around the Briar, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
Rounder Fiddle ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Rounder Old Time Music ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Rural String Bands of Tennessee ♪♪♪ (County)
Rural String Bands of Virginia ♪♪♪ (County)
Seedtime on the Cumberland ♪♪♪½ (June Appal)
Something Got a Hold of Me ♪♪♪ (RCA/BMG)
Songs of the Civil War ♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Times Ain't What They Used to Be, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
Times Ain't What They Used to Be, Vol. 2 ♪♪♪½ (Yazoo)
Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky—Along the Kentucky River ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky—Up the Ohio and Licking Rivers ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
A Tribute to the Appalachian String Band Music Festival at Clifftop, WV (Chubby Dragon) ♪♪♪½
Virginia Traditions—Native Virginia Ballads ♪♪½ (Global Village)
White Country Blues, 1926–1938: A Lighter Shade of Blue ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia/Legacy)
Wild and Reckless Men: Mountain Music Collection, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪♪ (CMH)
The Young Fogies ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
The Young Fogies, Vol. II ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)

Record Label Compilations

Acoustic Disc: 100% Handmade Music ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc)
Acoustic Disc: 100% Handmade Music, Vol. II ♪♪♪ (Acoustic Disc)
Camsco Music Sampler ♪♪♪ (Camsco)
Columbia Country Classics, Vol. 1: The Golden Age ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Columbia Country Classics, Vol. 2: Honky Tonk Heroes ♪♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Columbia Country Classics, Vol. 3: Americana ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Columbia Country Classics, Vol. 4: The Nashville Sound ♪♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Columbia Country Classics, Vol. 5: A New Tradition ♪♪♪ (Columbia)
Columbia Records Radio Hour, Vol. 1 ♪♪ (Columbia)
Defrost Your Heart: Sun Country, Vol. 1 ♪♪♪ (AVI)
The Essential Series ♪♪♪♪ (RCA)
The Essential Series, Vol. II ♪♪♪♪ (RCA)
Fifty Years of Country Music from Mercury, 1945–1995 ♪♪♪½ (Mercury)
From the Vaults: Decca Country Classics, 1934–1973 ♪♪♪♪ (MCA)
Hand-Picked: Twenty-Five Years of Rounder Bluegrass ♪♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
HighTone Records: The First 10 Years ♪♪♪½ (HighTone)
Hills of Home: Twenty-Five Years of Folk Music on Rounder Records ♪♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Louisiana Spice: 25 Years of Louisiana Music on Rounder Records (Rounder) ♪♪♪♪♪
Marimac Anthology ♪♪♪½ (Rounder)
Philo So Far: The 20th Anniversary Folk Sampler ♪♪♪♪ (Philo)
Roots and Branches ♪♪♪ (JMP Records)
The Sun Records Collection ♪♪♪♪½ (Rhino)
Time Is on Our Side: The DejaDisc Sampler ♪♪♪ (DejaDisc)
Top of the Hill Bluegrass: The Sugar Hill Collection ♪♪♪½ (Sugar Hill)
The Watermelon Sampler ♪♪♪½ (Watermelon)
A Wizmark Sampler 1986–1996 ♪♪½ (Wizmark)

Slack Key Guitar

Aloha—Hula Hawaiian Style ♪♪ (Cord International)
Classic Collector Series—Vol. 7: The New Hawaiian Band ♪♪ (Cord International)
Hapa Haole Hawaiian Hula Classics ♪♪ (Cord International)
Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Masters ♪♪♪½ (Dancing Cat)
Hawaiian Steel Guitar Classics ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie)
The History of Slack Key Guitar ♪♪½ (Cord International)
Hula Hawaiian Style ♪♪ (Cord International)
Ki Ho'alu Christmas ♪♪♪ (Dancing Cat)
Show Biz Hula Hawaiian Style ♪♪ (Cord International)
Songs of the Hawaiian Cowboy (Na Mele O Paniolo) ♪♪♪½ (Warner Western)

Tejano/Tex-Mex

Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. I ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. II ♪♪♪ (Rounder)
Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. III ♪♪♪ (Rounder)

Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. IV ♪♪♪ (Rounder)

Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. V: Polkas de Oro ♪♪♪ (Rounder)

Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Vol. VI: Contrabando ♪♪♪ (Rounder)

A Tejano Country Christmas ♪♪♪♪ (Arista/Texas)

Tejano Roots: San Antonio Conjuntos in the 1950s ♪♪♪ (Arhoolie)

Western Swing

Hillbilly Fever ♪♪½ (Rhino)

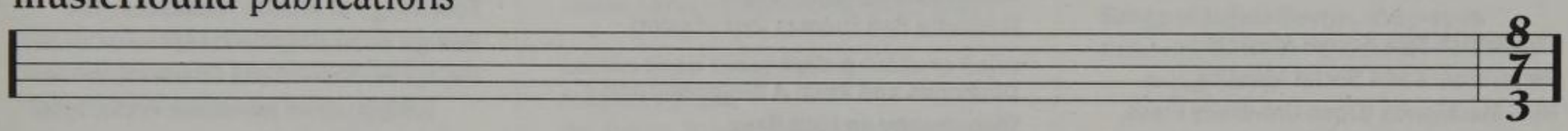
Hillbilly Jazz ♪♪♪½ (Flying Fish)

Honed on the Range, Vol. II: Contemporary Texas Swing ♪♪♪½ (Texas Monthly)

OKeh Western Swing ♪♪♪♪♪ (CBS Special Products)

Texas Music, Vol. 2: Western Swing & Honky Tonk ♪♪♪♪ (Rhino)

Under the Double Eagle ♪♪♪ (BMG)



Can't get enough information about folk music? Here are some books, magazines, newsletters, and catalogs you can check out for further information. Happy reading!

Books

African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia: A Study of Folk Traditions
Cecelia Conway (University of Tennessee Press, 1995)

African Roots (Traditional Black Music)
Jerry Silverman and Kenneth B. Clark (Chelsea House, 1994)

Aly Bain: Fiddler on the Loose
Alastair Clark (Mainstream Pub., 1994)

American Ballads and Folk Songs
John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax (Dover, 1994)

American Folk Tales and Songs, and Other Examples of English-American Tradition As Preserved in the Appalachian Mountains and Elsewhere in the United States
Chase Richard (Dover, 1971)

The American Song Treasury: 100 Favorites
Theodore Raph (Dover, 1989)

The American Songbag
Carl Sandburg and Garrison Keillor (Harcourt Brace, 1990)

And a Voice to Sing With: A Memoir
Joan Baez (1987, out of print)

Animal Folk Songs for Children: Traditional American Songs
Ruth Crawford Seeger (Linnet Books, 1993)

Appalachian Dulcimer Traditions (American Folk Music and Folk Musicians, No. 2)
Ralph Lee Smith (Scarecrow Press, 1997)

The Autoharp Book
Becky Blackley (Iad Pub., 1983)

Baby, Let Me Follow You Down: The Illustrated Story of the Cambridge Folk Years
Eric Von Schmidt and Jim Rooney (University of Massachusetts Press, 1994)

The Ballad As Song
Betrand H. Bronson (University of California Press)

The Ballad Matrix: Personality, Milieu, and the Oral Tradition
William Bernard McCarthy (Indiana University Press, 1990)

The Ballad Mongers: Rise of the Modern Folk Song
Oscar Brand (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1979)

Ballad of an American: The Autobiography of Earl Robinson (American Folk Music and Musicians, No. 3)
Earl Robinson and Eric A. Gordon (Scarecrow Press, 1997)

Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles
Steven Loza (University of Illinois Press, 1993)

Big Road Blues: Tradition and Creativity in the Folk Blues
David Evans (Da Capo Press, 1988)

Blackwell Guide to Recorded Country Music
Bob Allen (Blackwell Pub., 1994)

Bluegrass: A History
Neil V. Rosenberg (University of Illinois Press, 1993)

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Richard D. Smith (A Cappella Books, 1995)

Bob Dylan: A Life in Stolen Moments Day by Day, 1941–1995
Clinton Heylin (Schirmer Books, 1996)

Bob Dylan: American Poet and Singer: An Annotated Bibliography and Study Guide of Sources and Background Materials, 1961–1991
Richard D. Wissolik (Scholars Bibliography Series, No. 2)

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Bob Dylan: Watching the River Flow—Observations on His Art-In-Progress, 1966–1995
Paul Williams (Entwhistle Books, 1996)

Bob Wills: Hubbin It
Ruth Sheldon and Charles R. Townsend (Vanderbilt University Press, 1995)

Bound for Glory
Woody Guthrie (New American Library Trade, 1995)

The British Folk Scene: Musical Performance and Social Identity
Niall MacKinnon (Open University Press, 1993)

Campfire Songs
Irene Maddox and Rosalyn Blankenship (Globe Pequot Press, 1994)

The Care and Feeding of the Autoharp
Becky Blackley (Iad Pub., 1989)

Carry It On! The Story of America's Working People in Song and Picture
Pete Seeger and Bob Reiser (Sing Out! Publications, 1991)

Cash: The Autobiography
Johnny Cash and Patrick Carr (Harper San Francisco, 1997)

The Chieftains: The Authorized Biography
John Glatt (St. Martin's Press, 1997)

Circle of Song: Songs, Chants, and Dances for Ritual and Celebration
Kate Marks (Full Circle Press, 1994)

Country Music Revealed: True Stories of Boozin', Cheatin', Stealin', Tax Dodgin', and D-I-V-O-R-C-E
Randy Scott (Metro Books, 1995)

Cowboy Fiddler in Bob Wills' Band
Frankie McWhorter and John R. Erickson, with Lanny Fiel (University of North Texas Press, 1997)

The Crooked Stovepipe: Athapaskan Fiddle Music and Square Dancing in Northeast Alaska and Northwest Canada
Craig Mishler (University of Illinois Press, 1993)

The Day America's Music Went Bye
John L. Wilson (Americana Publishers)

Death of a Rebel: A Biography of Phil Ochs
Marc Eliot and Vin Scelsa (Citadel Press, 1994)

The Devil's Box: Masters of Southern Fiddling
Charles Wolfe and Mark O'Connor (Vanderbilt University Press, 1997)

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Jeannette Bell Thomas (out of print)

Diamonds and Rust: A Biography and Discography on Joan Baez
Joan Swanekamp (Pierian Press, 1979)

Dylan: World Gone Wrong
Bob Dylan (Music Sales Corporation, 1994)

Encyclopedia of Folk, Country & Western Music
Irwin Stambler (St. Martin's Press, 1984)

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Philip Martin (Midwest Traditions, 1995)

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Fiddling for Norway: Revival and Identity (Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology)
Chris Goertzen (University of Chicago Press, 1997)

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Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents
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The Folk Banjo: A Documentary History
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Terry E. Miller (Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987)

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Art Rosenbaum and Margo Rosenbaum (University of Georgia Press, 1983)

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Jim Bob Tinsley (University Press of Florida, 1982)

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David King Dunway (Da Capo Press, 1990)

In Every Style of Passion: The Works of Leonard Cohen
Jim Devlin (Omnibus Press, 1996)

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Pete Seeger and Jo Metcalf Schwartz (University of Nebraska Press, 1992)

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Christopher Lornell (WCB/McGraw-Hill, 1993)

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Betty N. Smith (University of Kentucky Press, 1998)

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Henrietta Yurchenco (1970)

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Loyal Jones (Appalachian Consortium Press)

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Barre Toelken (University of Illinois Press, 1995)

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Ivan M. Tribe (University Press of Kentucky, 1996)

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Colin Quigley (University of Georgia Press, 1995)

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Bill Meek (Quinlan Press, 1989)

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Michael Krogsgaard (Popular Culture Ink, 1991)

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Joe Carr and Alan Munde (Texas Tech. University Press, 1995)

Ramblin' Rose: The Life and Career of Rose Maddox
Jonny Whiteside (Vanderbilt University Press, 1997)

Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements
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Harold E. Cook (Associated University Press, 1971)

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Guy and Candie Carawan (Sing Out Publications, 1990)

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Singing Family of the Cumberlands
Jean Ritchie (University Press of Kentucky, 1988)

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Donald Brosnac (Panjandrum Press, 1977)

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Chris Hockenhull (Northdown)

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John Denver with Arthur Tobier (Harmony Books, 1994)

Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle: A History of the American Cowboy in Song, Story, and Verse
Katie Lee (Katyd Books, 1985)

That Half-Barbaric Twang: The Banjo in American Popular Culture
Karen Linn (University of Illinois Press, 1994)

There but for Fortune: The Life of Phil Ochs
Michael Schumacher (Hyperion Press, 1996)

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Thomas G. Burton (University of Tennessee Press, 1981)

Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined
Neil V. Rosenburg (University of Illinois Press, 1993)

Traveling the High Way Home: Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional Bluegrass Music
John Wright (University of Illinois Press, 1993)

A Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly
Will Schmid (Music Educators National Conference, 1990)

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Alton Delmore and Charles K. Wolfe (Country Music Foundation, 1995)

Underground Harmonies: Music & Politics in the Subways of New York
Susie J. Tanenbaum (Cornell University Press, 1995)

Wasn't That a Time! Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival
Ronald D. Cohen (Scarecrow Press, 1995)

When We Were Good: The Folk Music Revival
Robert S. Cantwell (Harvard University Press, 1996)

Where Have All the Flowers Gone: A Singer's Stories, Songs, Seeds, Robberies
Pete Seeger (Sing Out Publications, 1997)

"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" and Other Songs Cowboys Sing (Music in American Life)
Guy Logsdon (University of Illinois Press, 1995)

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Jim Longhi (University of Illinois Press, 1997)

Woody Guthrie: American Balladeer (Unsung Americans)
Janelle Yates (Ward Hill Press, 1995)

Magazines

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E-mail: froots@froots.demon.co.uk
Web site: http://www.froots.demon.co.uk//

Irish Music Magazine
11 Clare S.
Dublin 2, Ireland
(353-0) 1-6624887
Fax: (353-0) 1-6624886
E-mail: irishmusic@mayo-ireland.ie

Jug Band Rag
13 Schaeffer Lane
Freehold, NJ 07728

The Mandocrucian's Digest
PO Box 3585
Winchester, VA 22604

The Old-Time Herald
PO Box 51812
Durham, NC 27717
(919) 416-9433
E-mail: agerrard@nando.net

Sing Out! Magazine
PO Box 5253
Bethlehem, PA 18015-0253
Web site: http://www.singout.org/

Newsletters

The Bluegrass Missourian
3209 South Ten Mile Dr.
Jefferson City, MO 65109
(573) 893-6969
Fax: (573) 893-7179
E-mail: amelia@mail.cscdata.net

Central Texas Bluegrass Bulletin
4604 Balcones Woods Dr.
Austin, TX 78759-5231
(512) 346-3261

Old-Time News
Friends of American Old-Time Music and Dance
184 Liverpool Road
Reading RG1 3PH, England

Reel Times
Austin Friends of Traditional Music
PO Box 49608
Austin, TX 23505

The Resonator
The Full Circle Music Society
PO Box 13213
Reading, PA 19612

Victory Review
PO Box 2254
Tacoma, WA 98401-2254

Women in Bluegrass Bulletin
PO Box 2498
Winchester, VA 22604
(800) 227-2357
Fax: (703) 877-2422

Catalogs

Andy's Front Hall
PO Box 307
Voorheesville, NY 12186
(518) 765-4193
Web site:
http://members.aol.com/fronthal/index.html

Captain Fiddle Publications
4 Elm Court
Newmarket, NH 03857
(603) 659-2658
Web site: http://www.tiac.net/users/cfiddle/

Celtic Cultures
RR 2, Box 164
Houghton Brook Rd.
Putney, VT 05346
(802) 387-KILT (5458)
Fax: (802) 387-4831
E-mail: celtic@sover.net

Earthshaking Percussion
127 D Glenwood Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30316
(404) 622-0707
Fax: (404) 624-3349

publications

Web site: http://www.earthshakingmusic.com

Elderly Instruments
1100 N. Washington
PO Box 14210
Lansing, MI 48901
(517) 372-7890

Homespun Tapes
Box 694
Woodstock, NY 12498-0694
(800) 338-2737

House of Musical Traditions, Inc.
7040 Carroll Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(301) 270-9090
Fax: (301) 270-3010
Web site: http://www.hmtrad.com/

Lark in the Morning
PO Box 1176
Mendocino, CA 95460
(707) 964-3762
Mail orders: (707) 964-5569
Web site: http://www.mhs.mendocino.k12.ca.us/MenComNet/Business/Retail/Larknet/

Mel Bay Publications, Inc
#4 Industrial Dr.
Pacific, MO 63069

Musicmaker's Kits, Inc.
PO Box 2117
Stillwater, MN 55082-3117
(612) 439-9120
Web Site: http://www.primenet.com/~musikit/

Folk music, it turns out, has a tremendous presence in cyberspace. Point your Web browser to these pages for more information on your favorite artists, folk instruments, and filking (and don't forget to check out the lyrics and music databases).

Artists

Altan
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Altan.html

Arcady
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Arcady.html

Frankie Armstrong
http://www.rootsworld.com/harbourtown/armstrong.html

Atwater-Donnelly
http://www.nyx.net/~gfitzger/ADHome.html

Austin Lounge Lizards
http://www.austinlizards.com/

Hoyt Axton
http://www.sixcats.com/axton/hoyt.htm

Bad Livers
http://www.hyperweb.com/badlivers/

Joan Baez
http://baez.woz.org/

Les Barker
http://www.compulink.co.uk/~ackroyd/welcome.htm

The Barra MacNeils
http://www.grassroots.ns.ca/~jandrea/projects/barra-macneil.html

Cathy Barton and Dave Para
http://www.mid-mo.net/dpara/

Battlefield Band
http://www.rootsworld.com/folklore/battle.html

Keola Beamer
http://www.kbeamer.com/

Dan Bern
http://flemtam.com/db.html

Lou and Peter Berryman
http://members.aol.com/berrymanp/index.html

Theo Bikel
http://www.galender.com/theo/

Francis Black
http://house-of-music.com/frances/index.shtml

Mary Black
http://www.mcs.com/~candre/mblack.html

Black 47
http://www.black47.com/

Luka Bloom
http://www.totalweb.co.uk/dweb/jan/jbloom.htm

Blue Rodeo
http://www.bluerodeo.com/

Eric Bogel
http://www.flemtam.com/eb.html

Karla Bonoff
http://www.bryndle.com/

Bob Bossin
http://www.island.net/~oldfolk/

Bothy Band
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Bothy_Band.html

Brian Bowers
http://www.otrd.state.ok.us/bluegrass/bbowers.htm

Boys of the Lough
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Boys_of_the_Lough.html

Billy Bragg
http://www.mindspring.com/~usul/billy-bragg.html

Oscar Brand
http://members.aol.com/OscrBrand/

Chuck Brodsky
http://songs.com/cb/

Greg Brown
http://flemtam.com/gb.html

Bob Brozman
http://www.well.com/user/wellvis/brozman.html

Jeff Buckley
http://www.jeffbuckley.com/

web sites

Tim Buckley
http://pantheon.cis.yale.edu/~bodoin/tbarchives.html

Jimmy Buffett
http://www.soasoas.com/

Kevin Burke
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Kevin_Burke.html

The Burns Sisters Band
http://204.255.183.201/web/Burns/

The Byrds
http://members.aol.com/byrdsonlne/byrdsstuff/byrds.htm

Glen Campbell
http://www.glencampbellshow.com/

Al and Emily Cantrell
http://www.hidwater.com/cantrells/

Capercaille
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Capercaillie.html

Turlough Carolan
http://www.epix.net/~lesley/carolan.html

Mary Chapin Carpenter
http://www.music.sony.com/Music/Nashville/MCC/

Harry Chapin
http://www.littlejason.com/chapin/index.html
http://oak.cc.conncoll.edu/~bgbie/chapin/

Tom Chapin
http://members.aol.com/chapinfo/tc/index.html

Tracy Chapman
http://oak.cc.conncoll.edu/~bgbie/chapin/
http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Palms/9541/

Cherish the Ladies
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The Chieftains
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Clannad
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Eric Clapton
http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Towers/8488/

Guy Clark
http://www.physitron.com/~topher/guyclark/

Bruce Cockburn
http://www.fish.com/music/bruce_cockburn/

Leonard Cohen
http://www.music.sony.com/Music/ArtistInfo/LeonardCohen/

Judy Collins
http://judycollins.com/

Mitzie Collins
http://www.webcom.com/niki/friends/mitzie.shtml

Shawn Colvin
http://www.music.sony.com/Music/ArtistInfo/ShawnColvin/

Rita Connelly
http://www.meteo.physik.uni-muenchen.de/theorie/paul/rita.html

Elizabeth Cotten
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/c/cotten_elizabeth.html

J.D. Crowe
http://www.banjo.com/BG/Profiles/JDCrowe.html

Phil Cunningham
http://www.philcunningham.com/index.htm

Catie Curtis
http://www.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/~kcizas/Catie_Curtis/

De Dannan
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The Delmore Brothers
http://www.alamhof.org/delmores.htm

John Denver
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Ani DiFranco
http://www.cc.columbia.edu/~marg/ani/

disappear fear
http://www.fish.com/music/disappear_fear/

Connie Dover
http://www.celticmusic.com//connie_dover/

Jerry Douglas
http://www.alternetcomm.com/moonlight/doug.html

Nick Drake
http://www.algonet.se/~iguana/DRAKE/DRAKE.html
http://home4.swipnet.se/~w-44991/drake.html

Bob Dylan
http://www.bobdylan.com/

Fred Eaglesmith
http://www.panix.com/~tneff/eaglesmith/

Steve Earle
http://www.mcs.net/~lisa/EARLE/steve.htm

Cliff Eberhardt
http://www.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/~spencer/Cliff-Eberhardt/index.html

Jonathan Edwards
http://www.bicoastal.com/jedwards/index.html

Kat Eggleston
http://www.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/folkbook/artists/biographies/Kat_Eggleston/

Betty Elders
http://www.eden.com/BettyElders/

Electric Bonsai Band
http://members.aol.com/ytrecords/ebb.html

Joe Ely
http://www.ely.com/

Enya
http://sunsite.auc.dk/enya/

John Fahey
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/f/fahey_john.html

Fairport Convention
http://www.novpapyrus.com/fairport/

Stephen Fearing
http://www.interlog.com/~samy/fearing.htmll

web sites 881

Ferron
http://Ferronweb.com/

Five Chinese Brothers
http://www.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/folkbook/artists/biographies/Magpie/

Béla Fleck and the Flecktones
http://www.flecktones.com/

David Folks
http://www.hidwater.com/folks/

Steve Forbert
http://www.dip.ee.uct.ac.za/~brendt/music/forbert/

Four Bitchin' Babes
http://songs.com/babes/

Bob Franke
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Annie Gallup
http://www.rahul.net/hrmusic/artists/agart.html

Beppe Gambetta
http://www.pangea.it/music/gambetta/

Dick Gaughan
http://www.dickalba.demon.co.uk/

Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen
http://www.sover.net/~gillette/

Steve Goodman
http://www.hepcat.com/goodman/

John Gorka
http://www.windham.com/ourmusic/artist_pages/gorka.empty.byartist.html

Patty Griffin
http://www.hepcat.com/goodman/
http://nw3.nai.net/~zigmont/

Grace Griffith
http://www.loworbit.com/grace/

Nanci Griffith
http://www.sover.net/~rschrull/ngriffith/gchpage.html
http://www.rahul.net/frankf/nanci.html
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Steve Goodman
http://www.hepcat.com/goodman/glad.html

John Gorka
http://www.windham.com/artists/John_Gorka.html
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/g/gorka_john.html

David Grisman
http://www.dawgnet.com.

Arlo Guthrie
http://www.arlo.net/

Woody Guthrie
http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~davida/woody.html

John Hammond
http://www.teleport.com/~boydroid/blues/jhammond.htm

John Hartford
http://www.techpublishing.com/hartford/

Martin Hayes
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Martin_Hayes.html

Michael Hedges
http://www.windham.com/ourmusic/artist_pages/hedges.empty.byartist.html

Carolyn Hester
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/h/hester_carolyn.html

Sara Hickman
http://www.tns.lcs.mit.edu/music/hickman/

Dan Hicks
http://www.ns.net/~chaler/hicks.html

Anne Hills
http://www.mcs.net/~jmurdock/anne/hills.html

Tish Hinojosa
http://www.mundotish.com/

Horse Flies
http://wm.simplenet.com/Horse_Flies/

Hot Rize
http://www.banjo.com/BG/Profiles/HotRize.html

House Band
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/House_Band.html

Walter Hyatt
http://songs.com/walter/

Janis Ian
http://songs.com/janisian
http://www.nauticom.net/www/hyperguy/janis.html

Incredible String Band
http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac455/

Andy Irvine
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Andy_Irvine.html

Bert Jansch
http://www.demon.co.uk/andys/bjindex.html

Connie Kaldor
http://web.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/folkbook/artists/biographies/connie-kaldor/

Kathy Kallick
http://www.banjo.com/Profiles/kallick.html

Lucy Kaplansky
http://web.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/folkbook/artists/biographies/Lucy-Kaplansky/

James Keelaghan
http://www.cadvision.com/davideo/keelo/jpk.htm

Pete and Maura Kennedy
http://henryl.jic.com/pmk/pmk.html

Kingston Trio
http://brugold.com/kitmain.html
http://www.amdest.com/stars/Kingston.html

Klezmatics
http://www.aviv2.com/klezbio.html

Leo Kottke
http://www.windham.com/artists/Leo_Kottke.html

Allison Krauss and Union Station
http://www.banjo.com/BG/Profiles/AlisonKrauss.html

Kris Kristofferson
http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/usr/h92/h9225291/kris/kris.html

Patty Larkin
http://windham.com/ourmusic/artist_pages/larkin.empty.byartist.html

web sites

Grit Laskin
http://www.interlog.com/~brc/artists/grit.htm

Christine Lavin
http://www.christinelavin.com/

Leadbelly
http://cycad.com/cgi-bin/Leadbelly/index.html

Laurie Lewis
http://www.banjo.com/Profiles/LaurieLewis.html

Gordon Lightfoot
http://www.mmlc.nwu.edu/~mfifer/lightfoot/index.html

Laura Love
http://www.rahul.net/hrmusic/artists/llvart.html

Lyle Lovett
http://asylum.apocalypse.org/pub/u/lakrahn/lovett/

Joel Mabus
http://songs.com/jmabus/

Ashley MacIsaac
http://www.webcom.com/~morandan/Music/MacIsaac/Ashley.html
http://www.freenet.hamilton.on.ca/~aa343/ashley/

Dougie MacLean
http://www.dunkeld.co.uk/

Kate MacLeod
http://www.waterbug.com/macleod.html

Natalie MacMaster
http://www.NatalieMacMaster.com/

Madeline MacNeil
http://www.dpnews.com/roots.html

Tommy Makem
http://www.makem.com/tmbio.html
http://www.primecd.com/5cb.htm

Makem Brothers
http://www.makem.com/mbbio.html

David Mallett
http://www.bicoastal.com/dmallett/

Mando Mafia
http://www.access.digex.net/~jmangin/mmafia.htm

David Massengill
http://www.plump.com/plump/#david

Liz Masterson and Sean Blackburn
http://www.cowgirls.com/dream/liz-sean/

Kimberly M'Carver
http://www.phoenix.net/~nishimi/mcarver.html

Mary McCaslin
http://www.cruzio.com/~gpa/mary/index.html

Del McCoury Band
http://www.banjo.com/BG/Profiles/DelMcCoury.html

John McCutcheon
http://www.folkmusic.com/

Eileen McGann
http://www.canuck.com/~jscown/mcgann/index.html

Kate and Anna McGarrigle
http://www.mcgarrigles.com/

Loreena McKennitt
http://www.quinlanroad.com/

Don McLean
http://www.ozemail.com.au/~mclean/

Bill Miller
http://www5.pair.com/anative/
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/m/miller_bill.html

Ed Miller
http://www.io.com/~edmiller/ed.html

Chad Mitchell Trio
http://www.edge.net/folkera/cmtrio/index.html

Joni Mitchell
http://www.JoniMitchell.com/
http://members.aol.com/KyBoy1327/JoniMitchell.html

Hugh Moffatt
http://songs.com/hm/

Katy Moffatt
http://members.aol.com/klmoffatt/index.html

The Mollys
http://www.azstarnet.com/~sorenso/

Mick Moloney
http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/3034/Mick.html

Bill Monroe
http://www.banjo.com/BG/Profiles/BillMonroe.html

Christy Moore
http://www.iol.ie/~pcassidy/christy.html

Moxy Früvous
http://www.fruvous.com/

Alan Munde
http://www.banjo.com/Profiles/MundeCarr.html

Lee Murdock
http://www.mcs.net/~jmurdock/lee/murdock.html

Holly Near
http://www.hollynear.com/

Carrie Newcomer
http://www.carrienewcomer.com/

The Nields
http://www.ntplx.net/~senft/nields/nwhomepa.html

Nightnoise
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Nightnoise.html

No Strings Attached
http://www.bev.net/community/nsa/nsa.master.html

Northern Lights
http://www.bicoastal.com/nlights/index.html

Laura Nyro
http://LauraNyro.net/

Maura O'Connell
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/o/oconnell_maura.html

Odetta
http://www.ares1.com/pinemt/odetta1.htm

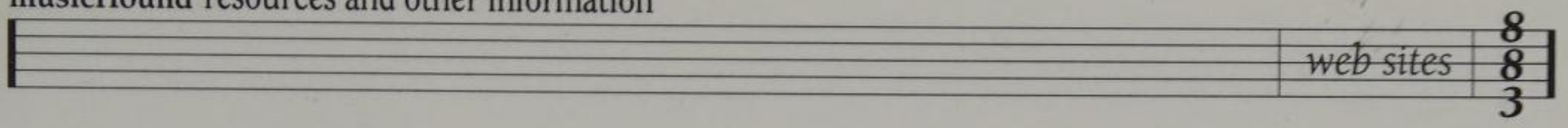
Old Blind Dogs
http://lummi.stanford.edu/users/b/r/brod/WWW/OBD/OldBlindDogs.html

David Olney
http://songs.com/davidolney/

Peter Ostroushko
http://www.rootsworld.com/smart/peter.html

Niamh Parsons and the Loose Connections
http://www.gpl.net/customers/LooseConnections/

Deb Pasternak
http://www.pasternak.com/



Tom Paxton
http://flemtam.com/tp.html

Pentangle
http://www.pavilion.co.uk/fdt/pent/

Ken Perlman
http://members.aol.com/kenperlman/homepage.htm

Peter, Paul and Mary
http://www.downeast.net/ppm/

Utah Phillips
http://www.hidwater.com/utah/utahhome.html

Planxty
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The Pogues
http://www.pogues.com/

John Prine
http://www.ohboy.com/OBR_Artists.html
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Maddy Prior
http://www.sectorel.pt/gaudela/prior/

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Harvey Reid
http://www.woodpecker.com/

John Renbourne
http://www.rootsworld.com/folklore/renbourn.html

Kimmie Rhodes
http://www.kimmierhodes.com/

Jean Ritchie
http://members.aol.com/greenhays/page6.htm

Kim Robertson
http://www.eldalamberon.com/friends/kimrobertson.html

The Roches
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Sally Rogers
http://www.teleport.com/~augustur/sallyrog.htm

Stan Rogers
http://www.summerfolk.org/srmain.htm

Tom Rush
http://tomrush.com/

Tom Russell
http://musicvil.com/

Buffy Sainte-Marie
http://130.63.218.180/~bsm/

Salamander Crossing
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Claudia Schmidt
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Schooner Fare
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Peggy Seeger
http://www.pegseeger.com/

Pete Seeger
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JimCapaldi/

Seldom Scene
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Martin Sexton
http://www.martinsexton.com/

Sharon Shannon
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Cosy Sheridan
http://www.hidwater.com/cosy/

Richard Shindell
http://www.folkartists.com/shindell/index.html

Michelle Shocked
http://www.shellshock.com/

Silly Wizard
http://www.rootsworld.com/harbourtown/silly_wizard.html

Simon and Garfunkel
http://www.connix.com/~rdrie/simon.html

Martin Simpson
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Fred Small
http://www.jg.org/folk/artists/fredsmall/fred_small.html

Judy Small
http://www.netspace.net.au/~sdyson/welcome.html

Debi Smith
http://songs.com/debi

Michael Smith
http://www.mcs.net/~jmurdock/michael/smith.html

Chris Smither
http://www.intermarket.net/~stessa/smither/

Sons of the Never Wrong
http://www.sons.com/

Bill Staines
http://www.execpc.com/~henkle/fbindex/s/staines_bill.html

Steeleye Span
http://www.informatik.uni-hamburg.de/~zierke/steeleye.span/

Cat Stevens
http://www.catstevens.com/

Al Stewart
http://flying.fish.com/music/al_stewart/

Andy Stewart
http://nats-www.informatik.uni-hamburg.de/~weber/AndyMStewart/

John Stewart
http://stevens.cnchost.com/stewart/

Alan Stivell
http://celtic.stanford.edu/artists/Stivell.html

The Story (Jonatha Brooke)
http://www.jonathabrooke.com/

June Tabor
http://flemtam.com/jt.html
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web sites

Tamarack
http://www.sentex.net/~gormorse/tamarack.html

Tannahill Weavers
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tannahill_weavers/

James Taylor
http://www.music.sony.com/Music/ArtistInfo/JamesTaylor/jt/index.html
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http://www.livtaylor.com/

Richard Thompson
http://www.alphalink.COM.AU/~sfy/RT/

Steve Tilston and Maggie Boyle
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tilston_boyle/

Trout Fishing in America
http://www.troutmusic.com/

Ian Tyson
http://www.nucleus.com/~cowboy/IanTyson.html

Uncle Bonsai
http://members.aol.com/ytrecords/ub.html

Jay Ungar and Molly Mason
http://members.aol.com/ungarmason/camp.html

Dave Van Ronk
http://www.rootsworld.com/folklore/vanronk.html

Townes Van Zandt
http://www.orst.edu/Dept/entomology/coopl/tvzindex.html

Suzanne Vega
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Loudon Wainwright
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Sloan Wainwright
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Doc Watson
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Gillian Welch
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Cheryl Wheeler
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Erica Wheeler
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David Wilcox
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Dar Williams
http://www.panix.com/~tneff/dar/

Robin and Linda Williams
http://www.dn.net/williams/

Cris Williamson and Tret Fure
http://www.cris-tret.com/

Robin Williamson
http://www.rootsworld.com/folklore/william.html

Kate Wolf
http://www.katewolf.com/

Wolfstone
http://www.highland-explorer.co.uk/wolfstone/halftail.htm

Neil Young
http://www.RepriseRec.com/NeilYoung/
http://HyperRust.org/

General

American Folklife Center
http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/afc.html

Appalachian Music and Arts
http://www.whistlepig.com/

Appalachian Music Archives
http://www.pitt.edu/~gebanks/pers/oldtime.html

Ari Davidow's Klezmer Shack
http://www.well.com/user/ari/klez/

Augusta Heritage Center
http://www.dne.wvnet.edu/augusta/home

Balkan Tunes
http://deepthought.armory.com/~cope/balkantunes/

Blue Highway
http://www.thebluehighway.com/

Blue Web
http://www.island.net/~blues/

Bluegrass Band
http://www.pgmusic.com/bluegras.htm

Brandywine Friends of Old Time Music
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~jlupton/bfotm.html

Ceolas Celtic Music Archive
http://celtic.stanford.edu/ceolas.html

Fiddler's Green
http://www.det.mun.ca/staff/lyard/music.htm

Folk Alliance
http://www.hidwater.com/folkalliance/fahome.html

Folk Book: An Online Acoustic Music Establishment.
http://www.folkmusic.org/

Folk Music Home Page
http://www.jg.org/folk/

Folk Venue Database
http://www.hidwater.com/folkvenue/

Irish Traditional Music Archive
http://www.itma.ie/home/itmae1.htm

Irish World Music Centre
http://www.ul.ie/~iwmc/HomePage.html

Karen Quick's Bluegrass Music Page
http://www.best.com:80/~kquick/bg.html

King Laoghaire: The Home of Irish Ballads and Booze
http://home2.swipnet.se/~w-27271/index.html

Klezmer Bands
http://www.well.com/user/ari/klez/contacts/klezbands.html#band.bow

Mining Co. Guide to Folk Music
http:/miningco.com/

Music Database
http://www.cs.nott.ac.uk/Department/Staff/ef/database.html

web sites

Music Search
http://musicsearch.com

MusicWeb Ireland
http://www.musweb.com/

Northern Journey Online (Canadian Folk Music)
http://www.interlog.com/~njo/

Planet Bluegrass
http://www.csn.net:80/planet/

Old Songs, Inc.
http://www.crisny.org/not-for-profit/oldsongs/

Old Time Music
http://www.pitt.edu/~gebanks/pers/oldtime.html

Old Time Music Home Page
http://www.geocities.com/~oldtimefiddler/

Old Time Music on the Web
http://funnelweb.utcc.utk.edu/~tkoosman/jca/oldtime.html

Old Time Southern String Bands
http://ils.unc.edu/barba/string/stringband.html

Renfro Valley Country Store
http://www.renfrovalley.com/musicfrm.htm

Smithsonian Folkways
http://www.si.edu/folkways/

Southern Folklife Collection
http://ils.unc.edu/barba/sfc.html

Tam Lin Web Site
http://cctr.umkc.edu/user/cgladish/tamlin.html

Web Music Resources on the Internet
http://www.musweb.com/resources.html

Yet Another Digital Tradition Page
http://underground.liquid.com/dtrad/

Magazines

Acoustic Guitar
http ://www.acguitar.com/

Acoustic Musician
http://www.netshop.net/~jesson/index.html

Banjo Newsletter
http://www2.gol.com/users/steve/f_banj.htm

Bluegrass Unlimited
http://www.bluegrassmusic.com/

Blues Access
http://www.bluesaccess.com/ba_home.html

Celtic Music E-mag
http://www.celticmusic.com/

Celtic Music on the Web
http://www.celticmusic.com/magazine/11_16_97/index.html

Delta Snake: The Online Blues 'Zine
http://www.island.net/~blues/snake.html

Dirty Linen
http://www.dirtynelson.com/linen/dirty.html

The Electric Harp Column
http://www.harpcolumn.com/

Fast Folk
http://www.users.interport.net/~stevena/ff/fastfolk.html

Fingerstyle Guitar
http://fingerstyleguitar.com/

Flatpicking Guitar Online
http://www.flatpick.com/Pages/Main/FPGMO-MainPage.html

Folk Alliance Online Newsletter
http://hidwater.com/folkalliance/fanews.html

Folk Harp Journal Index
http://www.tns.lcs.mit.edu/harp/fhj/

Folk Music Digest
http://hidwater.com/fmd/fmd.html

Folkways Web Magazine
http:/www.si.edu/folkways/mag1.htm

FolkWorld
http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/2030/indexe1.html

Heartsong: Resource Guide for Music of the Spirit
http://heartsong.bandnet.com/

The Hornpipe: Folk Music in the Southern Regions
http://www.hornpipe.com/hp/

Irish Music Magazine
http://www.mayo-ireland.ie/IrishMusic.htm

Jug Band Rag
http://heartsong.bandnet.com/

MandoZine
http://www.mandozine.com/

Mugwumps
http://www.mugwumps.com

North West Bluegrass News
http://members.aol.com/uknwbn

Northern Journey Online
http://www.interlog.com/~njo/

Old Time Herald Online
http://www.mindspring.com/~oth/

The Online Magazine of Roots and World Music
http://www.rootsworld.com

Stirrings Folk Magazine
http://www.sommers.demon.co.uk/stirrings/stirr88/stirrwelcome.html

Trad@Harp
http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/2030/indexe1.html

The Young Harpers Almanac
http://baruk.zendo.com/almanac/

Festivals

Bob Berens' Festivals
http://oeonline.com/folk_fests/

Festival Finder
http://www.festivalfinder.com/

Venues

Dirty Linen Gig Guide
http://www.dirtynelson.com/linen/special/tour.html

Hidden Water Folk Venues
http://www.hidwater.com/hwvenues.html

Musi-Cal Concert Pages
http://concerts.calendar.com/

Music Alive
http://www.acousticmusic.com/

MIDI Pages

Ain't Whistlin' Dixie
http://www.csn.net:80/planet/

web sites

Autoharp Tunes
http://weber.u.washington.edu/~britell/whiskey.html

Kipp Doolan's Traditional Midi Tunes
http://pluto.njcc.com/~kipp/

5-String Banjo
http://www2.gol.com/users/steve/f_banj.htm

Folk Music MIDI Page
http://www.epix.net/~lesley/folk.html

Folksongs and Ballads of the Appalachians and England
http://www.netstrider.com/music/folkways/

The Jordan-O'Connell Memorial Celtic MIDI Archive
http://www.albany.net/~dowland/index.html

Songs of the British Isles
http://www.netstrider.com/music/britisle/

Taylor's Traditional Tunebook
http://www3.islandnet.com/~btaylor/homepage.htm

The Virtual Tunebook
http://www.celticmusic.com/cgi-bin/~celticmusic/tunes.pl

The Wandering Whistler
http://www.geocities.com/~gmahan/

Lyrics and Music Databases

Australian Folk Songs
http://www.chepd.mq.edu.au/boomerang/songnet/

Campfire Sing Along
http://www.achilles.net/~cco/dir-cam.htm

Cantaria
http://chivalry.com/cantaria/

Civil War Songs
http://www.pcola.gulf.net/~vbraun/FlaStar/songs/index.html

Colin McArthur's Song Page
http://www.rt66.com/~colin/songbook.htm

Country Lyrics
http://www.ae.utexas.edu/~stimpy/music/country/lyrics/

Country Music Lyrics
http://www.roughstock.com/cowpie/

Digital Tradition Folk Song Database
www.deltablues.com/folksearch

Bob Dylan Lyrics
http://fciav3.bsd.uchicago.edu/~jrr/tbob/index.html

English Folk Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/welsh.html

Folk Songs from Other Countries
http://ingeb.org/

Folksong Index
http://acronet.net/~robokopp/folkindx.htm

Gaelic Song Index
http://chivalry.com/cantaria/

German Folk Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/Volksong.html

The Gospel Music Archive
http://subnet.virtual-pc.com/da567664/

Grendel's Lyric Archive
http://homepage.seas.upenn.edu/~avernon/lyrics.html

International Lyrics Server
http://www.lyrics.ch/

Irish Folk Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/irish.html

Irish Folksong Lyrics Collection
http://www.cs.hut.fi/~zaphod/search

Ken McGirr's Scottish Song Lyrics
http://www.smiley.cy.net/kmcgirr/

Music Database
http://www.cs.nott.ac.uk/Department/Staff/ef/database.html

Peter, Paul and Mary Lyrics
http://www.downeast.net/ppm/nslist.html

John Prine Lyrics
http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/1985/lyrics.htm

Scottish Folk Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/scottish.html

Scottish Song Lyrics
http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/1690/lyrics.html

Shanties and Sailor Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/shanty.html

Shanties and Sea Songs
http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~andrew/shanty/

Welsh Folk Songs
http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/welsh.html

Woody Gurthrie Lrics
http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~davida/lyrics.html

Associations

Acoustic Northwest
http://www.isomedia.com/homes/mspittal/acoustic.html

Boston Bluegrass Union
http://www.bbu.org/

Bucks County Folk Song Society
http://pages.prodigy.com/bcfss/

Canada On-Line Musicians Association
http://www.interlog.com/~cpreal/coma.html

Folk Federation of South Australia
http://www.folk-sa.asn.au/

The Folklore Society of Greater Washington
http://www.fsgw.org/

Greater New Haven Acoustic Music Society
http://revco.med.yale.edu/~robc_nhm/acoustic.html

Intermountain Acoustic Music Association
http://www.xmission.com:80/~iama/

International Bluegrass Music Association
http://www.ibma.org/IBMA/

Oklahoma City Traditional Music Association
http://www.octma.org/

Roots Music
http://www.roots.force9.co.uk/

Santa Cruz Bluegrass Society
http://www.infopoint.com/orgs/scbs/

Seattle Folklore Society
http://www.seafolklore.org/

Tidewater Friends of Folk
http://www.geocities.com/~tffm/

Filk

A Brief Guide to Filk
http://www.izzy.net/~tomsmith/filkfaq.htm

Darn Near All the Filk on the Web
http://www.dnaco.net/~mobrien/filk/filklink.html

Filking with Julia
http://www.sff.net/people/Julia.West/filking.html

Filklore and Filklife Studies
http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/org/swil/FILKS/Filklore.html

Interfilk Home Page
http://www.lovesong.com/interfilk/

M.A.S.S.F.I.L.K.
http://pages.prodigy.com/keshlam/whatfilk.html

Nich Smith on Filk
http://www.crc.ricoh.com/~steve/Doc/what-is-filk.html

Solomon Davidoff on Filk
http://ernie.bgsu.edu/~sdavido/index10.html

SWIL Filkbooks
http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/org/swil/filks.html

Xenofilkia
http://www.starport.com/xeno/

Filk Labels

Dandelion Digital
http://www.dandelion.com/

Firebird Arts and Music
http://firebirdarts.com/

Pegasus Publishing
http://www.fastlane.net/homepages/pegasus/

Quicksilver Fantasies
http://www.nidlink.com/~quicksilver/

Random Factors Catalog
http://sundry.hsc.usc.edu/random-factors/

Filk Groups

Black Book Band
http://www.sff.net/people/K-Mac/bwagon1.htm

The N'Early Music Consort
http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/9229/

Ookla the Mok
http://www.infinet.com/~scoteder/otmfan/

Phoenix
http://www.altrion.org/phoenix/

Urban Tapestry
http://www.inkspot.com/ut/

Windbourne
http://www.windbourne.com/

Shape Note Singing

Fasola Homepage
http://medinfo.labmed.umn.edu/Docs/.www/fasola_homepage.html

Sacred Harp and Related Shape-Note Music Resources
http://www.mcsr.olemiss.edu/~mudws/resource/

Sacred Harp Singing
http://www.mcsr.olemiss.edu/~mudws/harp.html

Shape Note Historical Background
http://www.mit.edu:8001/people/ijs/sn/sn-hist.html

Appalachian Dulcimer

Cult of the Revived Dulcimer
http://weber.u.washington.edu/~mkpb/dulchm.html

Jerry Rockwell's Mountain Dulcimer Home Page
http://www.eurekanet.com/~jcrmusic/

Mountain Dulcimer Homepage
http://www.ecnhs.org/dulcimer/dulcimer.html

Autoharps

Autoharp Page
http://www.autoharp.org/

Bagpipes

Bagpipe.com
http://www.bagpiper.com/

The Bagpipe Web
http://pipes.tico.com/pipes/pipes.html

The Bagpiping Pages
http://www.lismor.co.uk/pipehome.html

Northumbrian Small Pipes
http://www.nspipes.demon.co.uk/nsp/

The Pipers Corner
http://pw2.netcom.com/~crfowler/pcorner.htm

Uilleann Pipe Information List
http://www2.southwind.net/~karres/_music/_pipe/Uilleann.html

The Wonderful World of Bagpipes
http://www.epas.utoronto.ca:8080/~sagrillo/bagpipes/windbag.html

Banjo

Banjo Tabluture and Bluegrass Information
http://bluegrassbanjo.org/

The Classic Banjo Resource
http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rutkowsk/

The 5 String Banjo
http://www2.gol.com/users/steve/f_banj.htm

Gordon Banks' Old Time Music
http://www.pitt.edu/~gebanks/pers/oldtime.html

Introduction to Irish Banjo
http://www.sirius.com/~ststones/banjo.htm

Irish Tenor Banjo
http://www.wwisp.com/~dwisely/table.html

Proteus' Irish Tenor Banjo Site
http://www.geocities.com/Nashville/5055/

web sites

Bodhran

Bodhran
http://celtic.stanford.edu/instruments/bodhran/

Bouzouki

Han's Irish Bouzouki Homepage
http://www.ice.el.utwente.nl:80/~han/bouzouki/

Concertina

Alabama Concertina Support Group
http://hmi.homewood.net/tina.html

The Anglo Concertina
http://celtic.stanford.edu/instruments/bodhran/

Concertina FAQ
http://www.harbour.demon.co.uk/concerti.htm

Concertina! WWW Sites related to Concertinas
http://funnelweb.utcc.utk.edu/~tkoosman/boxlinks.html

Don Nichols' Concerina Pages
http://www.d-and-d.com/dnichols/DoN.html

Noel Hill School of Concertina
http://funnelweb.utcc.utk.edu/~tkoosman/nhics.html

Didgeridoo

Aboriginal Didjeridu
http://luff.latrobe.edu.au/~gengl1/didj.html

Dreamtime: The Didjeridu W3 Server
http://www.nd.edu/~sborman/didjeridu/

Fiddle

The American Nykelharpa Association
http://www.atmos.washington.edu/~brash/ana.html

Bowed Electricity
http://www.digitalrain.net/bowed/

Cape Breton Music & Entertainment
www.CapeBretonNet.com/Music

Ceolas! The Fiddler's Companion
http://celtic.stanford.edu/tunes/fc/

Chris Ricker's Fiddle Page
http://tnt.vianet.on.ca/pages/rickere

The Fiddle Web
http://www.gpfn.sk.ca/culture/arts/fiddle/

Fiddle's Home Page
http://www.west.net/~psalazar/fiddpage.html

Fiddles! The Fiddle Page
http://www-openmap.bbn.com/users/gkeith/fiddles/Fiddle.html

Georgi's Home Page of the Fiddle
http://www-openmap.bbn.com/users/gkeith/fiddles/Fiddle.html

The Hardanger Fiddle Association of America
http://www.lexianintl.org/sylte/hfaa.html

Larry Sanger's Donegal Fiddle Pages
http://www.geocities.com/Athens/6464/hmpg.html

Trente Sous Zero
www.qbc.clic.net/~thirtybe/agendaf.html

Guitar

Celtic/ British Isles Music For Finger Style Guitar
http://plainfield.bypass.com/~arte/celtic.html

Hammered Dulcimer

The Kitchen Musician's Hammered Dulcimer Site
http://members.aol.com/Kitchiegal/index.html/

The Nonesuch Dulcimer Club
http://www.hillside.co.uk/nonsuch/

The Official Hammered Dulcimer Web Site
http://www.rtpnet.org/~hdweb/misc/othrsite.html

Harp

Gaelic Harps & Harpers in Ireland & Scotland
http://www.silcom.com/~vikman/isles/scriptorium/harps/harps.htm

The Harp Page
http://www.tns.lcs.mit.edu/harp/

Trad@Harp
http://www.mayo-ireland.ie/harp.htm

Hurdy-Gurdy

Alden and Cali Hackmann's Hurdy-Gurdy Page
http://www.hurdygurdy.com/hg/hghome.html

A Brief History of the Hurdy-Gurdy
http://www.mhs.mendocino.k12.ca.us:80/MenComNet/Business/Retail/Larknet/ArtHurdGurdyHistory

Hurdy-Gurdy WWW Page
http://chpco6.ch.unito.it/~ravera/ghironda.html

Matthew Szostak's Hurdy-Gurdy Page
http://www.midcoast.com/~beechhil/vielle/

Lute

Guitar and Lute
http://www.albany.net/~dowland/index.html

The Lute Society of America
http://www.cs.dartmouth.edu/~wbc/lsa/lsa.html

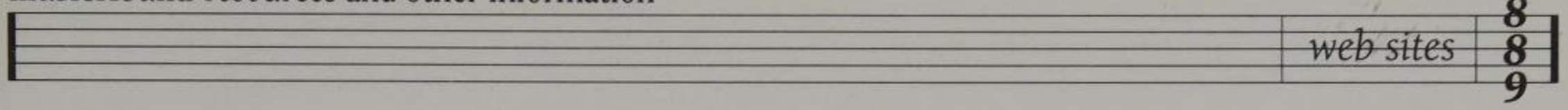
Wayne's Lute Page
http://www.cs.dartmouth.edu/~wbc/new/new_lute.html

Mandolin

Dawgnet home of David Grisman and Acoustic Disc
http://www.dawgnet.com/

Mando Mark's Mondo Mando Page
http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/3648/

Mandolin Cafe
http://www.mandolincafe.com/



Mandolinking
http://www.btinternet.com/~mandolinking/

Pennywhistles and Tin Whistles

Ain't Whistlin' Dixie
http://www.csn.net:80/planet/

The Ceolas Tin Whistle Site
http://celtic.stanford.edu/instruments/

Flutes and Pennywhistles
http://www.mhs.mendocino.k12.ca.us/MenComNet/Business/Retail/Larknet/ArtFlutesWhist

Mike Simpson's Tin Whistle Site
http://www.mindspring.com/~whistler/

Pennywhistle and Ocarina
http://mothra.nts.uci.edu/~dhwalker/dixie/

Semi-Comprehensive Whistle Guide
http://www.mindspring.com/~whistler/tutor/index.html

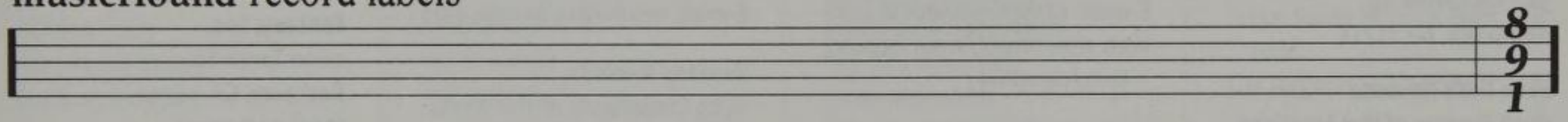
The Tin Whistle
http://members.aol.com/planetmac/whistle/whistle.html

The Tin Whistle Table
http://www.wwisp.com/~dwisely/table.html

The Wandering Whistler
http://www.geocities.com/~gmahan/

Whistle Tabluture Font
http://www.netbistro.com/georgemusic/tab.html

Whistling Low
http://www.wwisp.com/~dwisely/table.html



The following record labels are just some of the labels that have substantial folk catalogs. You may want to contact them if you have questions regarding specific releases.

Accurate Records
PO Box 390115
Cambridge, MA 02139

Acorn Music
5332 College Ave., Ste. 101
Oakland, CA 94618-2805
(510) 655-9076
Fax: (510) 655-9096
E-mail: acorn@sirius.com

Acoustic Disc
PO Box 4143
San Rafael, CA 94913
(800) 221-DISC (3472)

Acoustic Music Records
1610 Crestview
Seal Beach, CA 90740

Adobe Records
PO Box W
Shallowater, TX 79363
(806) 873-3537
Fax: (806) 873-3542

Alacazam! Records
PO Box 429
Waterbury, VT 05676-0429
E-mail: listenup@silo-alcazar.com

Alcazar Records
PO Box 429
Waterbury, VT 05676-0429
(802) 244-7845
Fax: (802) 244-6128
E-mail: listenup@silo-alcazar.com

Alligator Records
PO Box 60234
Chicago, IL 60660
(773) 973-7736
Fax: (773) 973-2088
E-mail: info@allig.com

A&M Records
1416 N. LaBrea
Hollywood, CA 90028
(213) 469-2411
Fax: (213) 856-2600

A&M/Sleeping Giant Music
1345 Denison St.
Markham, ON L3R 5V2
Canada

American Gramaphone Records
9130 Mormon Bridge Rd.
Omaha, NE 68152
(402) 457-4341
Fax: (402) 457-4332

American Melody
PO Box 270
Guilford, CT 06437
(203) 457-0881
Fax: (203) 457-2085

Angel Records
810 Seventh Ave.
New York, NY 10019
(212) 603-8600
Fax: (212) 603-8648

Appleseed Recordings
PO Box 2593
West Chester, PA 19380
E-mail: folkradicl@aol.com

Arabica Records
2515 36th Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Arhoolie Records
10341 San Pablo Ave.
El Cerrito, CA 94530 USA
(510) 525-7471
Fax: (510) 525-1204
E-mail: mail@arhoolie.com

Arista Records
6 W. 57th St.
New York, NY 10019
(212) 489-7400
Fax: (212) 830-2322

Asylum Records
1906 Acklen Ave.
Nashville, TN 37212
(615) 292-7990
Fax: (615) 292-8219

Atlantic Recording Corporation
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104-0101
(212) 707-2000

Avalanche Records
12000 W. Pico Blvd., Ste. 201
Los Angeles, CA 90064
E-mail: avalanche@bonaire.com

Axiom Records
400 Lafayette St., 5th Fl.
New York, NY 10003

Azure Records
PO Box 38
Washington, VA 22747
(540) 987-3164
Fax: (540) 987-3166

Bar/None
PO Box 1704
Hoboken, NJ 07030
(201) 795-9424
Fax: (201) 795-5048

Beacon Records
8033 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 392
Los Angeles, CA 90046

BCN Records
PO Box 3129
Peabody, MA 01961

The Blackbird Recording
185 Franklin St., 5th Fl.
New York, NY 10013

Blind Pig Records
PO Box 2344
San Francisco, CA 94126
(415) 550-6484
Fax: (415) 550-6485
E-mail: blindpigs@aol.com

Blix Street Records
PO Box 1129
Burbank, CA 91507
E-mail: BlixSt.@aol.com

Blue Hen Records
PO Box 420586
San Francisco, CA 94142
E-mail: mc@bluehenrecords.com

Blue Jacket Entertainment Inc.
322 Hicksville Rd.
Bethpage, NY 11714

Blue Note Records
1290 Avenue of the Americas, 35th Fl.
New York, NY 10104
(212) 492-5300
Fax: (212) 492-5458

Blue Planet Records
PO Box 2074
Boulder, CO 80306
E-mail: planet@bluegrass.com

Blue Suit Records
PO Box 352707
Toledo, OH 43635

Blue Thumb Records
555 W. 57th St., 10th Fl.
New York, NY 10019
(212) 424-1000
Fax: (212) 424-1007

Bluestein Family Tapes & Records
4414 E. Alamos
Fresno, CA 93726

Bohemia Beat
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

The Borealis Recording Company
67 Mowatt Ave., Ste. 233
Toronto, ON M6K 3E3 Canada
E-mail: brc@interlog.com

The Bottom Line Record Company
740 Broadway, 6th Fl.
New York, NY 10003

Brownstone Recordings
PO Box 60163
Worcester, MA 01606
(508) 853-9431

Buddah Records
1540 Broadway, 27th Fl.
New York, NY 10036

Campfire Records
1410 Ridge Creek Ln.
Bulverde, TX 78163
(210) 885-2488
Fax: (210) 828-0513
E-mail: campfire@hepcat.com
Web site: http://www.hepcat.com/campfire/

Capitol Nashville
3322 West End Ave.
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 269-2000
Fax: (615) 269-2053

Capitol Records
1750 N. Vine St.
Hollywood, CA 90028-5274
(213) 462-6252

Chrysalis Records
645 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022-1010

Claddagh
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Claddagh Records
Dame House
Dame St.
Dublin 2 Ireland
E-mail: claddagh@crl.ie

Clean Cuts
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Columbia Records
550 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022
(212) 833-8000
Fax: (212) 833-7731

Compas Records
117 30th Ave. South
Nashville, TN 37212
(800) 757-2277

Country Music Foundation Records
4 Music Square East
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 256-1639
Fax: (615) 255-2245

Culburnie Records
PO Box 219
Nevada City, CA 95959
(916) 292-4219
Fax: (916) 292-4352
E-mail: usinfo@culburnie.com

Cypress Records
1523 Crossroads of the World
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Daemon Records
PO Box 1207
Decatur, GA 30031

Dancing Cat Records
PO Box 639
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
(408) 429-5085
Fax: (408) 423-7057

Dancing Dog Music
PO Box 4427
Austin, TX 78765-4427
(512) 482-0132
Fax: (512) 482-0132
E-mail: mesa@eden.com

Daring
1 Camp St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Earwig Music Co.
1818 W. Pratt Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60626
(773) 262-0278
Fax: (773) 262-0285

Elektra/Nonesuch Records
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10019
(212) 275-4000
Fax: (212) 956-2270

EMI Music Canada
3109 American Drive
Mississauga, ON L4V 1B2 Canada

Enigma/Retro
PO Box 3628
Culver City, CA 90232-3628

Epic
1801 Century Park West
Los Angeles, CA 90067

Falling Mountain Music
240 Bucher Run Ln.
Winchester, VA 22602
(540) 877-2505
Fax: (540) 877-1797
E-mail: fallmtn@mnsinc.com

Fantasy, Inc.
2600 Tenth St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
(510) 549-2500
Fax: (510) 486-2015

Fast Folk Musical Magazine
PO Box 938
Village Station
New York, NY 10014

FireAnt Records
2009 Ashland Ave.
Charlotte, NC 28205
E-mail: Fireants@aol.com

Fish Tail Records
PO Box 2561
Iowa City, IA 52244

Flying Fish Records
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Folk-Legacy Records
PO Box 1148
Sharon CT 06069
(800) 836-0901
Fax: (860) 364-1050
E-mail: folklegacy@snet.net
Web site: http://folklegacy.com/

Foxglove Records
PO Box 5262
Portland, OR 97208

Fretless
1 Camp St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Front Hall Records
PO Box 307
Voorheesville, NY 12186

record labels 8 9 3

Gadfly Records
PO Box 5231
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 865-2406
E-mail: gadfly1@aol.com

Geffen Records
9130 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90069
(310) 278-9010
Fax: (310) 271-4358

A Gentle Wind
PO Box 3103
Albany, NY 12203
(518) 436-0391

Great American Music Hall
859 O'Farrell St.
San Francisco, CA 94109

Green Linnet/Xenophile Records
43 Beaver Brook Rd.
Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 730-0333
Fax: (203) 778-4443
E-mail: grnlinnet@aol.com

Gypsy Moth Records
PO Box 1285
New Haven, CT 06505

Harmonia Mundi USA
2037 Granville Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 478-1311
Fax: (310) 996-1389

Heritage Records
Rt. 3 Box 290
Galax, VA 24333

Homespun Tapes
PO Box 694
Woodstock, NY 12498

Iona Records
27-29 Carnoustie Place
Scotland St.
Glasgow G5 8PH Scotland

June Appal
PO Box 743
Whitesburg, KY 41858

Kells Music
64 New Hyde Park Rd.
Garden City, NY 11530-3909
(800) 854-3746
Fax: (516) 354-7768
E-mail: kellmus@usa.pipelin.com

Knitting Factory Works
74 Leonard St.
New York, NY 10013
(212) 219-3006
Fax: (212) 219-3401

La Louisianne Records
PO Box 52131
Lafayette, LA 70505

Ladyslipper
PO Box 3124
Durham, NC 27715

Legacy International
PO Box 6999
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.
PO Box 13819
Milwaukee, WI 53213

Lismor Recordings
S&I Music Store
27/29 Carnoustie Place
Glasgow G5 8P H
Scotland

Local Folkel Records
104 Catalpa Rd.
Rochester, NY 14617
(716) 544-0850

Maggie's Music
PO Box 4144
Annapolis, MD 21403
(410) 268-3394

Marimac Recordings, Inc
PO Box 447
Crown Pont, IN 46307
(800) 628-4507

MCA Records
70 Universal City Plaza
Universal City, CA 91608
(818) 777-4000
Fax: (818) 733-1407

MCA Nashville
60 Music Square E
Nashville, TN 37203-4325
(615) 244-8944
Fax: (615) 880-7410

Mercator/Caroline Records
114 W. 26th St.
New York, NY 10001

Mercury Records
825 Eighth Ave.
New York, NY 10019
(212) 333-8000
Fax: (212) 603-7650

Mesa/Bluemoon Recordings
9229 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90069
(310) 205-7445
Fax: (310) 205-5911

Miramar Recordings
200 Second Ave. West
Seattle, WA 98119
(206) 284-4700
Fax: (206) 286-4433

Missouri State Old Time Fiddlers Association
PO Box 7423
Columbia, MO 65205

Mouthpiece Records
106 W. 49th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55409

Mrs. Ackroyd Records
PO Box 95
South District Office
Manchester M20 4LB
England

Mulligan Records
19 Stephen's Ln.
Upper Mount St.
Dublin 2 Ireland

Nonesuch Records
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10019

Northeastern Records
PO Box 3589
Saxonville, MA 01701-0605
(508) 788-7770
Fax: (508) 788-7771

Oh Boy Records
33 Music Square West, #102-B
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 742-1250
Fax: (615) 742-1360
E-mail: ohboy@ohboy.com

Ossian
PO Box 84
Cork, Ireland

Out There Records
PO Box 543
Norman, OK 73070

Padraig Records
PO Box 22164
Lexington, KY 40522-2164
(606) 268-1718

Palmetto Records
71 Washington Place, #1A
New York, NY 10011

Parachute/Mercury/PolyGram
11150 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste. 1000
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Paradox Records
PO Box 4124
27 Mountain Blvd., Ste. 8
Warren, NJ 07060-0124

Phaeton
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Philo
1 Camp St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970
E-mail: info@rounder.com

Pinecastle Records
5108 S. Orange Ave.
Orlando, FL 32809
(800) 473-7773
Fax: (407) 858-0007
E-mail: pinecast@inspace.net

RCA Records/BMG
1540 Broadway
Times Square
New York, NY 10036
(212) 930-4000

Red Biddy Records
P. O. Box 336
Dover, NH 03821-0336
(603) 742-8866

Red House Records
PO Box 4044
St. Paul, MN 55104
(800) 695-4687

Red Pajamas
33 Music Square West, Ste. 102-B

record labels

Nashville, TN 37203

Rego Irish Records and Tapes
64 New Hyde Park Rd.
Garden City, NY 11530
(516) 328-7800
Fax: (516) 354-7768

Reprise
3300 Warner Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91505-4694
(818) 846-9090
Fax: (818) 846-8474

Rhiannon Records
20 Montague Rd.
London E8 2HW England
E-mail: rhiannonrec@compuserve.com

Rhino Records
10635 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 474-4778
Fax: (310) 441-6575

Rounder Records
1 Camp St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970
E-mail: info@rounder.com

Schoolkids' Records
523 E. Liberty St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(313) 994-8031
(800) 445-2361

Shanachie Entertainment Corp.
13 Laight St., 6th Fl.
New York, NY 10013
(212) 334-0284
Fax: (212) 334-5207

Small Dog A-Barkin'
PO Box 443
Madison, TN 37116

Smithsonian Folkways
955 L'Enfant Plz., Ste. 2600
Washington, DC 20560
(202) 287-3251
Fax: (202) 287-3699
E-mail: Folkways@aol.com

Stretchy Records
8238 Cohn
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 865-8455

Sugar Hill Records
PO Box 55300
Durham, NC 27717-5300
(919) 489 4349
Fax: (919) 489-6080

Temple Records
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Topaz Productions
PO Box 2725
Oakland, CA 94602
E-mail: HawkeyeH@aol.com

Tradition Rykodisc
Shetland Park
27 Congress St.
Salem, MA

Traditional Crossroads
PO Box 20320
Greeley Sq. St.
New York, NY 10001-9992
(800) 370-9812
E-mail: tradcross@aol.com

TriStar/Sony Music
550 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022-3211
(212) 337-5454
Fax: (212) 337-5453

Turquoise Records
PO Box 947
Highway 931
Whitesburg, KY 41858
(606) 633-0485
Fax: (606) 633-0493

Universe Records
PO Box 73
Kenmore, NY 14217

Vanguard Records Welk Record Group
1299 Ocean Ave.
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 451-5727

Varrick Records
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Vestapol
1 Camp St.
Cambridge MA 02140
(617) 354-0700
Fax: (617) 491-1970

Warner Music Canada
1810 Birchmount Rd.
Scarborough, ON M1P 2H1
Canada

Warner/Reprise
3300 Warner Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91505-4694
(818) 846-9090
Fax: (818) 846-8474

Waterbug
PO Box 6605
Evanston, IL 60204
E-mail: info@waterbug.com

Windham Hill Group
PO Box 5501
Beverly Hills, CA 90211-2713
(800) 888-8544
E-mail: consumers@windham.com

Xenophile Records
43 Beaver Brook Rd.
Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 730-0333
Fax: (203) 730-0345

Yazoo Records
Shanachie Records
37 E Clinton St.
Newton, NJ 07860
(201) 579-7763
Fax: (201) 579-7083

Yellow Tail Records
9102 17th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98115-3212
(206) 527-3546

These are just some of the radio stations in the United States that feature some sort of folk music programming. Please be advised that folk music may make up only a small portion of the station's program schedule, and that radio formats often change like the weather. Your best bet would be to check the local radio listings in the cities below for more specific information.

Alabama

Auburn
WEGL (91.1 FM)

Tuscaloosa
WQPR (88.7 FM)
WUAL (91.5 FM)

Alaska

Juneau
KTOO (104.3 FM)

Arizona

Tucson
KXCI (91.3 FM)

Arkansas

Little Rock
KABF (88.3 FM)

California

Berkeley
KPFA (94.1 FM)

Cupertino
KKUP (91.5 FM)

Davis
KDVS (90.3 FM)

Fresno
KSJV (91.5 FM)

Nevada City
KVMR (89.5 FM)

North Hollywood
KPFK (90.7 FM)

Northridge
KCSN (88.5 FM)

Oakland
KNEW (910 AM)

Pacific Grove
KAZU (90.3 FM)

Philo
KZYX (90.7 FM)

Rohnert Park
KRCB (91.1 FM)

Sacramento
KVMR (99.3 FM)

San Carlos
KBUD (88.1 FM)

San Francisco
KALW (91.7 FM)
KFLR (93.7 FM)

Santa Cruz
KSCU (103.3 FM)
KUSP (88.9 FM)
KZSC (88.1 FM)

Santa Monica
KCRW (89.9 FM)

Stockton
KUOP (91.3 FM)

Turlock
KCSS (91.9 FM)

Connecticut

Bridgeport
WPKN (89.5 FM)

Fairfield
WSHU (91.1 FM)

Hartford
WRTC (89.3 FM)

New Haven
WYBC (94.3 FM)

New London
WCNY (91.1 FM)

Sharon
WKZE (98.1 FM)

Storrs
WHUS (91.7 FM)

West Hartford
WWUH (91.3 FM)

West Haven
WNHU (88.7 FM)

Delaware

Newark
WVUD (91.3 FM)

District of Columbia

Washington
WAMU (88.5 FM)

Florida

Gainesville
WUFT (89.1 FM)

St. Augustine
WFCF (88.5 FM)

Tallahassee
WVFS (89.7 FM)

Tampa
WMNF (88.5 FM)

8 9 6 radio stations

Georgia

Athens
WUOG (90.5 FM)

Atlanta
WREK (91.1 FM)
WRFG (89.3 FM)

Valdosta
WVVS (90.9 FM)

Illinois

Carbondale
WSIU (91.9 FM)

Chicago
WFMT (98.7 FM)
WLUW (88.7 FM)

Evanston
WNUR (89.3 FM)

Springfield
WUIS (91.9 FM)

Indiana

Anderson
WAXT (96.7 FM)

Bloomington
WFHB (91.3 FM)

Elkhart
WVPE (88.1 FM)

Goshen
WGCS (91.1 FM)

Terre Haute
WMHD (90.5 FM)

Iowa

Cedar Falls
KUNI (90.9 FM)

Clinton
KROS (1340 AM)

Kansas

Garden City
KANZ (91.1 FM)
KZNA (90.5 FM)

Lawrence
KANU (91.5 FM)

North Newton
KBCU (88.1 FM)

Kentucky

Highland Heights
WNKU (89.7 FM)

Lexington
WRFL (88.1 FM)

Murray
WKMS (91.3 FM)

Whitesburg
WMMT (88.7 FM)

Louisiana

Baton Rouge
WRKF (89.3 FM)

Maine

Lewiston
WRBC (91.5 FM)

Maryland

Baltimore
WKHS (90.5 FM)

College Park
WMUC (88.1 FM)

Salisbury
WSCL (89.5 FM)

Towson
WTMD (89.7 FM)

Massachusetts

Amherst
WFCR (88.5 FM)
WMUA (91.1 FM)

Boston
WERS (88.9 FM)
WUMB (91.9 FM)

Framingham
WDJM (91.3 FM)

North Dartmouth
WSMU (91.1 FM)

Provincetown
WOMR (92.1 FM)

Springfield
WTCC (90.7 FM)

Waltham
WBRS (100.1 FM)

Williamstown
WJJW (91.1 FM)

Worcester
WCUW (91.3 FM)
WICN (90.5 FM)

Michigan

Ann Arbor
WCBN (88.3 FM)

Detroit
WDET (101.9 FM)

East Lansing
WDBM (88.9 FM)
WKAR (90.5 FM)

Minnesota

Duluth
KUMD (103.3 FM)

Grand Rapids
KAXE (91.7 FM)

Minneapolis
KFAI (90.3 FM)

Missouri

Cape Girardeau
KRCU (90.9 FM)

Columbia
KOPN (89.5 FM)

Fulton
KFAL (900 AM)

Rolla
KUMR (88.5 FM)

Springfield
KSMU (91.1 FM)

St. Charles
KCLC (89.1 FM)

St. Louis
KDHX (88.1 FM)

Montana

Great Falls
KGPR (89.9 FM)

Missoula
KGPR (89.9 FM)
KUFM (89.1 FM)

Nebraska

Lincoln
KZUM (89.3 FM)

Nevada

Las Vegas
KUNV (91.5 FM)

New Hampshire

Henniker
WNEC (91.7 FM)

New Jersey

East Orange
WFMU (91.1 FM)

Manahawkin
WYRS (90.7 FM)

Pemberton
WBZC (88.9 FM)

Teaneck
WFDU (89.1 FM)

Trenton
WTSR (91.3 FM)

New Mexico

Las Cruces
KRWG (90.7 FM)

New York

Fredonia
WCVF (88.9 FM)

Garden City
WBAU (90.3 FM)

Hyde Park
WHVW (950 AM)

Ithaca
WVBR (93.5 FM)

Poughkeepsie
WVKR (91.3 FM)

Rochester
WRUR (88.5 FM)
WWWG (1460 AM)

Saratoga Springs
WSPN (91.1 FM)

Syracuse
WCNY (91.3 FM)
WJNY (85.9 FM)
WUNY (90.9 FM)

North Carolina

Asheville
WCQS (88.1 FM)

Chapel Hill
WUNC (91.5 FM)

Durham
WXDU (88.7 FM)

Fayetteville
WFSS (91.9 FM)

Raleigh
WQDR (94.7 FM)

Ohio

Athens
WOUB (91.3 FM)

Cleveland
WRUW (91.1 FM)

Oberlin
WOBC (91.5 FM)

Owensville
WOBO (88.7 FM)

Wooster
WCWS (90.9 FM)

Xenia
WBZI (1500 AM)

Oregon

Eugene
KLCC (89.7 FM)
KRVM (91.9 FM)

Portland
KBOO (90.7 FM)

Pennsylvania

Allentown
WDIY (88.1 FM)

Philadelphia
WHYY (90.9 FM)
WXPN (88.5 FM)

State College
WPSU (91.5 FM)

South Carolina

Clemson
WSBF (88.1 FM)

Tennessee

Clinton
WDVX (89.9 FM)

Johnson City
WETS (89.5 FM)

Nashville
WPLN (90.3 FM)

Texas

Austin
KUT (90.5 FM)

College Station
KAMU (90.9 FM)
KEOS (89.1 FM)

El Paso
KTEP (88.5 FM)

Houston
KTRU (91.7 FM)

Huntsville
KSHU (90.5 FM)

San Antonio
KSYM (90.1 FM)

Utah

Moab
KZMU (89.7 FM)

Salt Lake City
KRCL (90.9 FM)

Vermont

Burlington
WRUV (90.1 FM)

Colchester
WVPR (107.9 FM)

Montpelier
WNCS (104.7 FM)

Plainfield
WGDR (91.1 FM)

Virginia

Charlottesville
WTJU (91.1 FM)

Harrisonburg
WMRA (90.7 FM)

Monterey
WVLS (89.7 FM)

Norfolk
WHRV (89.5 FM)

Orange
WJMA (96.7 FM)

Williamsburg
WCWM (90.7 FM)

Washington

Bellevue
KBCS (91.3 FM)

Gig Harbor
KGHP (89.3 FM)

Olympia
KAOS (89.3 FM)

Seattle
KUOW (94.9 FM)

West Virginia

Bethany
WVBC (88.1 FM)

Wisconsin

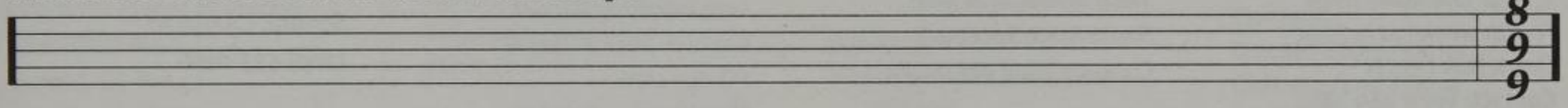
Madison
WORT (89.9 FM)

Milwaukee
WYMS (88.9 FM)

Wyoming

Casper
KVOC (1230 AM)

Douglas
KKTY (99.3 FM)



If you want to see some folk and roots music perfomed live, we suggest you check out some of these North American music festivals. We've also included a few workshops for the hands-on types.

UNITED STATES

Alabama

Huntsville
Once in a Blue Moon Dance Weekend
Memorial Day weekend
E-mail: mebanefamily@world-net.att.net

Huntsville
Annual State Fiddling and Bluegrass Convention
Third weekend in September
Cahaba Shriners Temple
Contact: (205) 859-4471

Huntsville
Mountain Dulcimer Festival
Third Sunday in September
Burritt Museum and Park
Contact: (205) 536-2882

Mentone
Birmingham Country Dance Society Old-Time Music & Dance Weekend
A weekend in August
Contact: Diane Weatherly
1452 Milner Crescent
Birmingham, AL 35205
(205) 939-0120
E-mail: dweather@uab.edu

Mobile
Deep South Dulcimer Festival
First weekend in November
Chickasabougue Park
Contact: (334) 633-7739

Alaska

Fairbanks
Fairbanks Winter Folk Festival
Second weekend in February
Wood Center, University of Alaska
Contact: (907) 488-0556

Fairbanks
Fairbanks Summer Folk Fest
Second or third weekend in June
Moose Creek Pavilion
Contact: (907) 488-0556

Fairbanks
Athabascan Old-Time Fiddlers' Festival
First or second weekend in November
Eagles Hall
Contact: (907) 452-1825

Juneau
Alaska Folk Festival
First or second weekend in April
Centennial Hall
Contact: (907) 789-0292

Skagway
International Folk Festival
Weekend in late May or early June
First Presbyterian Church
Contact: (907) 983-2276

Arizona

Casa Grande
Arizona Old Time Fiddlers Jamboree
First weekend in January
Pinal County Fairgrounds
Contact: (520) 723-5242

Lake Havasy City
Sandpoint's Fiddlers' Jamboree
Weekend before Thanksgiving Day
Sandpoint Marina and RV Park
Contact: (520) 855-0549

Payson
State Championship Old Time Fiddlers' Contest
A weekend in late September
Payson Rodeo Grounds
Contact: (520) 474-5242

Phoenix
Phoenix Folk Traditions Acoustic Music Festival
A weekend in late March or early April
Encanto Park
Contact: (602) 495-5458

Prescott
Sharlot Hall Museum Folk Music Festival
First weekend in October
Sharlot Hall Museum
Contact: (520) 445-3123

Scottsdale
US West National Festival of the West.
A weekend in March
Contact: PO Box 12966
Scottsdale, AZ 85267
(602) 996-4387

Tucson
Tucson Folk Festival
A weekend in late April or early May
El Presidio Park
Contact: (520) 881-2016

Wickenburg
Four Corner States Bluegrass Festival and Fiddle Championship
Mid-November
Everett Bowman Rodeo Grounds
Contact: (520) 694-5479

Arkansas

Mountain View
Annual Arkansas Folk Festival
A weekend in April
Stone County Courthouse Square
Contact: (501) 269-3851

Mountain View
Tribute to Merle Travis & National Thumbpicking Guitar Championships
Fourth weekend in May
Ozark Folk Center
Contact: (501) 269 3851

Mountain View
Old-Time Gathering on the Square
July 4
Stone County Courthouse Square
Contact: (501) 269-8068

Mountain View
Autoharp Jamboree
Second weekend in August
Ozark Folk Center
Contact: (501) 269-3851

Mountain View
Arkansas State Old Time Fiddle Championships
A weekend in September
Ozark Folk Center
Contact: (501) 269-3851

Mountain View
Fiddle and Dance Jamboree
Second weekend in October
Ozark Folk Center
Contact: (501) 269-3851

Mountain View
Bean Fest
Last weekend in October
Stone Mountain Courthouse Square
Contact: (501) 269-3851

California

Agoura
Topanga Banjo-Fiddle Contest, Dance & Folk Arts Festival
Third Sunday in May
Paramount Ranch, near Agoura
Contact: (818) 354-3795

Angels Camp
Annual Calaveras Celtic Faire
A weekend in March
Contact: PO Box 4541
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 532-8375

Arcadia
Great American Irish Fair and Music Festival
Third weekend in June
Santa Anita Racetrack
Contact: (818) 985-2233

Berkeley
Berkeley Free Folk Festival
A weekend in May
Cedar & Bonita Streets, Berkeley
Contact: Jessica Bryan
1627 Grant Street, Apt. G
Berkeley, CA 94703
E-mail: Folkfest@sirius.com

Bishop
Mill Pond Traditional Music Festival
Third weekend in September
Mill Pond Park
Contact: (800) 874-0669

Booneville
Wild Iris Folk Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Mendocino County Fairgrounds
Contact: Wild Iris Productions
PO Box 262
Philo, CA 95466
(707) 895-2148

Calabasas
Summer Solstice Folk Music, Dance & Storytelling Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Sola University
Contact: (818) 342-7664

Felton
Saw Player's Picnic and Music Festival
Third Sunday in July
Roaring Camp and Big Trees Train Depot
Contact: (510) 523-4649

Goleta
Annual Old-Time Fiddlers Convention
One day in October
Contact: Hilda Wenner
967 Garcia Rd
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
(805) 966-1191

Mendocino
Lark in the Morning Music Celebration
Late July/early August
Contact: Mickie Zekley
PO Box 1176
Mendocino, CA 95460
(707) 964-5569
E-mail: larkinam@larkinam.com

Mendocino Woodlands
Balkan Music and Dance Workshop
Late June/early July
East European Folklife Center
Contact: PO Box 593
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-3020
E-mail: office@eefc.org

San Francisco
San Francisco Celtic Music & Arts Festival
A weekend in March
Contact: (415) 252-9994

San Rafael
Acoustic Guitar Festival
A week in August
Contact: PO Box 767
San Anselmo, CA 94979-0767
(415) 485-6946, ext. 628
E-mail: agfestival@stringletter.com

Santa Clarita
Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival
Last weekend in March
Gene Autry's Melody Ranch
Contact: (800) 305-0755

Sebastopol
Kate Wolf Memorial Music Festival
A weekend in June
Caswell Vineyards
Contact: (707) 829-7067

Yosemite
Strawberry Spring Music Festival
Five days in May
Contact: PO Box 565
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 533-0191

Yosemite
Strawberry Fall Music Festival
A weekend in September
Contact: PO Box 565
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 533-0190

Colorado

Denver
Colorado's Annual Mid-Winter Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in February
Northglenn Holiday Inn & Holidome
E-mail: bluegras@verinet.com

Lyons
RockyGrass: The Annual Rocky Mountain Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in late July
Contact: Planet Bluegrass
500 West Main
Lyons, CO 80540
(303) 449-6007
E-mail: planet@bluegrass.com

Lyons
Annual Rocky Mountain Folks Festival
A weekend in August
Contact: Planet Bluegrass
500 West Main
Lyons, CO 80540
(303) 449-6007
E-mail: planet@bluegrass.com

Pueblo
Annual Bluegrass on the River
Memorial Day weekend
Greenway & Nature Center
Contact: Greenway & Nature Center
5200 Nature Center Road
Pueblo, CO 81003
(719) 549-2414

Silverton
Silverton Jubilee Folk Music Festival
A weekend in June
Contact: Jane Legge
PO Box 185
Silverton, CO 81433

Telluride
Annual Telluride Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in June
Contact: Planet Bluegrass
500 West Main
Lyons, CO 80540
(303) 449-6007
E-mail: planet@bluegrass.com

Connecticut

Mystic
Sea Music Festival
Second weekend in June
Mystic Seaport Museum
Contact: (860) 572-0711

Preston
Strawberry Park Bluegrass Festival
First weekend in June
Strawberry Park (5 miles east of Norwich)
Contact: (860) 886-1944

Delaware

Harrington
Eastern Shore Bluegrass Association Festival
Third weekend in June
Delaware State Fairgrounds
Contact: (302) 492-1048

Florida

Dade City
Annual Florida Old-Time Music Championships
A weekend in April
Sertoma Youth Ranch
Contact: Jim Strictland
1848 Thistle Ct.
Wesley Chapel, FL 33543

Dade City
Annual Will McLean Folk Festival
Two days in April
Seroma Youth Ranch
E-mail: mlonghill@aol.com

Kissimmee
Annual Kissimmee Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in March
Silver Spurs Rodeo Grounds
Contact: PO Box 456
Orlando, FL 32802
(800) 473-7773

Live Oak
Annual Suwannee Springfest
A weekend in March
Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park
Contact: Magnolia Music and Events, Inc.
PO Box 51597
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32240-1597
(904) 249-7990
E-mail: BigCosmo@aol.com

St. Augustine
Annual Gamble Rogers Folk Festival
A weekend in May
St. Augustine Amphitheater
Contact: Jim Springfield
(904) 794-0222
E-mail: StoryBuff@aol.com

St. Petersburg
Florida State Fiddlers Convention
A weekend in October
Contact: Dea Browning
PO Box 713
Micanopy, FL 32677
E-mail: dea@afn.org

Georgia

Athens
North Georgia Folk Festival
First weekend in October
Sandy Creek Park
Contact: (706) 613-3620

Hiawassee
Georgia's Official State Fiddlers Convention
Ten days in mid-October
Contact: (706) 896-4191

Tifton
Folk Life Festival & Fiddlers' Jamboree
Fourth Saturday in April
Georgia Agrirama Living History Museum
Contact: (912) 386-3344

Hawaii

Honolulu
Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival
Third Sunday in August
McCoy Pavilion
Contact: (808) 239-4336

Lihue (Kauai)
Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival, Kauai Style
First Saturday in November
Kauai Marriott Resort
Contact: (808) 239-4336

Idaho

Rexburg
Idaho International Folk Dance Festival
Last weekend in July through first weekend of August
Contact: (208) 356-5700

Weiser
National Old-Time Fiddlers Contest
A week in June
Weiser High School Gym
Contact: Layna Hafer
8 E. Idaho
Weiser, ID 83672

Illinois

Carbondale
Annual Southern Illinois Festival of Irish Music and Dance
Two days in April
Contact: Pat Eckert
Division of Continuing Education
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 549-3090

Chicago
Annual Universtiy of Chicago Folk Festival
A weekend in February
Mandel Hall
Contact: U of C Folklore Society
PO Box 67
Faculty Exchange
Chicago, IL 60637

Chicago
Chicago Blues Festival
First weekend in June
Grant Park
Contact: (312) 744-3315

Chicago
Chicago Gospel Festival
Second weekend in June
Grant Park
Contact: (312) 744-3315

Chicago
Greater Chicago Jewish Folk Arts Festival
Second Sunday in June
Cauldwell Woods
Contact: (847) 674-0344

Chicago
Chicago Highland Games and Scottish Festival
Third weekend in June
Grant Park
Contact: (800) 449-SCOT

Coal City
Coal City Storytelling Festival
Fourth weekend in May
Coal City Public Library
Contact: (815) 634-4552

Decatur
World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest
A weekend in May
Contact: Judy Leschewski
PO Box 4714
Decatur, IL 62525

Downer's Grove
Downer's Grove Heritage Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Downtown Downer's Grove
Contact: (630) 969-9720

Evanston
Midwest Anniversary Sacred Harp Singing
Second Sunday in January
Contact: (773) 486-7400

Evanston
Evanston Ethnic Arts Festival
Third weekend in July
Dawes Park
Contact: (847) 491-0266

Freeport
Oakdale Music Festival
Second Sunday in July
Oakdale Nature Preserve
Contact: (815) 235-2812

Grayslake
Great Plains Folk Festival
First weekend in June
College of Lake County
Contact: 1605 Wilmette Ave.
Willmette, IL 60091
(847) 251-6618

Morris
Gebhard Woods Dulcimer Festival
Second weekend in July
Gebhard Woods State Park
Contact: H.A.N.D.S.
PO Box 59
Elmwood Park, IL 60635
(708) 456-6292
E-mail: hammerd@mcs.com

Oak Forest
Chicago Gaelic Park Irish Fest
Memorial Day weekend
Gaelic Park
Contact: (630) 892-8811

Palos Hills
Great Plains Folk Festival
Last weekend in April
Moraine Valley Community College
Contact: (708) 251-6618

Poplar Grove
Blaine Folk Festival
Second Sunday in June
Blaine United Methodist Church
Contact: (815) 544-3616

Spring Grove
Illinois Storytelling Festival
Last full weekend in July
Spring Grove Village Park
Contact: PO Box 507
Richmond, IL 60071
(815) 648-2039

Warrenville
Warrenville Folk Festival
Second weekend in July
Cearny Park
Contact: W.F.M.S.
PO Box 248
Warrenville, IL 60555
(630) 717-8495

Indiana

Battle Ground
Annual Indiana Fiddlers Gathering
A weekend in June
Contact: Kirk Hallman
PO Box 49
Battle Ground, IN 47920

Battle Ground
"Battleground" Indiana Fiddler's Gathering
Fourth weekend in June
Tippecanoe Battlefield
Contact: Indiana Fiddlers Gathering
PO Box 49
Battle Ground, IN 47920
(317) 567-4242

Bean Blossom
Bean Blossom Bluegrass Festival
Third weekend in June
Contact: (615) 868-3333

Indianapolis
Eagle Creek Folk Music Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Eagle Creek Park
Contact: Central Indiana Folk Music & Mountain Dulcimer Society
c/o Berard
1331 Blue Bird Dr
Greenfield, IN 46140
(317) 462-9681

Kendalville
Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in May
4H Fairgrounds
Contact: Jim Winger
5043 Wapiti Ct.
Fort Wayne, IN 46804
(219) 432-4485
E-mail: jawinger@mixi.net

Petersburg
Indiana Fiddling & Picking Contest
First weekend in June
Prides Creek Park
Contact: Rothrock/OTMA
Rt. 1, PO Box 269D
Winslow, IN 47598
(812) 789-2518

Iowa

Avoca
Avoca Old-Time Country Music Contest & Festival
The six days preceding Labor Day
Pottawattamie County Fairgrounds
Contact: (712) 784-3001

Des Moines
Traditional Music Weekend
First weekend in August
Living History Farms
Contact: 2600 NW 11th St.
Urbandale, IA 50322
(515) 278-5286

Medora/Indianola
Hickory Hills Hoedown
Third Sunday in September
Hickory Hills Park
Contact: (515) 961-6169

Stratford
Bluegrass and Old-Time Country Music
Second weekend in July
Stratford City Park
Contact: (515) 838-2311

Kansas

Gardner
Santa Fe Trails Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in May
Johnson County Fairgrounds
Contact: JCCC Box Office
Santa Fe Trails Bluegrass Festival
12345 College Blvd.
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 469-4445

Kingman
Ninnescah Valley Folk Festival
Second weekend in August
Riverside Park
Contact: Kansas Acoustic Arts Association
RR 2, PO Box 106
Kingman, KS 67068
(316) 532-3270

Lawrence
Kansas State Fiddling & Picking Championships
Last or second-to-last weekend in August
South Park
Contact: (913) 841-7817

Overland Park
Prairie Dulcimer Festival
First weekend in June
Santa Fe Commons
Contact: Prairie Dulcimer Club
6741 Mackey St.
Overland Park, KS 66204
(913) 236-9289

Park City
Annual Park City Bluegrass Festival
Two days in May
Contact: Park City Festivals
Park City, KS 67219
(316) 691-8178

Salina
Smoky Hill River Festival
Second weekend in June
Oakdale Park
Contact: Smoky Hill River Fest
PO Box 2181
Salina, KS 67402
(913) 826-7410

Winfield
Walnut Valley Festival & National Flatpicking Championships
A weekend in September
Cowley County Fairgrounds
Contact: Walnut Valley Association
PO Box 245

Winfield, KS 67156
(316) 221-3250

Kentucky

Benton
Southern Harmony Singing
Fourth Sunday in May
Marshall County Courthouse
Contact: (502) 527 8616

Berea
Celebration of Traditional Music
A weekend in October
Berea College Campus
Contact: Gordon McKinney
Appalachian Center
CPO 2336
Berea College
Berea, KY 40404-23326
(606) 986-9341, ext.5140

Central City
Merle Travis Festival
The Saturday following Thanksgiving
Central City Elementary School
Contact: (502) 754-9603

Leitchfield
Official Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddlers Contest
Two days in July
Rough River Dam State Resort Park
Contact: Brent Miller
PO Box 4042
Leitchfield, KY 42755

Louisville
Otter Creek Park Bluegrass Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Otter Creek Park
Contact: (502) 583-3577

Olive Hill
Mountain Memories Weekend
Two days in March
Carter Caves State Park
Contact: J.P. Fraley's Mountain Music Gathering
Carter Caves State Park
344 Caveland Dr.
Olive Hill, KY 41164
(606) 286-4411

Olive Hill
J.P. Fraley's Mountain Music Gathering
Six days in September
Carter Caves State Park
Contact: J.P. Fraley's Mountain Music Gathering
Carter Caves State Park
344 Caveland Dr
Olive Hill, KY 41164
(606) 286-4411

Owensboro
IBMA Bluegrass Fan Fest
Last full weekend in September
English Park
Contact: (502) 684 9025

Pikeville
Hillbilly Days
Third weekend in April
Downtown Pikeville
Contact: (800) 844-7453

Pineville
Great American Dulcimer Convention
Fourth weekend in September
Pine Mountain State Resort
Contact: (606) 337-3066

Renfro Valley
Old Joe Clark Bluegrass Festival
First weekend in July
Contact: (800) 765-7464

Louisiana

Athens
Bluegrass Festival
First weekend in June
Home Place Acres
Contact: (318) 258-4943

Eunice
Acadiana Music Festival
Second Sunday after Easter
Northwest Community Center Pavilion
Contact: (318) 457-3014

New Orleans
Annual New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival
Late April
Fair Grounds Race Course
Contact: PO Box 53407
New Orleans, LA 70151-3407

New Orleans
Louisiana Music Tour
Late April
Contact: Festival Tours International
15237 Sunset Blvd, Ste. 17
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
(818) 346-5146
E-mail: festtours@aol.com

New Orleans
Celtic Nations Festival
A weekend in mid- or late October
Marconi Meadows
Contact: (504) 566-5011

Plaisance
Original Southwest Louisiana Zydeco Music Festival
A weekend in September
Contact: Southern Development Foundation
361 Sandoz
Opelousas, LA 70570

Maine

Bar Harbor
Downeast Dulcimer and Folk Harp Festival
First or second weekend in July
Congregational Church
Contact: (207) 288-5653

Blandford
Blandford Fair Old Time Fiddlers Contest
One day in September
Contact: Chris Keenan
PO Box 3
Blandford, MA 01008

Brunswick
Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass Festival
Labor Day weekend
Thomas Point Beach
Contact: (207) 725-6009

Cambridge
Salty Dog Bluegrass Music Festival
Last weekend in August
Cambridge Festival Grounds
Contact: (207) 277-5624

East Benton/Waterville
Annual East Benton Fiddle Convention
One day in July
Contact: Shirley Littlefield
PO Box 215
Clinton, ME 04927-0215

Sidney
Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival
A weekend in June
Silver Spur Riding Club
Contact: Blistered Fingers Production
Greg Cormier
RFD #1, PO Box 7560
Waterville, ME 04901
(207) 873-6559
E-mail: blist-f@gwi.net

South Paris
The Record Family's Oxford County Bluegrass Festival
Third weekend in August
Rose-Beck Farm
Contact: 207 743 2905

Maryland

Friendsville
Friendsville Fiddle and Banjo Contest
Third Saturday in July
Town Park
Contact: (301) 746-8194

Westminster
Deer Creek Fiddlers' Convention
Second Sunday in June
Contact: (800) 654-4645

Westminster
Common Ground: American Music and Arts Festival
A weekend in July
Carroll County Farm Museum
Contact: Common Ground on the Hill
Western Maryland College
Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 857-2771
E-mail: cground@qis.net

904 festivals and workshops

Web site: http://www.commongroundonthehill.com/

Massachusetts

Boston
Gaelic Roots Music, Song and Dance Summer Festival
One week in June
Boston College
Contact: (617) 552-1490

Lowell
Lowell Folk Festival
Last full weekend in July
Downtown Lowell
Contact: (508) 970-5000

Natick
New England Folk Festival
The weekend after the third Monday in April
Natick High School
Contact: (617) 354-1340

North Easton
Irish Festival
Second weekend in June
Stonehill College
Contact: (617) 323-3399

Michigan

Ann Arbor
Ann Arbor Folk Festival
One night in January
Hill Auditorium, University of Michigan
Contact: Linda Siglen
Office of Major Events
University of Michigan
530 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
(734) 763-8587

Brethren
Spirit of the Woods Festival
Third Saturday in June
Dickson Township Park
Contact: Spirit of the Woods
11171 Kerry Rd
Brethren, MI 49619
(616) 477-5381

Davison
Banjo-Rama
First Saturday in May
Contact: (810) 687-1573

Evart
Evart Funfest—"Grand Daddy" of All Dulcimer Festivals
A weekend in July
Osceola County Fairgrounds

Grand Rapids
Annual Fiddlers Jamboree
Last weekend in April
Highland Middle School
Contact: (616) 361-3444

Harbor Springs
Blissfest
Second weekend in July
Contact: Blissfest
PO Box 441
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
(616) 348-2815

Hart
Original Michigan Fiddler's Jamboree
Fourth Saturday in June
Hart High School
Contact: Oceana Center Grange
1525 N. 112th Ave
Hart, MI 49420
(616) 873-4854

Hart
Michigan Womyn's Music Festival
Second week in August
Contact: WWWTMC
PO Box 22
Walhalla, MI 49458
(616) 757-4766

Jackson
Jackson Story Fest
Second weekend in May
Michigan Theater
Contact: Pamela Stillson
6007 Ann Arbor Rd
Jackson, MI 49201
(800) 245-5282

Jackson
Annual Southern Michigan Dulcimer Festival
A weekend in June
Western High School Community Arts Center
Contact: Warren Guiles
9575 Peach Ridge
Sparta, MI 49345
(616) 887-9436

Marquette
Hiawatha Traditional Music Festival
Fourth weekend in July
Tourist Park
Contact: Hiawatha Music Co-Op
PO Box 414
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 228-9500

Remus
Wheatland Dance Camp
Last weekend in May
Contact: Wheatland Music Organization
PO Box 22
Remus, MI 49340
(517) 967-8879

Remus
Wheatland Traditional Music Festival
A weekend in September
Contact: Lola Tyler
PO Box 22
Remus, MI 49340

Rochester
May Play Day
Second Saturday in May
University Presbyterian Church
Contact: Paint Creek Folklore Society
433 Sussex Fair
Rochester, MI 48309
(810) 375-2513

Ypsilanti
Frog Island Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Depot Town in Ypsilanti
Contact: Dave Siglin
Frog Island Fest
c/o The Ark
316 S. Main
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 761-1451

Minnesota

Bloomington
Summerfolk
Fourth Sunday in June
Highland Hills Ski Area
Contact: (800) 695-4687

Collegeville
Swayed Pines Folk Festival
Last Saturday in April
St. Johns University
Contact: St. Johns University
Luke Hall
Collegeville, MN 56321
(612) 363-3249

Plymouth
The Winter Bluegrass Weekend
A weekend in March
Radisson Hotel and Conference Center
Contact: Minnesota Bluegrass & Old Time Music Associaiton
(800) 635-3037

Two Harbors
Folk Festival
Third weekend in July
Contact: (218) 834-4898

Zimmerman
Minnesota Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Festival
Late July
Camp in the Woods Resort
Contact: Jed Malischke
PO Box 607
Spooner, MN 54801

Zimmerman
Minnesota Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Festival
First weekend in August
Camp in the Woods
Contact: MBOTMA
c/o Malischke
PO Box 480
Spooner, WI 54801
(715) 653-2479

Mississippi

Drew
Pops Staples Blues and Gospel Heritage Festival
First Saturday in June
Downtown Drew
Contact: (601) 745-6576

Missouri

Arrow Rock
Boonslick Traditional Folk Festival
Second Saturday in September
Old Schoolhouse Community Center
Contact: (816) 837-3231

Boonville
Big Muddy Folk Festival
First or second weekend in April
Thespian Hall
Contact: (816) 882-7977

Branson
Silver Dollar City Music Festival
Mid-June
Silver Dollar City
Contact: Silver Dollar City
HRC 1, PO Box 791
Branson, MO 65616
(417) 338-8282

Kahoka
Kahoka Festival of Bluegrass Music
Second weekend in August
Clark County Fairgrounds in Kahoka
Contact: (573) 853-4344

Lawrenceburg
Old Time Fiddler's Jam and Contest
Two days in June
Synder's Music Park
Contact: Virginia Synder
1347 E. Broadmoor
Springfield, MO 65804

Lawrenceburg
Old Time Fiddler's Jam and Contest
Two days in December
Synder's Music Park
Contact: Virginia Synder
1347 E. Broadmoor
Springfield, MO 65804

St. Louis
Mississippi River Celtic Music Festival
A weekend in March
Contact: (314) 962-9192

St. Louis
St. Louis Storytelling Fest
First week in May
Contact: University of Missouri
Attn: Becky Walstrom
8001 Natural Bridge Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63121
(314) 553-6914

Montana

Columbus
Musicians Festival
First full weekend in July
Itch-Kep-Pe Park
Contact: (406) 322-4143

Elliston
Annual Fiddler's Association Fiddle Camp
Early June
Contact: Jeanne Buckley
319 Old Divide Rd.
Roundup, MT 59072

Hamilton
Bitterroot Valley Bluegrass Festival
Second weekend in July
Ravalli County Fairgrounds
Contact: (406) 363-2400

Lincoln
Wilderness Bar Fiddlers Contest
Last weekend in August
The Wilderness Bar
Contact: (406) 362-9200

Polson
Montana State Fiddlers Contest
Fourth full weekend in July
Flathead Lake, 35 miles north of Missoula
Contact: (406) 323-1198

Nebraska

Ainsworth
Annual National Country Music Festival
Second weekend in August
East City Park
Contact: (402) 387-2740

Elgin
Bluegrass Festival
Second-to-last weekend in August
The City Park
Contact: (402) 843-5307

Syracuse
Nebraska State Country Music Championship
Second weekend in June
Otoe County Fairgrounds
Contact: (402) 234-5277

Nevada

Elko
The Cowboy Poetry Gathering
Late January
Contact: Addison Wilhite, Hal Cannon
(702) 738-7508
Web site: http://www.westfolk.org

Fallon
Desert Oasis Bluegrass Festival
Second or third weekend in May
Churchill County Fairgrounds
Contact: (702) 423-7733

Logandale
Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival
Second weekend in October
Clark County Fairgrounds
Contact: (702) 564-5455

New Hampshire

Durham
Ralph Page Legacy Weekend
A weekend in January
University of New Hampshire
Contact: NEFFA
1950 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02140-2102
(617) 354-1340

Lincoln
Old-Time Fiddlers Contest
Last Saturday in June
Hobo Junction Railroad Station
Contact: (603) 745-3563

Stark
Stark Fiddlers' Contest
Last Sunday in June
Whitcomb Field
Contact: (603) 636-1325

New Jersey

Bridgeton
Bridgeton Folk Festival
Second or third Saturday in June
Donald Rainear Amphitheater at Sunset Lake
Contact: (609) 451-9280

Ocean Grove
Ocean Grove Irish & Scottish Music Fest & Fair
Last Saturday in May
Ocean Grove Auditorium
Contact: (610) 825-7268

Red Bank
Two River Folk Festival
A weekend in early October
Contact: Navesink River Environmental League
PO Box 6153
Fair Haven, NJ 07704
(732) 842-7164

Stanhope
Festival of the Andes
Third weekend in August
Waterloo Village
Contact: (201) 543-4496

New Mexico

Cloudcroft
Cloudcroft Bluegrass Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Contact: (505) 746-9351

Santa Fe
Sante Fe Banjo and Fiddle Contest
Last weekend in August/first weekend in September
Sante Fe Rodeo Grounds
Contact: (505) 471-3462

Truth or Consequences
International Fiesta Fiddle Contest
Last weekend in April

906 festivals and workshops

Truth or Consequences Convention Center
Contact: (505) 894-2847

Truth or Consequences
New Mexico Old-Time Fiddlers' State Championship
Third weekend in October
Truth or Consequences Convention Center
Contact: (505) 894-2847

New York

Altamont
Old Songs Festival of Traditional Music
Last full weekend in June
Altamont Fairgrounds
Contact: (518) 765-2815

Binghamton
Cranberry Dulcimer Gathering
Fourth weekend in July
Unitarian Universalist Church
Contact: Ed Ware
1259 Fowler Pl.
Binghamton, NY 13903-6036
(607) 669-4653
E-mail: ed_ware@compuserve.com

Corning
World Folk Music Festival
Last weekend in July
Centerway Square
Contact: (607) 936-4647

Dutchess County
Annual Springtime Cajun Dance Festival
A weekend in May
Country Fare Antique and Arts Center
Contact: Bill Molloy
390 Beach Rd.
Poughquag, NY 12570
(914) 724-5270

Ellenville
Irish Traditional Music Extravaganza
Late February
Nevele Grande Hotel
Contact: (800) 647-6000
E-mail: byrnes@mhonline.net

Hillsdale
Falcon Ridge Folk Festival
Fourth weekend in July
Long Hill Farm
Contact: (860) 364-0366

Leeds
Old Ireland Traditional Music Festival
Weekend closest to Fourth of July
Main Street
Contact: (518) 943-3736

South Fallsburg
Pines Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in March
Contact: Harry Grant
51 Main St.
Flanders, NJ 07836
(800) 367-4637

Stony Brook
Long Island Fiddle and Folk Music Festival
Second Sunday in September
The Museum at Stony Brook
Contact: (516) 751-0066

Trumansburg
Finger Lakes Grassroots Festival of Music and Dance
Third weekend in July
Trumansburg Fairgrounds
Contact: (607) 387-5098

North Carolina

Asheville
Annual Mountain Dance & Folk Festival
A weekend in July
Contact: Stewart Cantor
PO Box 207
Barnardsville, NC 28709

Burnsville/Celo
Music in the Mountains Folk Festival
Third Saturday in September
Toe River Campground
Contact: (704) 682-7215

Flat Rock
Black Mountain Music Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Camp Ton-a-wandah
Contact: PO Box 7585
Asheville, NC 28802
(704) 281-3382

Lake Junaluska
Smoky Mountain Folk Festival
Labor Day weekend
Stuart Auditorium
Contact: (704) 452-1688

Mars Hill
Annual Blue Ridge Old Time Week
A week in June
Mars Hill College
Contact: Scott Miller
Center for Continuing Education
Mars Hill College
Mars Hill, NC 28754
(800) 582-3047

Sparta
Alleghany County Fiddler's Convention
A weekend in July
Alleghany Fairgrounds
Contact: Alleghany Co. Fiddler's Convention
PO Box 602
Sparta, NC 28675
(336) 372-2033
E-mail: fiddler@ls.net

Swannanoa
Swannanoa Gathering
July and August
Warren Wilson College
Contact: The Swannanoa Gathering
Warren Wilson College
PO Box 900
Asheville, NC 28816-9000
(704) 298-3324
E-mail: gathering@warren-wilson.edu

Union Grove
Ole Time Fiddlers & Bluegrass Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Fiddler's Grove Campground
Contact: Harper A. Van Hoy
PO Box 11
Union Grove, NC 28689

Waynesville
North Carolina International Folk Festival
11 days ending last Sunday of July
Contact: (704) 452-2997

Wilkesboro
Annual MerleFest
A weekend in April
Wilkes Community College
Contact: Ticket Center
(800) 343-7857

North Dakota

Hensler
Missouri River Bluegrass and Old-Time Music Festival
Labor Day weekend
Cross Ranch State Park
Contact: (701) 794-3731

West Fargo
Old-Time Fiddlers Contest and Jamboree
First weekend in July
The Demonstration Building in Bonanzaville
Contact: (701) 282-2822

Ohio

Akron
Cuyahoga Valley Heritage Fest
Third weekend in August
Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area
Contact: John Reynolds
c/o National Park Service
15610 Vaughn Rd.
Brecksville, OH 44141
(216) 650-4636

Bath
Music in the Valley
Third weekend in July
Hale Farm & Village
Contact: Hale Farm & Village
PO Box 296
Bath, OH 44210
(216) 666-3711 or (800) 589-9703

Berea
Cleveland's Irish Cultural Festival
Fourth weekend in July
Berea Fairgrounds
Contact: Cleveland Irish Fest
14708 Westland Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44111
(216) 251-0711

Coshocton
Roscoe Village Dulcimer Days Festival and Competition
A weekend in May
Lake Park Pavillion
Contact: Cheryl Oswald
Roscoe Village Foundation
381 Hill Street
Coshocton, OH 43812

Coshocton
Old Time Music Festival
A weekend in Septemper
Roscoe Village
Contact: Cheryl Oswald
Roscoe Village Foundation
381 Hill St.
Coshocton, OH 43812

Kirtland Hills
Little Mountain Folk Festival
Last full weekend in July
Lake County History Center
Contact: Lake County Historical Society
8610 King Memorial Rd.
Mentor, OH 44060
(216) 255-8979

Lisbon
Dulci-More Festival
Memorial Day weekend
BSA Camp McKinley
Contact: Bill Schilling
984 Homewood Avenue
Salem, OH 44460-3816
(330) 332-4420
E-mail: ssssbill@aol.com

North Olmsted
Emerald City Folk Festival
Last weekend in August
Frostville Historical Village
Contact: Folknet
PO Box 21235
S. Euclid, OH 44121
(216) 382-6586

Oberlin
Ohio Scottish Games
Last weekend in June
Oberlin College
Contact: Scottish American Cultural Society of Ohio, Inc.
6050 Wilson Mills Rd.
Mayfield Village, OH 44143
(216) 442-2147

South Euclid
Neowilderness Hammered Dulcimer Festival
Second weekend in June
Cuyahoga National Recreation Area
Contact: Folknet
PO Box 21235
South Euclid, OH 44121
(216) 321-1284

Warren
Celtic Heritage Fair
Third weekend in July
City Hall Grounds
Contact: Celtic Heritage Fair
PO Box 128
Warren, OH 44482
(216) 856-3432

Oklahoma

Wagoner
Oklahoma State Fiddlers Convention
A weekend in February
Western Hills Lodge
Contact: Ginger King
7424 NW 29
Bethany, OK 73008

Oregon

Eugene
Willamette Valley Folk Festival
Third weekend in May
University of Oregon
Contact: (541) 346-4373

Portland
Annual Pacific NW Sacred Harp Convention
A weekend in October
Sellwood Community Center
Contact: Karen Willard
15215 Tubbs Rd.
Buckley, OR 98321
E-mail: hallock@aa.net

Sumpter
North American Jew's Harp Festival
A weekend in August
Contact: The Jew's Harp Guild
Box 92
Sumpter, OR 97877
(541) 894-2345

Web site: http://www.cyberhighway.net/~mposs1/jhghp.html

Pennsylvania

Cooksburg
The Great Dulcimer Round-up
A weekend in September
Cook Forest Sawmill Center for the Arts
Contact: Felice Dugan
Sawmill Center for the Arts
PO Box 180
Cooksburg, PA 16217
(814) 927-6655

Gettysburg
Gettysburg Bluegrass Camporee
A weekend in May
Granite Hill Campground
Contact: Granite Hill Campground
3340 Fairfield Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325
(714) 642-8749

Hamlin
Annual Fiddling Bear Festival
Labor Day weekend
Lake Genero Park
Contact: AFOTM
228 Cherry St.
Katonah, PA 10536
(914) 232-4657

King of Prussia
Greater Philadelphia Mid-Winter Scottish & Irish Music Festival and Fair
Second weekend in February
Valley Forge Convention Center
Contact: (610) 825-7268

New Holland
Spring Gulch Folk Festival
Weekend before Memorial Day
Spring Gulch Resort Campground
Contact: (800) 255-5744

Newport
Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering
Fourth of July weekend
Contact: Limberjack Productions
18 Burd Rd.
Newport, PA 17074
E-mail: autoharp@pa.net

Philadelphia
Mummers String Band Show of Shows
Two weekends in March and April
Civic Center
Contact: (215) 336-3050

Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Folk Festival
Memorial Day weekend
David L. Lawrence Convention Center
Contact: (415) 281-4882

Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Irish Festival
A weekend in September
Station Square
Contact: Pittsburgh Irish Festival
PO Box 81173
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
(412) 422-5642
E-mail: pghirishfest@juno.com

Schwenksville
Philadelphia Folk Festival
A weekend in August
Contact: Philadelphia Folksong Society
7113 Emlen St.
Philadelphia, PA 19119
(215) 242-0150

Wind Gap
Wind Gap Bluegrass Festival
A weekend in June
Mountain View Park
Contact: Harry Grant
51 Mail St.
Flanders, NJ 07836
(973) 584-2324

Rhode Island

Escoheag
Cajun & Bluegrass Music-Dance-Food Festival
Labor Day weekend
Stepping Stone Ranch

908 festivals and workshops

Contact: (401) 351-6312

South Carolina

Lancaster
Carolina Legends Festival
A Saturday in May
Andrew Jackson State Park
Contact: Arlan Schwoyer
300 Lyons Rd.
Lyons, SC 19536

Mountain Rest
Hillbilly Day
Fourth of July
Contact: (803) 638-6871

South Dakota

Canton
Annual Sioux River Folk Festival
Late July/early August
Newton Hills State Park
Contact: Gaynor Johnson
103 1/2 S. Main
Canton, SD 57013

Canton
Sioux River Folk Festival
First weekend in August
Newton Hills State Park
Contact: Newton Hills State Park
Canton, SD 57013
(605) 987-2582

Lake Norden
Old-Time Fiddler's Jamboree
Second Saturday in April
Contact: Box 80
Lake Norden, SD 57248
(605) 785-3553

Rockerville
Black Hills Bluegrass Festival
Last full weekend in June
Mystery Mountain Resort
Contact: (605) 394-4101

Yankton
Great Plains Old-Time Fiddlers Contest
Third weekend in September
Yankton 4-H Grounds
Contact: (605) 665-3636

Tennessee

Cosby
Cosby Dulcimer and Harp Festival
Second Friday in June
Folklife Center of the Smokies
Contact: (423) 487-5543

Memphis
Memphis Dulcimer Festival
Last weekend in September
Idlewild Presbyterian Church
Contact: (901) 725-6976

Murfreesboro
Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days Festival
A weekend in July
Contact: Uncle Dave Macon Days Festival Committee
PO Box 5016
Murfreesboro, TN 37133
(615) 893-2361

Nashville
SPBGMA Bluegrass Awards & Competition
Late January/early February
Sheraton Music Center
Contact: SPBGMA Bluegrass Music Awards
Chuck Spearman
PO Box 271
Kirksville, MO 63501
(816) 665-7172

Smithville
Smithville Fiddlers Jamboree & Crafts Festival
Fourth of July weekend
On the Square
Contact: Smithville Jamboree
PO Box 83
Smithville, TN 37166
(615) 597-8500

Texas

Athens
Texas Fiddlers' Association Contest
First Thursday and Friday in May
Courthouse Lawn
Contact: (903) 675-2325

Austin
Traditional Music Festival
A Saturday in mid-January
Dougherty Arts Center
Contact: (512) 454-9481

Austin
South by Southwest
A week in mid-March
Contact: PO Box 4999
Austin, TX 78765
(512) 467-7979
E-mail: sxsw@sxsw.com

Austin
Austin Acoustic Music Festival
Third weekend in November
Contact: (512) 499-8497

Canton
Texas State Bluegrass Festival
Fourth weekend in June
Trades Day Park
Contact: (903) 567-6004

Crockett
Annual World Championship Fiddlers & Pioneer Festival
A weekend in September
Contact: Houston County Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 307
Crockett, TX 75835
(409) 544-2359

Dallas
North Texas Irish Festival
A weekend in March
Fair Park (State Fairgrounds)
Contact: 4340 N. Central Expressway, Ste. 104
Dallas, TX 75206
(214) 821-4174

Dallas
Shamrock Music Festival
Weekend closest to St. Patrick's Day
Art district
Contact: (214) 821-7494

Glen Rose
Lone Star State Dulcimer Festival
Mother's Day weekend
Oakdale Park
Contact: (817) 275-3872

Hallettsville
Texas State Championship Fiddlers Frolics
A weekend in April
Knights of Columbus Hall
Contact: Kenneth Henneke
(512) 798-5934

Kerrville
Kerrville Folk Festival
Last weekend in May, first three weekends in June
Quiet Valley Ranch
Contact: (800) 435-8429

La Grange
Annual Slide Guitar Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Lafayette Country Fairgrounds
Contact: Taylor Mackey
Rt 1, Box 98
Penrose, NC 28766
(704) 884-4415
E-mail: slidetm@infoave.net

Meridan
John A. Lomax Gathering
Fourth Saturday in April
Meridan Texas Civic Center
Contact: (817) 435-2966

Mineola
Pickin' in the Pines
Third weekend in May
Contact: (903) 857-2253

Round Rock/Austin
Old Settlers' Bluegrass and Acoustic Music Festival
Last weekend in March
Old Settlers' Park
Contact: (512) 443-5001

San Antonio
San Antonio Folk Festival
First Saturday in October
Mayan Jungle Garden of Karam's Mexican Restaurant
Contact: (210) 224-7239

Snyder
Legends of Texas Swing Reunion
Fourth week in June
Scurry Center Coliseum
Contact: (405) 376-4939

Stamford
Texas Cowboy Reunion

festivals and workshops 909

Beginning of July
Contact: Texas Cowboy Reunion
PO Box 928
Stamford, TX 79553
(915) 773-3614

Turkey
Bob Wills Day
Last Saturday in April
Bob Wills Center
Contact: (806) 423-1033

Utah

Murray
Murray City Acoustic Festival
Labor Day
Murray City Park Ampitheater
Contact: (800) 453-1360
E-mail: iam@xmission.com
Web site: http:www.xmission.com/~iama

Park City
Founders Title Company Folk and Bluegrass Festival
Third weekend in August
Snow Park Lodge, Deer Valley Resort
Contact: (800) 453-1360
E-mail: iam@xmission.com
Web site: http: www.xmission.com/~iama

Salt Lake City
Wheeler Historic Farm Old Time Fiddlers Contest & Bluegrass Festival
Last Friday and Saturday in June
Wheeler Historic Farm
Contact: (801) 339-7664
E-mail: iam@xmission.com
Web site: http:www.xmission.com/~iama

Vermont

Barre
National Traditional Old-Time Fiddlers & Stepdancers Contest
Third or fourth weekend in September
Municipal Auditorium
Contact: (802) 879-1536

Burlington
Champlain Valley Summer Folk Festival
First weekend in August
Redstone Campus, University of Vermont
Contact: (802) 899-1111

Dover
Vermont's Green Mountain Irish Music Festival
First weekend in August
Mount Snow Ski Resort
Contact: (800) 245-7669

Hardwick
Old-Time Fiddler's Contest
Last Saturday in July
Shepard's Field
Contact: (802) 472-6425

Virginia

Buena Vista
Annual Maury River Fiddlers Convention
A weekend in June
Glen Maury Park
Contact: Maury River Fiddlers Convention
PO Box 702
Buena Vista, VA 24416
(800) 555-8845

Galax
Old Fiddlers Convention
A week in August
Felts Park
Contact: Tom Jones
PO Box 655
Galax, VA 24333
(540) 236-3740

Hiltons
Carter Family Memorial Festival
Late July/early August
The Carter Fold
Contact: Janette Carter
PO Box 111
Hiltons, VA 24258
(540) 386-9480

Rocky Mount
Annual Festival in the Pines
A weekend in May
Tripple Creek Music Campground
Contact: Sterling T. Belcher
1185 Tripple Creek Rd.
Rocky Mount, VA 24151-6149
(540) 483-9839

Rocky Mount
Annual Part-Time International Blue Grass & Old-Time Competitions
A weekend in June
Tripple Creek Music Campground
Contact: Sterling T. Belcher
1185 Tripple Creek Rd.
Rocky Mount, VA 24151-6149
(540) 483-9839

Smithfield
Smithfield Folk Festival
Third weekend in October
Windsor Castle, on Virginia's Isle of Wight
Contact: (804) 357-3288

Syria
Graves' Mountain Festival of Music
Weekend after Memorial Day
Graves' Mountain Lodge
Contact: (540) 923-4231

Washington

Port Townsend
Festival of American Fiddle Tunes
Late June/early July
Fort Worden State Park
Contact: (360) 385-3102

Port Townsend
Annual Indianola Hurdy-Gurdy Festival
A weekend in September
Fort Flagler State Park
Contact: Joanne Andrus
1511 SW 320 Court
Federal Way, WA 98023

Richland
Washington State Fiddle Contest
Second weekend in May
Richland High School
Contact: (509) 586-2843

Seattle
Northwest Folklife Festival
Memorial Day weekend
Seattle Center
Contact: Northwest Folklife
305 Harrison St.
Seattle, WA 98109
(206) 684-7300

Tacoma
Wintergrass
Last weekend in February
Sheraton Hotel
Contact: (360) 871-7354

Tenino
Old Time Music Festival
Third weekend in March
Tenino High School
Contact: (360) 264-4590

West Virginia

Clifftop
Appalachian String Band Music Festival
Late July/early August
Camp Washington Carver
Contact: Director, Camp Washington Carver
HC 35, Box 5
Clifftop, WV 25831
(304) 637-1350

Elkins
Augusta Heritage Festival
A weekend in August
Davis & Elkins College
Contact: Gordon Blackley
Augusta Heritage Center
Davis & Elkins College
Elkins, WV 26241
(304) 637-1350

Elkins
Augusta Old Time Week and Fiddlers' Reunion
Mid- to late October
Davis & Elkins College
Contact: Gordon Blackley
Augusta Heritage Ctr.
Davis & Elkins College
Elkins, WV 26241
(304) 637-1350

Fairmont
Traditonal Music Weekend
A weekend in May
Pricketts Fort State Park
Contact: David Elkinton
Rt 3, Box 407

Fairmont, WV 26554
(800) CALL-WVA

Morgantown
Annual Worley Gardner Winter Music Festival
A weekend in February
South Junior High School in Morgantown
Contact: 1332 Cain Street
Morgantown, WV 36505
(304) 599-2540

Summersville
Music in the Mountains
Last full weekend in June
Summersville Music Park
Contact: (304) 872-3145

Wisconsin

Allenton
Allenton Concertina Jamboree Festival
Labor Day weekend
Addison Town Hall
Contact: (414) 255-3454

Ashland
Ashland Fiddle Celebration
Fourth weekend in June
Alvord Theater, Northland College
Contact: Chequamegon Folk Collective
Rt. 2, Box 52
Ashland, WI 54806
(715) 682-4199

Dodgeville
English Country Dance Weekend
Second weekend in April
Folklore Village Farm
Contact: Folklore Village Farm
3210 Co. Hwy BB
Dodgeville, WI 53533
(608) 924-4000

La Crosse
Great River Traditional Music and Crafts Festival
Last weekend in August
Contact: Great River Fest
199 King Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 784-3033

Milwaukee
Gays Mills Folk Festival of Music and Dance
A weekend in May
Contact: Tim Jenkins
Rt 2, Box 83
Gays Mills, Wisconsin 54631

Milwaukee
Milwaukee Irish Fest
Third weekend in August
Contact: Irish Festivals
515 Glenview Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53213
(414) 476-3378

Shawano
Shawano Old-Time Music and Crafts Festival
Second weekend in August
Mielke Park
Contact: Shawano County Arts Council
PO Box 213
Shawano, WI 54166
(715) 526-2525

Wyoming

Alta
Grand Targhee Bluegrass Festival
Second weekend in August
Grand Targhee Ski and Summer Resort
Contact: (800) 827-4433

Douglas
High Plains Old Time Country Music Show and Contest
Weekend in mid- to late April
Douglass High School
Contact: (307) 358-9006

CANADA

British Columbia

Victoria
The Zimbabwean Music Festival
A weekend in late May
Contact: 1921 Fernwood Rd.
Victoria, BC V8T 2Y6
(250) 384-1997
E-mail: zimfest@islandnet. com

Manitoba

Fergus
50th Anniversary Fergus Scottish Festival
Second week in August
Victoria Park
Contact: (519) 787-0099
E-mail: mjaitken@hookup.net

Winnepeg
Winnipeg Folk Festival
Second weekend in July
Bird's Hill Provincial Park
Contact: 264 Tache Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2H 1Z9
(204) 231-0096

New Brunswick

Miramichi
Canada's Irish Festival on the Miramichi
Third weekend in July
Lord Bearverbrook Arena
Contact: (506) 778-8810

Miramichi
Miramichi Folk Song Festival
First Monday in August
Lord Beaverbrook Theater
Contact: (506) 622-1780

Poley
Poley Mountain Music Festival
Second weekend in July
Poley Mountain Ski Area
Contact: (506) 652-5238

St. John
Festival by the Sea
Ten days in August beginning the Friday after New Brunswick Day
Loyalist Plaza
Contact: (506) 632-0086

Newfoundland & Labrador

Burin
Burin Peninsula Festival of Folk Song and Dance
First weekend in July
Donald C. Jamieson Academy
Contact: (709) 891-1546

La Grand' Terre
Une Journée Dans L'Passe
Last Sunday in July
Centre Scolaire at Communautaire Ste-Anne
Contact: (709) 642-5254

Mount Pearl
Newfoundland International Irish Festival
Second weekend in July
Contact: (709) 748-1002

St. John's
Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Festival
First weekend in August
Bannerman Park
Contact: (709) 576-8508

Nova Scotia

Cape Breton Island
Celtic Colours International Festival
Ten days in November
Cape Breton Island
Contact: 363 Charlotte St.
Sydney, Nova Scotia B1P 1E1
(902) 562-6700

Church Point
Festival Acadien de Clare
Second weekend in July
Contact: (902) 769-2152

Dartmouth
Maritime Old Time Fiddling Contest
Six days in July
Andrew High School Auditorium
Contact: James Delaney
PO Box 3037
Dartmouth East, Dartmouth
Nova Scotia B2W 4Y3
(902) 434-5466
Web site: http://fox.nstn.ca/~whebby

Lower Sackville
Down East Old Time Fiddling Contest
Fourth weekend in August
Sackville and District Community Arena
Contact: (902) 869-4141

Lunenburg
Lunenburg Folk Harbour Festival
Second weekend in August
Contact: (902) 634-3180

Mount Denson
Avon River Bluegrass and Old-time Music Festival
First weekend in June
Avon River Park
Contact: (902) 684-1046

St. Ann's
Festival of Scottish Fiddling
Third weekend in August
Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts
Contact: (902) 295-3411

St. Peter's
Stone Mountain Music Festival
First weekend in September
Contact: (902) 865-1715

Ontario

Barrie
Horseshoe Valley Folk Festival
Third weekend in April
Horseshoe Valley Resort
Contact: (905) 430-2529

Cambridge
Mill Race Festival of Traditional Folk Music
First Saturday in August
Contact: Mill Race Festival
PO Box 22148
Galt Centre Postal Station
Cambridge, ON N1R 8E3
(519) 622-0146

Clarendon
Blue Skies Music Festival
First weekend in August
Contact: Blue Skies
PO Box 2502
Clarendon, ON K0H 1J0
(613) 279-3260

Goderich
Celtic Roots Festival
Second weekend in August
Lions Harbour Park
Contact: Goderich Recreation Department
166 McDonald St.
Goderich, ON N7A 3N5
(519) 524-2125

Goderich
Earth, Air, Fire, & Water—Celtic Roots Festival
Second weekend in August
Contact: 20 Caledonia Tce
Goderich, ON N7A 2M8
(519) 524-8221

Guelph
Hillside Festival
Last weekend in July
Guelph Lake Conservation Area
Contact: 123 Woolrich, 3rd fl.
Guelph, ON N1H 3V1
(519) 763-6396

Hamilton
Earthsong Festival
First weekend in July
Princess Point Park
Contact: 401 Main St. W.
Hamilton, ON L8P 1K5
(519) 747-8765

Hamilton
Festival of Friends
Second weekend in August
Gage Park
Contact: 401 Main St. W.
Hamilton, ON L8P 1K5
(905) 525-6644

Kingston
All Folks Festival
Fourth weekend in July
Contact: Kingston Folk Festival Association
PO Box 1697
Kingston, ON K7L 5J8
E-mail: highi@qucdn.queensu.ca

London
Home County Folk Festival
Third weekend in July
Victoria Park
Contact: Home County Folk League
Grosvenor Lodge
1017 Western Rd.
London, ON N6G 1G5
(519) 645-2845

Ottawa
CKW Ottawa Folk Festival
A weekend in August
Britannia Park
Contact: CKW Ottawa Folk Festival
516 Unicentre
1125 ColonelByDe
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
(613) 520-2600

Owen Sound
Summerfolk Music & Craft Festival
A weekend in August
Kelso Beach Park
Contact: Georgian Bay Folk Society
PO Box 521
Owen Sound, ON N4K 5R1
(519) 371-2995

Pefferlaw
Eaglewood Earth Festival
Last weekend in August
Contact: 31 Helendale Ave.
Toronto, ON M4R 1C5
(416) 481-5506

Pentanguishene
Songs of Sail—Marine Heritage Festival
Last weekend in August
Contact: PO Box 298
Victoria Harbour, ON L0K 2A0
(705) 361-3084

Peterborough
Peterborough Folk Festival
Last weekend in August
Contact: PO Box 823
Peterborough, ON K9J 7A2
(705) 749-3157

Sudbury
Northern Lights Festival Boreal
Second weekend in July
Bell Park Amphitheatre by Ramsay Lake
Contact: PO Box 1236, Station B
Sudbury, ON P3E 4S7
(705) 674-5512

Toronto
Canadian Music Week
A weekend in March
Westin Harbour Castle
Contact: 5399 Elginton Avenue W, Ste. 301
Toronto, ON M9C 5K6
(416) 695-9236
E-mail: cmw@ican.net

Toronto
Mariposa Folk Festival
Second weekend in August
Toronto's Olympic Island
Contact: Mariposa Folk Foundation
60 Atlantic Ave., Ste. 107
Toronto, ON M6K 1X9
(416) 588-8371

Toronto
Ashkenaz . . . A Festival of Yiddish Culture
Late August/early September
Harbourfront Centre
Contact: Ashkenaz
642 King Street, Ste. 202
Toronto, ON M5V 1M7

WORKSHOPS

Alaska

Kings Lake
Alaska Midnight Sun Songwriters Camp
A weekend in June
Kings Lake Camp
Contact: PO Box 230873
Anchorage, AK 99523-0873
E-mail: mooseman@arctic.net

Arkansas

Mountain View
Ozark Folk Center Workshops Series
April through October
Ozark Folk Center
Contact: Elliott Hancock
PO Box 500
Mountain View, AR 72560
www.ozarkfolkcenter.com

California

Petaluma
Klezkamp West: The Yiddish Folkarts Program
A week in August
Walker Creek Ranch
Contact: Henry Sapoznik
430 W. 14th St. #514
New York, NY 10014

(212) 691-1272
E-mail: livetrads@aol.com

Colorado

Boulder
Pete Wernick's Banjo Camps
Early January (basic skills), mid-January (intermediate/advanced), mid-April (special session)
Sandy Point Inn
Contact: Dr. Banjo
7930-C Oxford Rd.
Niwot, CO 80503
E-mail: PWernick1@aol.com

Lyons
RockyGrass Academy
Late July/early August
Contact: Planet Bluegrass
500 W. Main
Lyons, CO 80640
(303) 449-6007

Maryland

Dunkirk
Clawhammer Banjo Workshop with Ken Perlman
A Saturday in May
Contact: The Capital Area Bluegrass and Old-Time Music Association
Dave Schenkman
(301) 274-3441

New York

West Hurley
Ashokan Fiddle & Dance
Late June through mid-August
Contact: Ashokan Fiddle & Dance
987 Rt. 28A
West Hurley, NY 12491
(914) 338-2996
E-mail: ashokan@aol.com
www.jayandmolly.com

North Carolina

Brasstown
John C. Campbell Folk School
Classes taught year-round
Contact: (800) 365-5724
Web site: http://www.grove.net/~jccfs/

Valle Crucis
The Jink & Diddle School of Scottish Fiddle
A week in July
Contact: Fiddletree Music Inc
11302 Avocet Dr.
Chesterfield, VA 23838-8945
Web site: http://members.aol.com/kitchenboy/jink/jink.html

Ohio

Oberlin
Ohio Scottish Arts School
Last week in June
Oberlin College
Contact: Scottish American Cultural Society of Ohio, Inc.
24209 Hedgewood
Westlake, OH 44145
(800) 636-3655

Tennessee

Maryville
Steve Kaufman's Mandolin Camp
Beginning of June
Maryville College
Contact: PO Box 1020
Alcoa, TN 37701
(800) FLATPIK
E-mail: Flatpik@compuserve.com

Maryville
Steve Kaufman's Flatpicking Camp
A week in June
Maryville College
Contact: PO Box 1020
Alcoa, TN 37701
(800) FLATPIK
E-mail: Flatpik@compuserve.com

Nashville
NashCamp—The Nasville Acoustic Music & Songwriting Camp
Two weeks in June
Contact: (615) 292-0967
E-mail: BabsLamb@aol.com

Washington

Port Townsend
Festival of American Fiddle Tunes
Late June/early July
Fort Worden State Park
Contact: (360) 385-3102

West Virginia

Elkins
Augusta Heritage Workshops
April through October
Contact: Gordon Blackley
Augusta Heritage Center
Davis & Elkins College
Elkins, WV 26241
(304) 637-1350

Ripley
West Virgina Old Time Week
A week in March
Contact: Cedar Lakes Craft Center
Ripley, WV 25271
(304) 372-7872

Wisconsin

East Troy
Stringalong Weekend
A weekend in March
Camp Edwards Conference Center
Contact: Music Workshops
2851 N. Farwell
Milwaukee, WI 53211
annschmid@aol.com

Milwaukee
Milwaukee Irishfest Summer School
A week in August
Contact: The University of Wisconsin
Off-Campus Programs
PO Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201
(414) 229-5879

musicHound **folk**

Indexes

Five-Bone Album Index

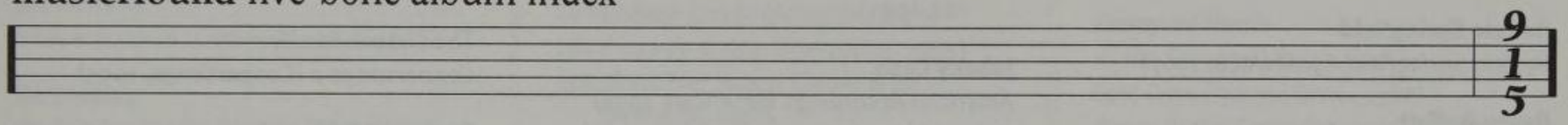
Band Member Index

Producer Index

Roots Index

Category Index

musicHound five-bone album index



The following albums achieved the highest rating possible—5 bones—from our discriminating MusicHound Folk *writers. You can't miss with any of these recordings. (Note: Albums are listed under the name of the entry (or entries) in which they appear and are not necessarily albums by that individual artist or group. The album could be a compilation album, a film soundtrack, an album on which the artist or group appears as a guest, etc. Consult the artist or group's entry for specific information.)*

Nathan Abshire
French Blues (Arhoolie, 1993)
Le Grand Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology: The Historic Victor/Bluebird Sessions, 1928–1941 (Country Music Foundation, 1990)

Mose Allison
Allison Wonderland: The Mose Allison Anthology (Rhino, 1994)

Altan
Horse with a Heart (Green Linnet, 1989)

Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
The Ardoin Family Band with Dewey Balfa: A Couple of Cajuns (Sonet, 1987)
La Musique Creole (Arhoolie, 1997)
Les Blues du Bayou (Melodeon, 1967)

Amédée Ardoin
Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do (Columbia, 1994)
I'm Never Comin' Back: The Roots of Zydeco (Arhoolie, 1995)

Joan Armatrading
Greatest Hits (A&M, 1996)
Joan Armatrading (A&M, 1976)

Frankie Armstrong
Till the Grass O'ergrew the Corn (Fellside, 1996)

Clarence "Tom" Ashley
Anthology of American Folk Music (Folkways, 1952/Smithsonian/Folkways, 1997
The Original Folkways Recordings 1960–1962 (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1994)

Etta Baker
Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians (Tradition, 1956/Rykodisc, 1997)

Kenny Baker
Master Fiddler (County, 1993)

The Balfa Brothers
The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music, Vols. 1 & 2 (Swallow, 1987)

E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
E.C. Ball with Orna Ball (Rounder, 1996)
High Atmosphere (Rounder, 1995)

The Band
The Band (Capitol, 1969)
Moondog Matinee (Capitol, 1973)
Music from Big Pink (Capitol, 1968)
Rock of Ages (Capitol, 1972)

Mary Bergin
Feadoga Stain (Gael Linn, 1976/Shanachie, 1992)

Lou and Peter Berryman
Double Yodel (Cornbelt Records, 1995)

Tony Bird
Sorry Africa (Rounder, 1991)

Blind Blake
The Master of Ragtime Guitar: Essential Recordings (Indigo Records, 1996)

Michael Bloomfield
Highway 61 Revisited (Columbia, 1965)

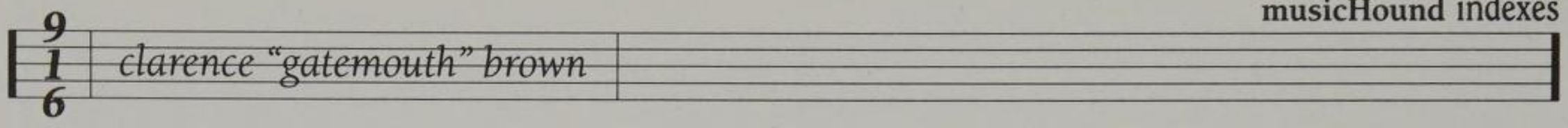
Dock Boggs
Country Blues (Revenant, 1998)

The Bothy Band
The Bothy Band 1975 (Mulligan, 1975/Green Linnet, 1983)
Old Hag You Have Killed Me (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet, 1982)

Robin Huw Bowen
Kiss of Fire (Fflach, 1992/Firebird, 1994)

Boys of the Lough
The Boys of the Lough

Big Bill Broonzy
Big Bill's Blues (Portrait)
Blues in the Mississippi Night (Rykodisc, 1990)
Good Time Tonight (Columbia/Legacy, 1990)



Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
The Original Peacock Recordings (Rounder, 1990)

Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies
The Complete Recordings of the Father of Western Swing: Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies 1932–1937 (Texas Rose Records, 1995)

Paul Brown
Old Time, New Times (Rounder, 1994)

Buffalo Springfield
Buffalo Springfield Again (Atco, 1967)

Jimmy Buffett
All the Greatest Hits (Prism Leisure, 1994)
Songs You Know by Heart: Jimmy Buffett's Greatest Hit(s) (MCA, 1985)

Kevin Burke
Andy Irvine, Paul Brady (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet, 1981)

Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Better Days (Bearsville, 1973)
The Box Set (Elektra, 1998)
East West Live (Winner, 1997)
The Paul Butterfield Blues Band (Elektra, 1965)

The Byrds
The Byrds (Columbia, 1990)
Mr. Tambourine Man (Columbia, 1965)
Sweetheart of the Rodeo (Columbia, 1968)

The Camp Creek Boys
Old Time, New Times (Rounder, 1994)
Old Time String Band (County, 1967/County, 1997)

The Carter Family
Anchored in Love: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1927–1928 (Rounder, 1993)
Country Music Hall of Fame Series (MCA, 1991)
Give Me the Roses While I Live: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1932–1933 (Rounder, 1997)
My Clinch Mountain Home: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1928–1929 (Rounder, 1993)
Sunshine in the Shadows: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1931–1932 (Rounder, 1996)
20 of the Best of the Carter Family (RCA International, 1984)
When the Roses Bloom in Dixieland: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1929–1930 (Rounder, 1995)
Worried Man Blues: Their Complete Victor Recordings 1930 (Rounder, 1995)

Jason Carter
A Deeper Shade of Blue (Rounder, 1993)

Martin Carthy
Life and Limb (Topic/Green Linnet, 1991)
The Martin Carthy Collection (Green Linnet, 1993)

Johnny Cash
American Recordings (American, 1994)
Columbia Records, 1958–1986 (Columbia, 1987)
The Essential Johnny Cash, 1955–1983 (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)
The Sun Years (Sun/Rhino, 1990)

Rosanne Cash
King's Record Shop (Columbia, 1988)

Clifton Chenier
60 Minutes with the King of Zydeco (Arhoolie, 1988)
Zydeco Dynamite: The Clifton Chenier Anthology (Rhino, 1993)

The Chestnut Grove Quartet
The Legendary Chestnut Grove Quartet (County, 1994)

The Chuck Wagon Gang
The Chuck Wagon Gang Columbia Historic Edition (Columbia, 1984)

Clannad
Dulaman (Blackbird, 1976/Shanachie, 1988)

Eric Clapton
Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs (Polydor, 1970)

Gene Clark
Mr. Tambourine Man (Columbia, 1965/1996)
Turn! Turn! Turn! (Columbia, 1965/1996)

Michael Coleman
Michael Coleman (Gael-Linn/Viva Voce, 1992)

Albert Collins
Complete Imperial Recordings (EMI, 1991)
Frostbite (Alligator, 1980)
Frozen Alive! (Alligator, 1981)

Shirley Collins
Etchingham Steam Band (Fledg'ling, 1995)
For As Many As Will (Topic, 1978/Hokey Pokey, 1993)
Love, Death and the Lady (EMI, 1974)
Morris On (Island, 1972/Hannibal)
No Roses (BBC, 1971/Mooncrest, 1991)

Stompin' Tom Connors
Bud the Spud (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1969)
A Proud Canadian (Capitol/EMI Canada, 1990)

The Copper Family
Coppersongs 2 (Coppersongs, 1995)

Cordelia's Dad
Comet (Omnium, 1995)

The Country Gentlemen
Country Songs Old and New (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1960)
Folk Songs and Bluegrass (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1961)

Country Joe and the Fish
Electric Music for the Mind and Body (Vanguard, 1967)

Crosby, Stills and Nash
Deja Vu (Atlantic, 1970)

J.D. Crowe
J.D. Crowe & the New South (Rounder, 1975)

The Rev. Gary Davis
The Complete Early Recordings of the Reverend Gary Davis (Yazoo, 1994)
Pure Religion and Bad Company (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991)

Iris DeMent
Infamous Angel (Rounder, 1992/Warner Bros., 1993)
My Life (Warner Bros., 1994)

Dead Can Dance
Spleen and Ideal (4AD, 1985)

Geno Delafose
That's What I'm Talking About! (Rounder, 1996)

John Delafose
Blues Stay Away from Me (Rounder, 1993)
Joe Pete Got Two Women (Arhoolie, 1988)

The Delmore Brothers
Brown's Ferry Blues (County, 1995)
Freight Train Boogie (Ace, 1993)

Sand Mountain Blues (County, 1986)
When They Let the Hammer Down (Bear Family, 1984)

Sandy Denny
The BBC Sessions 1971–73 (Strange Fruit, 1997)
Fotheringay (Island, 1970)
Sandy (Island, 1972)
Who Knows Where the Time Goes? (Island, 1985)

Joe Derrane
Irish Accordion (Copley Records, 1993)

Bo Diddley
Bo Diddley/Go Bo Diddley (Chess/MCA, 1996)
Bo Diddley: His Best (MCA/Chess, 1997)
The EP Collection (See for Miles, 1991)

Robin and Barry Dransfield
Up to Now (Free Reed, 1997)

The Dubliners
Original Dubliners 1966–1969 (EMI, 1993)

Bob Dylan
Blonde on Blonde (Columbia, 1966)
Blood on the Tracks (Columbia, 1975)
Highway 61 Revisited (Columbia, 1965)

The Eagles
Hotel California (Asylum, 1976)
Their Greatest Hits, 1971–1975 (Asylum, 1975)

Ensemble Galilei
Following the Moon (Dorian, 1994)

Enya
Watermark (Reprise, 1989)

Sleepy John Estes
I Ain't Gonna Be Worried No More, 1929–41 (Yazoo, 1992)

Everly Brothers
Cadence Classics: Their 20 Greatest Hits (Rhino, 1985)

Fairport Convention
House Full (Hannibal, 1986)
Liege and Lief (A&M, 1969)
Unhalfbricking (Hannibal, 1969)
What We Did on Our Holidays (Hannibal, 1968)

Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon
Abbeville Breakdown (Columbia, 1990)
Cajun Dance Party: Fais Do Do (Columbia, 1994)
Cleoma B. Falcon: A Cajun Music Classic (Jadfel, 1983)

Figgy Duff
Figgy Duff: A Retrospective, 1974–1993 (Amber Music, 1995)

Red Foley
Country Music Hall of Fame (MCA, 1991)

Canray Fontenot
La Musique Creole (Arhoolie, 1997)
Les Blues du Bayou (Melodeon, 1965)
Louisiana Hot Sauce, Creole Style (Arhoolie, 1992)

Jesse Fuller
Jazz, Folk Songs, Spirituals & Blues (Good Time Jazz, 1958/Original Blues Classics, 1993)

Dick Gaughan
Handful of Earth (Green Linnet, 1981/1992)

Frankie Gavin
Frankie Goes to Town (The Bee's Knees, 1989/Green Linnet, 1991)
A Tribute to Joe Cooley (Gael-Linn, 1986)

Gibson Brothers Band
Spread Your Wings (Hay Holler, 1995)

Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Voices (Flying Fish, 1990)
Voices of Winter (Gadfly Records, 1997)

Jimmie Dale Gilmore
After Awhile (Elektra Nonesuch, 1991)

Steve Goodman
No Big Surprise (Red Pajamas, 1994)

Vern Gosdin
Chiseled in Stone (Columbia, 1987)

Grateful Dead
American Beauty (Warner Bros., 1970)
Two from the Vault (Grateful Dead Records, 1992)
Workingman's Dead (Warner Bros., 1970)

Bruce Greene
Five Miles of Ellum Wood (BG Records, 1996)

Nanci Griffith
Last of the True Believers (Rounder/Philo, 1986)
One Fair Summer Evening (MCA, 1988)
Other Voices, Other Rooms (Elektra, 1993)

Woody Guthrie
Bound for Glory (Folkways, 1967)
Dust Bowl Ballads (Victor, 1940/Rounder, 1988)
Library of Congress Recordings (Rounder, 1988)

Hackberry Ramblers
Early Recordings: 1935–1948 (Old Timey, 1988)

Emmylou Harris
At the Ryman (Reprise, 1992)
Last Date (Warner Bros., 1982)
Roses in the Snow (Warner Bros., 1980)
Trio (Warner Bros., 1987)
Wrecking Ball (Asylum, 1995)

John Hartford
Mark Twang (Flying Fish, 1976)
Me Oh My, How the Time Does Fly (Flying Fish, 1987)

Ted Hawkins
Songs from Venice Beach (Evidence, 1995)

Hazel & Alice
Hazel & Alice (Rounder, 1973/1995)

Helicon
Highlands (Dorian, 1997)
Horizons: Traditional Music from around the World (Dorian Discovery, 1992)

Chris Hillman
Bakersfield Bound (Sugar Hill, 1996)

The Holy Modal Rounders
Have Moicy! (Rounder, 1976)

John Lee Hooker
The Real Folk Blues (Chess, 1966)
The Ultimate Collection (Rhino, 1991)

The Hoosier Hot Shots
Rural Rhythm 1935-1942 (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)

Lightnin' Hopkins
Blues Train (Mainstream, 1991)
The Complete Aladdin Sessions (EMI, 1991)
The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 1 (Arhoolie, 1990)
The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 2 (Arhoolie, 1990)
The Herald Recordings (Collectables, 1989)

The Herald Recordings, Volume 2 (Collectables, 1993)
Lightnin' Hopkins (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990)
Lightnin' in New York (Candid, 1988)
Swarthmore Concert (Bluesville Prestige/Fantasy, 1993)
Texas Blues (Arhoolie, 1992)
Texas Blues (Arhoolie, 1994)

Hothouse Flowers
People (London, 1988)

Mississippi John Hurt
Avalon Blues: The Complete 1928 OKeh Recordings (Columbia/Legacy, 1996)

Ashley Hutchings
Battle of the Field (Island, 1976)
The Prospect Before Us (EMI/Harvest, 1976/Hannibal, 1996)
Rise Up Like the Sun (EMI/Harvest 1978)

Incredible String Band
The 5000 Spirits or the Layers of the Onion (Elektra, 1967/Hannibal, 1994)

Irish Tradition
The Corner House (Green Linnet, 1978)
Makin' the Rounds (Green Linnet, 1981)

Andy Irvine
Andy Irvine & Paul Brady (Mulligan, 1976/Green Linnet)

Burl Ives
Greatest Hits! (MCA, 1996)

Skip James
Complete Early Recordings (Yazoo, 1994)
She Lyin' (Genes, 1964/1993)

Bert Jansch
Bert Jansch (Transatlantic, 1965)
Bert Jansch/It Don't Bother Me (Essential, 1996)
The Best of Bert Jansch (Shanachie, 1980)

Tommy Jarrell
Old-Time Fiddling & Clawhammer Banjo (Heritage)
Rainbow Sign (County)
Sail Away Ladies (County, 1998)
Tommy & Fred: Best Fiddle-Banjo Duets Played by Tommy Jarrell & Fred Cockerham (County, 1992)

Blind Lemon Jefferson
Blind Lemon Jefferson (Milestone, 1992)
Blind Lemon Jefferson: Complete Works 1926–29 (Document, 1991)

Robert Johnson
King of the Delta Blues Singers (Columbia, 1961)
Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings (Columbia, 1990)

Rickie Lee Jones
Rickie Lee Jones (Warner Bros., 1979)
Traffic from Paradise (Geffen, 1993)

Seán Keane
Contentment Is Wealth (Green Linnet, 1985)

Albert King
Born under a Bad Sign (Atlantic, 1967)

B.B. King
The Best of B.B. King, Volume I (Flair/Virgin, 1991)
Live at the Regal (MCA, 1971)

Carole King
A Natural Woman: The Ode Collection 1968–1976 (Legacy, 1994)
Tapestry (Ode, 1971)

The Kingston Trio
The Capitol Years (Capitol, 1995)

John Kirkpatrick
Force of Habit (Omnium, 1996)
Plain Capers (Free Reed, 1976/Topic, 1996)
A Short History of John Kirkpatrick (Topic, 1994)

Leo Kottke
Six and Twelve-String Guitar (Takoma, 1969/Rhino 1994)

Alison Krauss
Now That I've Found You: A Collection (Rounder, 1995)

Doyle Lawson
Rock My Soul (Sugar Hill, 1981)

Eddie LeJeune
It's in the Blood (Rounder, 1991)

Iry LeJeune
Cajun's Greatest: The Definitive Collection (Ace, 1994)

Furry Lewis
Complete Recorded Works (1927–29) (Document, 1990)
Shake 'Em on Down (Fantasy, 1972)

Gordon Lightfoot
Gord's Gold (Warner/Reprise, 1975)

David Lindley
El Rayo-X (Asylum, 1981)

Mance Lipscomb
Texas Songster (Arhoolie, 1993)
Texas Songster Volume II: You Got to Reap What You Sow (Arhoolie, 1964, 1993)

Lonesome River Band
One Step Forward (Sugar Hill, 1996)

Louvin Brothers
Tragic Songs of Life (Capitol, 1996)
When I Stop Dreaming: The Best of the Louvin Brothers (Razor & Tie, 1995)

Love
Forever Changes (Elektra, 1967)

Lovin' Spoonful
Anthology (Rhino, 1990)

Dougie MacLean
Putamayo Presents the Dougie MacLean Collection (Putamayo, 1995)
Singing Land (Dunkeld Records, 1986)

Magical Strings
Crossing to Skellig (Flying Fish, 1990)
Islands Calling (Earthbeat! Records, 1996)

Jimmy Martin
Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys (Bear Family, 1994)
You Don't Know My Mind (Rounder, 1990)

The Del McCoury Band
Classic Bluegrass (Rebel, 1991)
A Deeper Shade of Blue (Rounder, 1993)

Mississippi Fred McDowell
The Blues Roll On (Atlantic, 1959)
Roots of the Blues (Atlantic, 1959)

Eileen McGann
Turn It Around (Dragonwing, 1991)

Kate & Anna McGarrigle
Dancer with Bruised Knees (Hannibal, 1977)

Dennis McGee
Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do (Columbia, 1994)
The Complete Recordings 1929–1930 (Yazoo, 1994)
La Vielle Musique Acadienne (Swallow, 1983)

Susan McKeown & the Chanting House
Bones (Sheila-na-Gig, 1995/1-800-PRIME-CD, 1996)
Bushes and Briars (Alula, 1998)

Peter and Wendy (Alula, 1997)

Peter McLaughlin
The Oak and the Laurel (Rounder, 1995)
True Stories (Rounder, 1993)

Brian McNeill
The Back o' the North Wind (Greentrax, 1991)

Blind Willie McTell
Atlanta 12 String (Atlantic, 1991)
Blind Willie McTell: Complete Recorded Works (1927–35), Volumes I–III (Document, 1990)
The Definitive Blind Willie McTell (Columbia/Legacy, 1994)

Memphis Minnie
Hoodoo Lady (1933–37) (Columbia/Roots 'n' Blues, 1991)
I Ain't No Bad Gal 1941 (CBS/Portrait Masters, 1988)
Me and My Chauffeur 1935–46 (E.P.M. Blues Collection, 1997)

Roger Miller
King of the Road: The Genius of Roger Miller (Mercury, 1995)

Mississippi Sheiks
Stop and Listen (Yazoo, 1992)

Joni Mitchell
Blue (Reprise, 1971)
Court and Spark (Asylum, 1974)
Turbulent Indigo (Warner Bros., 1994)

Matt Molloy
Contentment Is Wealth (Green Linnet, 1985)
Matt Molloy (Green Linnet, 1976)
Stony Steps (Green Linnet, 1987)

The Mollys
Hat Trick (Apolkalips Now, 1997)

Bruce Molsky
Lost Boy (Rounder, 1996)

Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys
Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1950–1958 (Bear Family, 1989)
The Essential Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys 1945–1949 (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)
Feast Here Tonight (RCA/Bluebird, 1975)
The Music of Bill Monroe from 1936 to 1994 (MCA, 1994)
16 Gems (Columbia, 1996)

Patsy Montana
Columbia Country Classics, Volume I: The Golden Age (Columbia, 1990)

Van Morrison
Astral Weeks (Warner Bros., 1968)
Moondance (Warner Bros., 1970)

Pete Morton
Courage, Love, and Grace (Harbourtown, 1996/Rounder, 1997)

Maria Muldaur
Maria Muldaur (Reprise, 1973/Warner Archives, 1993)

The Nashville Bluegrass Band
To Be His Child (Rounder, 1987)
Unleashed (Sugar Hill, 1996)
Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go (Sugar Hill, 1993)

Willie Nelson
Nite Life: Greatest Hits and Rare Tracks, 1959–1971 (Rhino, 1990)
Phases and Stages (Atlantic, 1974)
Red Headed Stranger (Columbia, 1975)
Revolutions of Time . . . the Journey (Columbia/Legacy, 1995)
Shotgun Willie (Atlantic, 1973)
Shotgun Willie/Phases and Stages (Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, 1993)
Who'll Buy My Memories? (The IRS Tapes) (Sony, 1991)

The New Lost City Ramblers
The New Lost City Ramblers, the Early Years, 1958–1962 (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1991)
The New Lost City Ramblers Volume II, 1963–1973: Out Standing in Their Field (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993)

Maire Ni Chathasaigh
The New Strung Harp (Temple, 1985/1997)

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Will the Circle Be Unbroken (Liberty, 1972)

Laura Nyro
The First Songs (Columbia, 1973)
New York Tendaberry (Columbia, 1969)

Mark O'Connor
Appalachia Waltz (Sony Classical, 1996)

Mary Margaret O'Hara
Miss America (Virgin, 1988/KOCH International, 1996)

Phil Ochs
Farewells & Fantasies (Elektra Traditions/Rhino, 1997)
In Concert (Elektra, 1966/Rhino, 1995)

Ossian
The Best of Ossian (Iona, 1994)
Borders (Iona, 1984)
When First I Went to Caledonia (Iona, 1988)

The Oyster Band
Ride (PolyGram, 1989)

Gabby Pahinui
The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1 (Edsel, 1975/1987)

The Pahinui Brothers
The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1 (Edsel, 1975/1987)

Gram Parsons
G.P./Grievous Angel (Reprise, 1990)

Charley Patton
King of the Delta Blues (Yazoo/Shanachie, 1991)

Pentangle
Basket of Light (Reprise/Transatlantic, 1969/Castle, 1996)
Cruel Sister (Reprise, 1971/Castle, 1996)
Sweet Child (Reprise, 1968/Castle, 1996)

Tommy Peoples
Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples (Mulligan, 1978/Green Linnet, 1985)

Peter, Paul & Mary
Eugene McCarthy for President—If You Love Your Country (1968)
In Concert (Warner Bros., 1964)
Peter, Paul, and Mary (Warner Bros., 1962)
Peter, Paul, and Mommy (Warner Bros., 1969)

Al Petteway
A Scottish Christmas (Maggie's Music, 1996)

Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Good Though! (Philo, 1973)
Heart Songs: The Old-Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips (Rounder, 1997)

Planxty
After the Break (Tara, 1979)
Planxty (Polydor, 1973/Shanachie, 1979)

Dirk Powell
Deux Voyages (Rounder, 1996)

John Prine
John Prine (Atlantic, 1971)
The Missing Years (Oh Boy, 1991)

Raffi
Singable Songs Collection (Rounder, 1996)

"Cheese" Read
Cajun House Party: C'ez Cheese (Arhoolie, 1994)
Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians (Arhoolie, 1994)

Otis Redding
Live in Europe (Stax, 1967)
Otis Blue (Stax, 1965)
The Very Best of Otis Redding (Rhino, 1992)

Jean Redpath
Jean Redpath (Philo, 1975/1989)
Lowlands (Philo, 1994)
The Songs of Robert Burns, Volumes I and II (Philo, 1976, 1980/1996)

John Renbourn
John Renbourn and Bert Jansch (Cambra, 1985)
Sir John Alot of Merry England (Shanachie, 1992)

Don Reno & Red Smiley
Reno & Smiley & the Tennessee Cut-Ups, 1951–1959 (King, 1993)

Sue Richards
Hazel Grove (Maggie's Music, 1995)

Bonnie Rideout
Celtic Circles (Maggie's Music, 1994)
Kindred Spirits (Maggie's Music, 1996)
A Scottish Christmas (Maggie's Music, 1996)

Jimmie Rodgers
First Sessions, 1927–1928 (Rounder, 1990)

Aldus Roger
A Cajun Legend (La Louisiana, 1995)
Marie/Be Careful, You're Breaking My Heart (Swallow, c. 1966)
Plays the French Music of South Louisiana (La Louisiana, 1995)

Stan Rogers
Fogarty's Cove (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1977)
Northwest Passage (Fogarty's Cove Music, 1981)

Linda Ronstadt
Heart like a Wheel (Capitol, 1974)
Prisoner in Disguise (Asylum, 1975)
Trio (Warner Bros., 1987)

Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women
The Alligator Records Christmas Collection (Alligator, 1992)

Maggie Sansone
A Scottish Christmas (Maggie's Music, 1996)

The Saw Doctors
All the Way from Tuam (Shamtown, 1992)

Helen Schneyer
Somber, Sacred & Silly (Straight Arrow, 1992)

Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker
Deep Hollows and High Ridges (Marimac, 1995)

Mike Seeger
American Banjo Scruggs Style (Folkways, 1957)

Pete Seeger
A Link in the Chain (Columbia, 1996)
We Shall Overcome (Columbia, 1989)

Shooglenifty
A Whiskey Lass (Greentrax, 1996)

Jane Siberry
When I Was a Boy (Reprise, 1993)

Paul Siebel
Paul Siebel (Philo/Rounder, 1995)

Paul Simon
Graceland (Warner Bros., 1986)

Simon & Garfunkel
Bookends (Columbia, 1968)
Collected Works (Columbia, 1990)

Ricky Skaggs
Highways and Heartaches (Epic, 1982)

Patrick Sky
Songs That Made America Famous (Adelphi, 1997)

Bessie Smith
Bessie Smith (Time-Life, 1982)
The Complete Recordings, Volume II (Columbia/Legacy, 1991)
The Complete Recordings, Volume III (Columbia/Legacy, 1992)

Chirps Smith
Backside of Buncombe (Marimac, 1989)
The Volo Bogtrotters (Marimac, 1990)

Michael Smith
Michael Smith/Love Stories (Rounder, 1992)

Leo Soileau
Cajun String Bands: Cajun Breakdown (Arhoolie, 1997)
Pioneer Cajun Fiddler (1929–37) (Arhoolie, 1993)
Raise Yur Window—A Cajun Music Anthology, Volume II (CMF, 1994)

Sons of the Pioneers
Country Music Hall of Fame (MCA, 1991)

Bill Spence
The Hammered Dulcimer (Front Hall, 1990)

The Stanley Brothers
Angel Band: The Classic Mercury Recordings (Mercury, 1995, comp.)
The Complete Columbia Stanley Brothers (Columbia/Legacy, 1996)

Andy Statman
Between Heaven and Earth: Music of the Jewish Mystics (Shanachie, 1997)

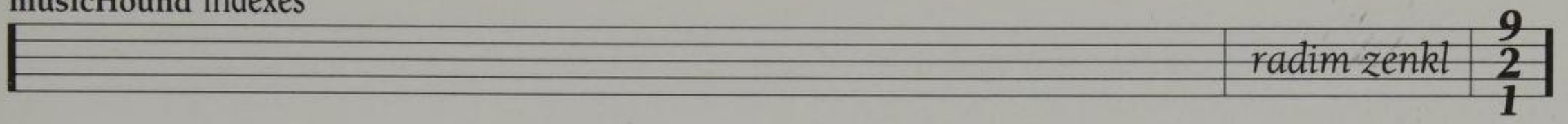
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin
Heart Songs: The Old Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips (Rounder 1997)
A Song That Will Linger (Rounder, 1989)
Stay Awhile (Rounder 1995)

Steeleye Span
Please to See the King (B&C, 1971/Shanachie)
Silly Sisters (Chrysalis, 1976/Shanachie, 1988)

Cat Stevens
Classics—Volume 24 (A&M, 1987)
Tea for the Tillerman (A&M, 1971)

Andy M. Stewart
Dublin Lady (Green Linnet, 1987)

John Stewart
California Bloodlines/Willard Minus 2 (Bear Family, 1989)
The Phoenix Concerts—Live (Capitol, 1974/One Way, 1997)



Alan Stivell
70/95 ZOOM (Dreyfus, 1997)
Chemins de Terre (Mercury, 1973)

Don Stover
Lilly Brothers and Don Stover: Early Recordings (Rebel, 1991)
Things in Life (Rounder, 1995)

Dave Swarbrick
Folk on 2 (Cooking Vinyl, 1996)
Smiddyburn/Flittin' (Raven, 1981/1996)
Swarbrick/Swarbrick II (Transatlantic, 1976–77/Castle, 1996)

June Tabor
Abyssinians (Topic, 1983)
Silly Sisters (Chrysalis, 1976)

James Talley
Got No Bread/Tryin' like the Devil (Bear Family, 1989)

Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry Sing (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1958/Rounder, 1990)

Rosetta Tharpe
Sister R. Tharpe (MCA, 1975)
Sister R. Tharpe (Rosetta, 1988)
Sister Rosetta Tharpe (Frémeaux & Associates, 1994)
Sister Rosetta Tharpe Complete Recorded Works (Document, 1995)

Henry "Ragtime Texas" Thomas
Henry Thomas 1927–29 (Document, 1991)
Texas Worried Blues (Yazoo, 1990)

Eric & Suzy Thompson
The Young Fogies (Rounder, 1994)

Richard Thompson
Shoot out the Lights (Hannibal, 1982)

Horace Trahan
Ossun Blues (Swallow, 1996)

Trian
Trian (Flying Fish, 1991)

Ernest Tubb
Country Music Hall of Fame (1991, MCA)

Townes Van Zandt
The Late Great Townes Van Zandt (Poppy, 1973/Rhino, 1994)
Live at the Old Quarter, Houston, Texas (Tomato, 1977)

Suzanne Vega
Suzanne Vega (A&M, 1985)

Tom Waits
Closing Time (Asylum, 1973)
Rain Dogs (Island, 1985)

Doug & Jack Wallin
Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1995)

Don Walser
Rolling Stone from Texas (Watermelon, 1994)

The Waterboys
Fisherman's Blues (Chrysalis, 1988)
This Is the Sea (Chrysalis, 1985)

Muddy Waters
Complete Plantation Recordings: The Historic 1941–42 Library of Congress Field Recordings (MCA/Chess, 1993)
Fathers and Sons (MCA/Chess, 1989)
His Best 1947–55 (MCA/Chess, 1997)
Muddy "Mississippi" Waters Live (CBS/Blue Sky, 1989)

Waterson:Carthy
Norma Waterson (Rykodisc, 1996)

Doc Watson
Bill Monroe and Doc Watson: Live Duet Recordings 1963–80 off the Record, Volume II (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993)
Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley: The Original Folkways Recordings: 1960–62 (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1994)
The Doc Watson Family (Sugar Hill, 1994)
Doc Watson: The Vanguard Years (Vanguard, 1995)
The Watson Family (Smithsonian/Folkways, 1990)

Kitty Wells
Country Music Hall of Fame (MCA, 1991)

Camille West
Mother Tongue (Mother Tongue, 1995)

Bukka White
The Complete Bukka White (Columbia/Legacy, 1994)
Legacy of the Blues (Sonet, 1969)

David Wilcox
Home Again,.for the First Time (A&M, 1991)
How Did You Find Me Here (A&M, 1989)

Robert Wilkins
The Original Rolling Stone (Yazoo, 1989)

Dar Williams
Mortal City (Razor & Tie, 1996)

Hank Williams
The Collectors' Edition (Mercury, 1987)
40 Greatest Hits (Polydor, 1978)
The Hits Volume I (Mercury, 1994)
The Hits Volume II (Mercury, 1995)
The Original Singles Collection . . . Plus (Polydor, 1990)

Lucinda Williams
Lucinda Williams (Rough Trade, 1988)

Bob Wills
Anthology, 1935–73 (Rhino, 1991)

Kate Wolf
Close to You (Kaleidoscope, 1981/Rhino, 1994)
Give Yourself to Love (Kaleidoscope, 1985/Rhino, 1994)
Gold in California (Kaleidoscope, 1986/Rhino, 1994)

Wolfstone
The Chase (Iona, 1992/Green Linnet, 1994)

Young Tradition
Galleries (Transatlantic, 1968)
The Holly Bears the Crown (Fledg'ling, 1969/1995)
No Relation (Transatlantic, 1977)

Neil Young
After the Gold Rush (Reprise, 1970)
Tonight's the Night (Reprise, 1975)

Radim Zenkl
Galactic Mandolin (Acoustic Disc, 1991)

Can't remember what band a certain musician or vocalist is in? Wondering if a person has been in more than one band? The Band Member Index will guide you to the appropriate entry (or entries).

Abernathy, Barry *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Abrams, Rick *See* Piney Creek Weasels

Abshire, Nathan *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Adams, Tom *See* Johnson Mountain Boys; The Lynn Morris Band

Adegbalola, Gaye *See* Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Agee, Stafford "Lil D" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Adler, Arni *See* Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai

Aguillard, Janet Mott *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Aharon, Michael *See* Trapezoid

Alesi, Tommy *See* Beausoleil

Alfred, Morten *See* The American Cafe Orchestra

Allcock, Martin *See* Fairport Convention

Allemond, Philip *See* Tasso

Allen, Johnny Ray *See* The subdudes

Allred, Rick *See* The Country Gentlemen

Ambler, Mark *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Amedee, Steve *See* The subdudes

Amidon, Mary Alice *See* The Amidons

Amidon, Peter *See* The Amidons

Amidon, Sam *See* The Amidons

Amidon, Stefan *See* The Amidons

Amos, Bob *See* Front Range

Anders, Robin Adnan *See* Boiled in Lead

Anderson, Eric *See* Piney Creek Weasels

Anderson, Greg *See* Whirligig

Anderson, John *See* The Fugs

Anderson, Keith "Wolf" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Anderson, Peter *See* Whistlebinkies

Anderson, Shannon *See* Whirligig

Andrews, "Lil" Glenn *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Andrews, Molly *See* Duck Baker and Molly Andrews

Anger, Darol *See* Psychograss

Anglin, Jack *See* Johnnie & Jack

Anton, Alan *See* Cowboy Junkies

Antonakos, Stephen B. *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Appino, Pat *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Applin, Herb *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Arbo, Rani *See* Salamander Crossing

Ardoin, Chris *See* Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Ardoin, Sean *See* Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Arlin, Bobby *See* The Leaves

Armerding, Jake *See* Northern Lights

Armerding, Taylor *See* Northern Lights

Armitage, Dave *See* Blowzabella

Armstrong, Billy *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Armstrong, Paul *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Armstrong, Robert *See* The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Arnold, Jerome *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Arthur, Danny *See* The Bing Brothers

Artzner, Greg *See* Magpie

Ashbrook, Karen *See* Ceoltoiri

Asher, Peter *See* Peter & Gordon

Atwater, Aubrey *See* Atwater-Donnelly

Audain, Courtney *See* Timbuk 3

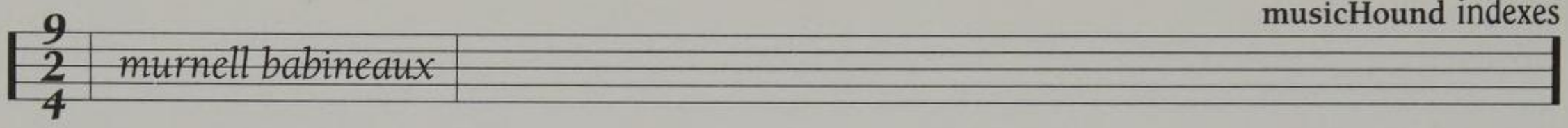
August, Kent Perre *See* Zydeco Force

Auldridge, Mike *See* Chesapeake; The Seldom Scene

Austin, Kenneth *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Austin, Tim *See* Lonesome River Band

B., Stevie *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27



Babineaux, Murnell *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Baggott, Ed *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Bailey, James *See* Country Ham

Bain, Aly *See* Boys of the Lough

Baird, Edward *See* Amazing Blondel

Baker, Kenny *See* Kenny Baker/Kenny Baker and Josh Graves

Baker, Duck *See* Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews

Baker, John Lee *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Baldassari, Butch *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Baldwin, Ken *See* Kentucky Standard Band

Balfa, Burkeman *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Balfa, Christine *See* Balfa Toujours; Magnolia Sisters

Balfa, Dewey *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Balfa, Freres *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Balfa, Harry *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Balfa, Rodney *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Balfa, Tony *See* Balfa Toujours

Balfa, Will *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Ball, E.C. *See* E.C. Ball and Orna Ball

Ball, Orna *See* E.C. Ball and Orna Ball

Ballard, Mary Anne *See* Baltimore Consort

Bankston, Emmett *See* Earl Johnson/Earl Johnson & His Dixie Entertainers/Earl Johnson & His Clodhoppers

Barber, Junior *See* Gibson Brothers Band

Barber, Mike *See* Gibson Brothers Band

Barenberg, Russ *See* Fiddle Fever

Barlow, Becky *See* Farmer's Daughters

Barlow, Bruce *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Barnes, Brian *See* Stoney Lonesome

Barnes, Danny *See* Bad Livers

Barnes, Jeffrey *See* Brave Combo

Barnes, Kevin *See* Stoney Lonesome

Barnes, Micah *See* The Nylons

Barnes, Peter *See* Bare Necessities

Barnwell, Ysaye Maria *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Barr, Ralph *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Barrand, Tony *See* John Roberts & Tony Barrand

Barron, Oz *See* Northern Lights

Barron, Ronnie *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Barthol, Bruce *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Barton, Cathy *See* Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Barwick, Kathy *See* The All Girl Boys

Bass, David *See* The Freight Hoppers

Battin, Skip *See* The Byrds; Flying Burrito Brothers

Battle, John *See* The Fairfield Four

Baucom, Terry *See* Boone Creek; IIIrd Tyme Out

Baxter, Dorothy *See* Good Ol' Persons

Bayne, Iain *See* Runrig

Beam, John *See* The Double Decker String Band

Beamer, Kapono *See* Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer

Beamer, Keola *See* Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer

Beamer, Nona *See* Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer

Beck, Don *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Beck, John *See* The Leaves

Beckley, Gerry *See* America

Bedford, Brian *See* Artisan

Bedford, Jacey *See* Artisan

Beland, John *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Bell, Delia *See* Delia Bell and Bill Grant

Bell, Derek *See* The Chieftains

Bell, Richard *See* The Band

Bellamy, Peter *See* Young Tradition

Belland, Bruce *See* The Four Preps

Belzer, Bill *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Bence, Bob *See* Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

Benford, Mac *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Bengtson, Rose *See* Ebin-Rose

Benson, Ray *See* Asleep at the Wheel

Benson, Wayne *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Benzie, Ian F. *See* Old Blind Dogs

Berard, Al *See* Basin Brothers

Berg, Jeff *See* Free Hot Lunch!

Bergin, Mary *See* Mary Bergin/Dordan

Bergmann, Ken *See* Klezmorim

Berkstresser, Paul Reed *See* Country Ham

Berline, Byron *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Berryman, Lou *See* Lou and Peter Berryman

Berryman, Peter *See* Lou and Peter Berryman

Bibey, Alan *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Bing, Dave *See* The Bing Brothers

Bing, Mike *See* The Bing Brothers

Bing, Tim *See* The Bing Brothers

Bishop, Elvin *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Black, Bobby *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Black, Frances *See* The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Black, Jeremy *See* Mouth Music

Black, Martin *See* The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Black, Mary *See* The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Black, Michael *See* The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Black, Shay *See* The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black

Blackman, Tewee *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Blackmar, Jeanie McLerie *See* Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico

Blackwell, Kenny *See* The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Blair, Warren *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Blake, Norman *See* Norman Blake/Norman & Nancy Blake/Norman Blake and Tony Rice

Blake, Nancy *See* Norman Blake/Norman & Nancy Blake/Norman Blake and Tony Rice

Blakey, Colin *See* The Waterboys

Blanchard, Keith *See* Basin Brothers

Blisard, John *See* The Bing Brothers

Bliss, Laurel *See* Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss

Blizard, Ralph *See* Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Bloomfield, Michael *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Bohan, Gary *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Bok, Gordon *See* Bok, Muir & Trickett

Bolick, Bill *See* Blue Sky Boys

Bolick, Earl *See* Blue Sky Boys

Bolton, Adie *See* Ceolbeg

Bonnie Hearne *See* Bill & Bonnie Hearne

Boond, Peter *See* Ceolbeg

Boone, Steve *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Borella, Rick *See* Acousticats

Borowski, Johnny *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Boulding, Pam *See* Magical Strings

Boulding, Phil *See* Magical Strings

Bourke, Ciaran *See* The Dubliners

Bovee, Bob *See* Bob Bovee and Gail Heil

Bowden, Richard *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Bowman, Ronnie *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals; Lonesome River Band

Bradley, Alton *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Bradley, Carrie *See* Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Bradley, Paula *See* Rhythm Rats

Brady, Pat *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Brady, Paul *See* The Johnstons

Brasseaux, Dwayne *See* Basin Brothers

Breaux, Jimmy *See* Beausoleil

Brembley, Paul *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Brennan, Máire *See* Clannad

Bressler, Judy *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Brewer, Finley J. Sr. *See* Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr.

Bridgeman, Noel *See* The Waterboys

Brigante, Merle *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Bright, Fletcher *See* Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Bright, George *See* Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Brislin, Kate *See* Any Old Time String Band

Brock, Jesse *See* The Lynn Morris Band

Brooks, Jim *See* Ensemble Galilei

Brody, David *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Brooke, Jonatha *See* The Story

Brooks, Brian *See* The House Band

Brooks, Michael *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Brooks, Orville *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Broughman, Joey *See* The Bing Brothers

Brousard, Kevin *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Broussard, Herbert *See* Zydeco Force

Broussard, Jeffery *See* Zydeco Force

Broussard, Shelton *See* Zydeco Force

Brower, Cecil *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Brown, Alison *See* Northern Lights

Brown, Derwood *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Brown, J.H. *See* Herschel Brown/J.H. Brown

Brown, Milton *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Browne, Jackson *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Brozman, Bob *See* The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Bruner, Cliff *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Bryant, Steve *See* Boone Creek

Bryson, Bill *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals; The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Bub, Mike *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle; The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury

Buchanan, Buck *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Buchanan, Jim *See* The Greenbriar Boys; Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Buckhannon, Curtis *See* The Buckhannon Brothers

Buckhannon, Dennis *See* The Buckhannon Brothers

Buckner, Clay *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Bulla, Jenny Anne *See* Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla

Bulla, Luke *See* Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla

Bullock, Robin *See* Helicon

Bunnell, Dewey *See* America

Buono, Michael *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band; Ranch Romance

Burke, Kevin *See* Patrick Street

Burleson, Jason *See* Blue Highway

Burns, Annie *See* The Burns Sisters

Burns, Bobby *See* Special Consensus

Burns, Jeannie *See* The Burns Sisters

Burns, Kenneth "Jethro" *See* Homer & Jethro

Burns, Marie *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars; The Burns Sisters

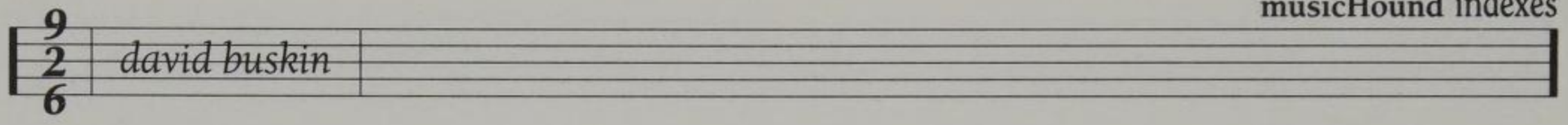
Burse, Charlie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Burton, Alice *See* Kentucky Standard Band

Burton, Barry "Byrd" *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Bush, Roger *See* Flying Burrito Brothers; The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys

Bush, Sam *See* The New Grass Revival; Strength in Numbers



Buskin, David *See* David Buskin/Buskin and Batteau

Butler, Joe *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Butterfield, Paul *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Butts, Wes *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Byrne, Chris *See* Black 47

Cable, John *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Cahill, Greg *See* Special Consensus

Caldwell, Gayle *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Calhoun, Fred "Papa" *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Callery, Phil *See* The Voice Squad

Calnan, Brian *See* Moving Hearts

Cameron, Duncan *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Campbell, Eamonn *See* The Dubliners

Campbell, Terry *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Cannon, Hal *See* The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Cannon, Sean *See* The Dubliners

Carageorge, Gerg *See* Klezmorim

Carbone, Pat *See* Front Range

Card, Hank *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Carlisle, Bill *See* Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles

Carlisle, Cliff *See* Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles

Carpenter, Bob *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Carrethers, Harold *See* The Fairfield Four

Carrethers, Rev. J.R. *See* The Fairfield Four

Carrethers, Rufus *See* The Fairfield Four

Carrier, Chubby *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Carrier, Kevin *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Carrier, Roy *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Carrier, Troy Dickie *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Carroll, Liz *See* Trian

Carson, Ken *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Carter, A.P. *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Anita *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Anna *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, David "Dad" *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, Dorretta *See* Hans Theessink/Blue Groove

Carter, Eddie *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, Gil *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Carter, Helen *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Jason *See* The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury

Carter, Jim *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, June *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Maybelle *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Rose *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, Roy *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, Ruth Ellen *See* The Chuck Wagon Gang

Carter, Sara *See* The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter

Carter, Tom *See* The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Carthy, Eliza *See* Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt; Waterson:Carthy

Carthy, Martin *See* Waterson:Carthy; The Watersons

Carton, Davy *See* The Saw Doctors

Casady, Jack *See* Hot Tuna

Casel, Nitanju Bolade *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Cassidy, Dan *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Cattanach, Davy *See* Old Blind Dogs

Cauthen, Jim *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Cauthen, Joyce *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Cephas, John *See* Cephas & Wiggins

Chaisson, Mike *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Chalfant, Dave *See* The Nields

Chambers, George *See* The Chambers Brothers

Chambers, Joe *See* The Chambers Brothers

Chambers, Lester *See* The Chambers Brothers

Chambers, Willie *See* The Chambers Brothers

Chancey, Tina *See* Hesperus

Chapman, Curt *See* J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Chapman, Mike *See* Balfa Toujours

Chapman, Tyrus *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Chappell, Wes *See* No Strings Attached

Chastain, Laurie *See* Klezmorim

Chatmon, Lonnie *See* Mississippi Sheiks

Cherns, Richard *See* Runrig

Chevron, Philip *See* The Pogues

Chisholm, Duncan *See* Wolfstone

Chuckrow, Bob *See* Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Ciarlante, Randy *See* The Band

Cirimele, Carolyn *See* The All Girl Boys

Clancy, Bobby *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Clancy, Liam *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Clancy, Pat *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Clancy, Tom *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Clark, Don *See* The Four Preps

Clark, Gene *See* The Byrds

Clark, Jackie *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Clark, Jenny *See* Battlefield Band

Clark, Roy *See* The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Clarke, Cyrus *See* Acousticats

Clarke, Jamie *See* The Pogues

Clarke, Michael *See* The Byrds; Flying Burrito Brothers

Claus, Jeff *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Clem, Mike *See* Eddie from Ohio

Clifton, Verlin *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Clyde, Jeremy *See* Chad & Jeremy

Coakley, John *See* Boys of the Lough

Cobb, Ed *See* The Four Preps

Cockerham, Fred *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Cody, Commander (George Frayne) *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Coffman, Wanna *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Cohen, David *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Cohen, John *See* The New Lost City Ramblers

Coleman, T. Michael *See* Chesapeake; The Seldom Scene

Collins, Dolly *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band

Collins, Joe *See* Boiled Buzzards

Collins, Ronald *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Collins, Shirley *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band

Colston, Maclaine *See* Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt

Comeaux, Tommy *See* Basin Brothers; Beausoleil

Compton, Mike *See* The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Conley, Cabe *See* Boys from Indiana

Conneff, Kevin *See* The Chieftains

Connell, Dudley *See* Johnson Mountain Boys; Longview; The Seldom Scene

Connors, Marc *See* The Nylons

Conway, Gerry *See* Sandy Denny/Fotheringay; Pentangle

Cooley, Steve *See* The Dillards

Coombes, Rod *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Coomer, Ken *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Cooper, Dale T. "Stoney" *See* Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper

Cooper, Paul *See* The Nylons

Cooper, Roger *See* The Bing Brothers

Cooper, Wilma Lee *See* Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper

Corbett, Tom *See* Acousticats

Cordle, Larry *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Cormier, Danny *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Cormier, Jacob *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Cormier, Lesa *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Cormier, Lionel *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Cormier, Raymond *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Corning, John *See* Free Hot Lunch!

Corwin, Andrew *See* The Foremen

Cotter, Debby *See* The All Girl Boys

Coulson, Leonard *See* The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Coulter, David *See* The Pogues

Cowan, John *See* The New Grass Revival

Cox, Evelyn *See* The Cox Family

Cox, Jim *See* The Country Gentlemen

Cox Pagter, Judie *See* Country Ham

Cox, Sidney *See* The Cox Family

Cox, Suzanne *See* The Cox Family

Cox, Terry *See* Pentangle

Cox, Willard *See* The Cox Family

Crabtree, Lee *See* The Fugs

Craig, Shaun *See* Capercaillie

Crase, Noah *See* Boys from Indiana

Craven, Joe *See* Psychograss

Craver, Mike *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Creach, Papa John *See* Hot Tuna

Creed, Kyle *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Creeper, West Virginia *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Crofts, Dash *See* Seals & Crofts

Croker, Glen *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Crosbie, Malcolm *See* Shooglenifty

Crosby, David *See* The Byrds; Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills

Crowder, Dave *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Crowe, J.D. *See* J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Crowe, Josh *See* Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin

Crumb, Robert *See* The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Crumm, Chad *See* The Chicken Chokers

Cudek, Mark *See* Baltimore Consort; Hesperus

Cullen, Gerry *See* The Voice Squad

Cullis, "Doc" Ed *See* Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Cunningham, John *See* Silly Wizard

Cunningham, Phil *See* Silly Wizard

Currin, Sam *See* Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band

Curtis, Ken *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Cutting, Jennifer *See* The New St. George

D'Amato (Muldaur), Maria *See* Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Dalton, Erik *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Daly, Jackie *See* Patrick Street

Danko, Rick *See* The Band

Darbone, Luderin *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Darby, Tom *See* Darby and Tarlton

Daring, Mason *See* Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring

Darling, Erik *See* Rooftop Singers

Darriau, Matt *See* The Klezmatics; Whirligig

Darrow, Chris *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Darvill, Benjamin *See* Crash Test Dummies

Daugherty, Jay Dee *See* The Waterboys

Dauphin, Jane *See* Boiled in Lead

Davenport, Billy *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Davenport, Jed *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Davidson, George *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Davis, Jeff *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Davis, John *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Dawdy, Cheryl *See* The Chenille Sisters

Deaton, Lester *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Deaton, Ray *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

DeLancey, Dan *See* Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey

Delmore, Alton *See* The Delmore Brothers

Delmore, Rabon *See* The Delmore Brothers

Demel, Sue *See* Sons of the Never Wrong

DeMeo, Pete *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Denny, Sandy *See* Sandy Denny/Fotheringay; Fairport Convention

Devitt, Sean *See* The Devlins

Devlin, Colin *See* The Devlins

Devlin, Peter *See* The Devlins

Devonie, Nova Karina *See* Ranch Romance

Dick, Bob *See* Front Range

Dickens, Hazel *See* Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard; Strange Creek Singers

Dickerson, Lance *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Diehl, Marcia *See* Ensemble Galilei

Diesler, Conrad *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Dillard, Doug *See* The Dillards

Dillard, Rodney *See* The Dillards

Dilleshaw, John *See* John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw/Dilly & the Dill Pickles

Dilling, Steve *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Dillon, Mary *See* Déanta

Dinn, Noel *See* Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan

Dinwiddie, Gene *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Dodge, Allan *See* The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Dodge, Peter *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Doherty, Dennis *See* The Mamas & the Papas

Doherty, Pearse *See* The Saw Doctors

Domengeaux, Jimmy *See* Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Donahue, Jerry *See* Sandy Denny/Fotheringay; Fairport Convention

Donald, Keith *See* Moving Hearts

Donaldson, Pat *See* Sandy Denny/Fotheringay

Donnelly, Elwood *See* Atwater-Donnelly

Donnelly, John *See* The Saw Doctors

Donoghue, Mike *See* The Chicken Chokers; Primitive Characters

Dorge, Michel *See* Crash Test Dummies

Dornfeld, Ruthie *See* The American Cafe Orchestra

Dorsey, Court *See* Bright Morning Star

Doss, Tommy *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Dott, Gerald *See* Incredible String Band

Doucet, David *See* Beausoleil

Doucet, Michael *See* Beausoleil; Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Douglas, Blair *See* Runrig

Douglas, Jerry *See* Boone Creek; J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Dover, Connie *See* Connie Dover/Scartaglen

Draheim, Sue *See* Any Old Time String Band

Dransfield, Barry *See* Robin and Barry Dransfield

Dransfield, Robin *See* Robin and Barry Dransfield

Drever, Ivan *See* Wolfstone

Drew, Ronnie *See* The Dubliners

Dudley, Juan *See* The New St. George

Duff, Marc *See* Capercaillie

Duffey, John *See* The Country Gentlemen; The Seldom Scene

Dugas, Kevin *See* Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Dugger, Michael *See* Connie Dover/Scartaglen

Duhon, Edward *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Duisit, Lorraine *See* Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit; Trapezoid

Duncan, Glen *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle; Longview

Duncan, Stuart *See* The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Dunn, Bob *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Duplechain, Corey *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Dural, Rodney *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Dvorin, Miriam *See* Klezmorim

Dyble, Judy *See* Fairport Convention

Eaglesham, Struan *See* Wolfstone

Eaglesham, Stuart *See* Wolfstone

Earhart, Billy III *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

East, Ernest *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Eaton, Nigel *See* Blowzabella

Echols, John *See* Love

Eden, Alan *See* Mr. Fox

Edmundson, Dave *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Egan, David *See* Filé

Egan, Joe *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Egan, Seamus *See* Solas

Ekstrom, Lisa *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

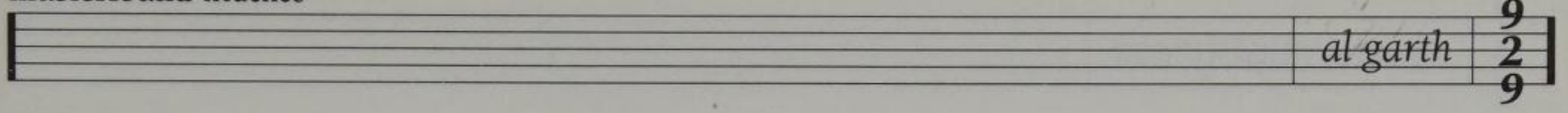
Eldridge, Ben *See* The Seldom Scene

Elliot, Cass *See* The Mamas & the Papas

Ellis, Dolan *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Ellis, Lance *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Elmore, Rick *See* Klezmorim



Ely, Joe *See* The Flatlanders

Emerson, Bill *See* The Country Gentlemen

Enright, Pat *See* The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Epstein, Freyda *See* Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude; Trapezoid

Eriksen, Tim *See* Cordelia's Dad

Ernst, Richard *See* Mad Pudding

Ervin, Dick *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Espinola, Tom *See* Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit

Etheridge, Chris *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Everly, Don *See* Everly Brothers

Everly, Phil *See* Everly Brothers

Fadden, Jimmie *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Falcon, Cleoma Breaux *See* Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon

Falcon, Joseph *See* Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon

Fallon, Joe *See* The Chicken Chokers; Critton Hollow String Band

Falzarano, Michael *See* Hot Tuna

Fariña, Mimi *See* Richard and Mimi Fariña/Mimi Fariña

Fariña, Richard *See* Richard and Mimi Fariña/Mimi Fariña

Farlow, Billy C. *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Farnham, Tim *See* Salamander Crossing

Farr, Hugh *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Farr, Karl *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Farrar, Jay *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Farrell, Skip *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Faul, Don *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Favre, Boris *See* Mad Pudding

Fay, Martin *See* The Chieftains

Fearnley, James *See* The Pogues

Feiten, Buzzy *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Felder, Don *See* The Eagles

Ferguson, Jimmy *See* Irish Rovers

Ferris, Ed *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Field, Jim *See* The Charles River Valley Boys

Fifield, Fraser *See* Old Blind Dogs

Finch, Carl *See* Brave Combo

Fineman, Alisa *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

Finer, Jem *See* The Pogues

Fingerett, Sally *See* Four Bitchin' Babes

Fink, Cathy *See* Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

Finlayson, Carry *See* Shooglenifty

Finley, Jamie *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Finn, Alec *See* De Danann/De Dannan

Fisher, Shug *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Flatt, Lester *See* Flatt & Scruggs; Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Fleck, Béla *See* Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones; The New Grass Revival; Strength in Numbers

Flick, Bob *See* The Brothers Four

Flippen, Benton *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Foglino, Paul *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Foley, Ged *See* Battlefield Band; The House Band; Patrick Street

Foley, Richard *See* The Brothers Four

Fontenot, Hadley *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa

Forbes, Homer *See* The Forbes Family

Forbes, Jay *See* The Forbes Family

Forbes Roberts, Lisa *See* The Forbes Family

Forbes Slate, Lori *See* The Forbes Family

Ford, Mike *See* Moxy Früvous

Ford, Robert "Peg" *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Forssi, Ken *See* Love

Forster, Nick *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Foster, Murray *See* Moxy Früvous

Foster, Phil *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Fowler, Mark *See* Simple Gifts

Fox, Cheryl *See* Bright Morning Star

Fradon, Amy *See* Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon

Fraley, Annadeene *See* J.P. and Annadeene Fraley

Fraley, J.P. *See* J.P. and Annadeene Fraley

Frank, Chris *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Frank, Cindy *See* disappear fear

Fraser, Alasdair *See* Skyedance

Fratar, Gail *See* Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar

Frazier, Joe *See* The Chad Mitchell Trio

Frazier, Keith "Bass Drum Shorty" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Frazier, Philip *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Freeman, Isaac *See* The Fairfield Four

Freeman, Scott *See* Skeeter & the Skidmarks

French, Bob *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Frey, Glenn *See* The Eagles

Freya, Jo *See* Blowzabella

Fricker Tyson, Sylvia *See* Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Fricker Tyson

Fridley, Cary *See* The Freight Hoppers

Friend, Rick *See* Mando Mafia

Fulks, Robbie *See* Special Consensus

Furay, Richie *See* Buffalo Springfield

Gaar, John *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Gabbard, Harley *See* Boys from Indiana

Gaddis, Earl *See* Bare Necessities

Gahagan, John *See* Battlefield Band

Gaiser, Robin *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Gallier, Gary *See* Les & Gary Gallier

Gallier, Les *See* Les & Gary Gallier

Gammon, Vic *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band

Garcia, Jerry *See* Grateful Dead

Gardner, Michael *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Garfunkel, Art *See* Simon & Garfunkel

Garnier, D'Jalma *See* Filé

Garrett, Amos *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Garth, Al *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Gastineau, Charl Ann *See* Acousticats

Gaudreau, Jimmy *See* Chesapeake; The Country Gentlemen

Gavin, Frankie *See* De Danann/De Dannan

Gayheart, Willard *See* Skeeter & the Skidmarks

Gerrard, Alice *See* Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard; Strange Creek Singers

Gerrard, Lisa *See* Dead Can Dance

Ghomeshi, Jian (formerly Jean) *See* Moxy Früvous

Gibbons, Mary *See* The All Girl Boys

Gibson, Eric *See* Gibson Brothers Band

Gibson, Greg *See* The Bing Brothers

Gibson, Leigh *See* Gibson Brothers Band

Gilbeau, Floyd "Gib" *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Gilbert, John "Prince" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Giles, Ken *See* Bright Morning Star

Gill, Janis *See* Sweethearts of the Rodeo

Gillette, Steve *See* Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

Gilmore, Jimmie Dale *See* The Flatlanders

Gilston, John *See* Incredible String Band

Giltinan, Bill *See* Mando Mafia

Ginyard, Julius Caleb "J.C." *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Gladwin, John David *See* Amazing Blondel

Glaser, Matt *See* Fiddle Fever

Gleason, Susan *See* Farmer's Daughters

Glover, Tony "Little Sun" *See* Koerner, Ray & Glover

Godchaux, Donna *See* Grateful Dead

Godchaux, Keith *See* Grateful Dead

Goggin, Martina *See* Mary Bergin/Dordan

Goldberg, Merryl *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Golding, Wes *See* Boone Creek

Goodall, Jim *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Gordon, James *See* Tamarack

Gordon, Ralph *See* Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude; Trapezoid

Gottlieb, Lou *See* The Limeliters

Gotzmer, Kathleen *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Graham, Len *See* Skylark

Graham, Randy *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Grant, Angus R. *See* Shooglenifty

Grant, Bill *See* Delia Bell and Bill Grant

Grant, Bob *See* Bad Livers

Grant, Pete *See* Incredible String Band

Grantham, Theodore *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Graves, Josh *See* Kenny Baker and Josh Graves

Gray, David Julian *See* Klezmorim

Gray, Tom *See* The Seldom Scene

Greely, David *See* Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Green, Gardner Ray *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Green, Douglas B. (Ranger Doug) *See* Riders in the Sky

Greene, Richard *See* Muleskinner

Greenwood, Derek Dee *See* Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Grier, David *See* Psychograss

Grier, Lamar *See* Strange Creek Singers

Griffin, A.C. "Eddie" *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Griffin, Mitch *See* Boiled in Lead

Grimwood, Keith *See* Trout Fishing in America

Grisman, David *See* Muleskinner

Grover, Sandy *See* Skeeter & the Skidmarks

Guard, Dave *See* The Kingston Trio

Guerin, John *See* The Byrds

Guillory, Ida *See* Queen Ida/Ida Guillory

Gullane, Roy *See* Tannahill Weavers

Gunning, John Francis *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Gutkin, Lisa *See* Whirligig

Guttmann, James *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Hébert, Donna *See* Rude Girls

Haensler, Mick *See* Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Hagberg, Neal *See* Neal & Leandra

Haley, Genny *See* Any Old Time String Band

Hall, Rachel *See* Simple Gifts

Hamilton, Mark *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Hamlett, Robert *See* The Fairfield Four

Hammond, Lorraine & Bennett *See* Lorraine (Lee) Hammond/Lorraine & Bennett Hammond/Solomon's Seal/Rick & Lorraine Lee

Hancock, Butch *See* The Flatlanders

Hancock, Tommy *See* The Flatlanders

Haney, Dave *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Hanna, Jeff *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Hardie, Jonny *See* Old Blind Dogs

Hardy, Lyn *See* Rude Girls

Harlan, Evan *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Harness, Eddie *See* Eddie from Ohio

Harper, Iris *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Harrigan, Katie *See* Ceolbeg

Harrington, Dick *See* Dick Harrington & Victoria Young

Harris, Evelyn Maria *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Harris, Princess *See* The Plaid Family

Harris, Ted *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Harrison, John *See* The Watersons

Harrison, Nate *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Hart, Greg *See* Incredible String Band

Hart, Hattie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Hart, Mickey *See* Grateful Dead

Hart, Tim *See* Steeleye Span

Hartgrove, Mike *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Hassilev, Alex *See* The Limeliters

Hastings, Pete *See* No Strings Attached

Hathaway, Richard *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Hawker, Ginny *See* Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Haynes, Henry D. "Homer" *See* Homer & Jethro

Hayward, John *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Hearne, Bill *See* Bill & Bonnie Hearne

Heidorn, Mike *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Heil, Gail *See* Bob Bovee and Gail Heil

Helberg, Dave *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Helm, Levon *See* The Band

Henderson, Lee "Red" *See* Earl Johnson/Earl Johnson & His Dixie Entertainers/Earl Johnson & His Clodhoppers

Henley, Don *See* The Eagles

Henrie, Doug *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Henry, Bill *See* Northern Lights

Herald, John *See* The Greenbriar Boys; The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Hernandez, Bubba *See* Brave Combo

Heron, Mike *See* Incredible String Band

Herrick, Jack *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Herrmann, Joe *See* Critton Hollow String Band

Herrmann, John *See* Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Herrmann, Sam *See* Critton Hollow String Band

Heyman, Preston *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Hicks, Bill *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band; Red Clay Ramblers

Hicks, Rod *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Higginbotham, Darrell *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Higginbotham, Linda *See* Brad Leftwich/Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham

Hildebrand, John *See* Mad Pudding

Hill, James *See* The Fairfield Four

Hill, Joe Scott *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Hillhouse, Andy *See* Mad Pudding

Hillman, Chris *See* The Byrds; Flying Burrito Brothers

Hinners, Gordy *See* Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Hirsh, Chicken *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Hirshon, Karen *See* Simple Gifts

Hisey, John *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Hitchcock, Bob *See* The New St. George

Hitchcock, Robyn *See* Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians

Hobbs, Evelyn Cox *See* The Cox Family

Hoeger, Hugh *See* Piney Creek Weasels

Holder, Ian *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band

Holland, Bernie *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Holly, Kelvin *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Holmes, Michael *See* Dervish

Holt, Aubrey *See* Boys from Indiana

Holt, Jerry *See* Boys from Indiana

Holt, Tom *See* Boys from Indiana

Holt, Tony *See* Boys from Indiana

Hood, Wallace *See* Irish Rovers

Hooker, Cecil *See* Trapezoid

Hooker, James *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Hooven, Herb *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Horton, Jeff *See* Northern Lights

Houff, Terry *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Hower, Dave *See* The Nields

Huber, Connie *See* The Chenille Sisters

Hudson, Garth *See* The Band

Hunt, Darryl *See* The Pogues

Hurd, Kimball *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

Hurwitz, Cheryl *See* Trapezoid

Hutchings, Ashley *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band; Fairport Convention; Steeleye Span

Hutchinson, Trevor *See* The Waterboys

Hutton, Bruce *See* The Double Decker String Band; Hesperus

Hyman, Judy *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Hymowitz, David *See* California Cajun Orchestra

Ibbotson, Jimmy *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Ickes, Rob *See* Blue Highway

Idlet, Ezra *See* Trout Fishing in America

Inabnett, Marvin *See* The Four Preps

Ingram, Jack *See* Incredible String Band

Ingram, Wally *See* Timbuk 3

Irvine, Andy *See* Patrick Street; Planxty; Sweeney's Men

Irvine, Peter *See* Cordelia's Dad

Iviteky, Conrad *See* Shooglenifty

Jabbour, Alan *See* Hollow Rock String Band

Jackson, George *See* Ossian

Jackson, Kenny *See* Rhythm Rats

Jackson, Nancy *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Jackson, Roger *See* Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians

Jackson, William *See* Ossian

James, Paul *See* Blowzabella

Jamison, Phil *See* Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Jammer, Joe *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Jansch, Bert *See* Pentangle

Jayne, Mitch *See* The Dillards

Jeffries, Sam *See* Boys from Indiana

Johnson, Craig *See* The Double Decker String Band

Johnson, Earl *See* Earl Johnson/Earl Johnson & His Dixie Entertainers/Earl Johnson & His Clodhoppers

Johnson, Howard *See* The Fugs

Johnson, Jamie *See* Boys from Indiana

Johnson, Keith *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Johnson, Mark *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Johnson, Michael *See* The Johnstons

Johnson, Nancy *See* Kentucky Standard Band

Johnson, Rome *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Johnson, Shirley Childress *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Johnson, Willie *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Johnston, Adrienne *See* The Johnstons

Johnston, Luci *See* The Johnstons

Johnston, Max *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Jones, Diane *See* Diane Jones and & King

Jones, Gordon *See* Silly Wizard

Jones, Grandpa *See* The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Jones, Jab *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Jones, John *See* The Oyster Band

Jones, Malcolm *See* Runrig

Jones, "Preacher" *See* The Fairfield Four

Jones, Tina Lisa *See* Trapezoid

Jordan, Cathy *See* Dervish

Jordan, Louis "Shuaka Shuaka" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Jorgensen, Hanne *See* The Freight Hoppers

Joyce, Jackie *See* Mouth Music

Justice, Kay *See* Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice

Kaapana, Ledward *See* Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana

Kaapana, Nedward *See* Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana

Kahlil, Aisha *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Kaiser (Chris Silver), Chris *See* Stoney Lonesome

Kallick, Kathy *See* Good Ol' Persons

Kane, Barry *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Kane, Kieran *See* Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes

Kane, Raymond *See* Ray Kane/Raymond Kane

Kane, Ron *See* The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Kaplan, Selma *See* Rude Girls

Karpeles, Nancy *See* Ensemble Galilei

Kass, Ruth *See* Boiled Buzzards

Katz, Mike *See* Ceolbeg

Katz, Nancy *See* Ranch Romance

Kaukonen, Jorma *See* Hot Tuna

Keane, Sean *See* The Chieftains

Kearey, Ian "Chopper" *See* The Oyster Band

Kearney, Pete *See* The Fugs

Keenan, Brian *See* The Chambers Brothers

Keenan, David *See* Ranch Romance

Keith, Bill *See* Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band; Muleskinner; The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Kelley, Kevin *See* The Byrds

Kelliher, Jeff *See* Salamander Crossing

Kelly, Geoffrey *See* Spirit of the West

Kelly, Liam *See* Dervish

Kelly, Luke *See* The Dubliners

Kennedy, Maura *See* The Kennedys/Pete Kennedy/Pete & Maura Kennedy

Kennedy, Pete *See* The Kennedys/Pete Kennedy/Pete & Maura Kennedy

Keppeler, Ken *See* Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico

Kerr, Nancy *See* Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr

Kershaw, Doug *See* Doug Kershaw/Rusty & Doug

Kershaw, Rusty *See* Doug Kershaw/Rusty & Doug

Kessler, Josef *See* Boiled in Lead

Kessler, Peter *See* Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar

Kettering, Frank *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Kihn, Greg *See* Greg Kihn/The Greg Kihn Band

Kiker, Harry "Bill" *See* John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw/Dilly & the Dill Pickles

Kilbride, Pat *See* Battlefield Band

Kilby, Trish *See* Farmer's Daughters

Kimball, Jennifer *See* The Story

King, Charlie *See* Bright Morning Star

King, Hubie *See* Diane Jones and & King

King, James *See* Longview

King, Tom *See* Cordelia's Dad

Kinsey, Andrew *See* Salamander Crossing

Kirchen, Bill *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Kirk, John *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Kirkland, Michael *See* The Brothers Four

Kirtley, Peter *See* Pentangle

Kirwan, Larry *See* Black 47

Klein, Moondi *See* Chesapeake; The Seldom Scene

Kleinow, "Sneaky" Pete *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Knight, Cheri *See* Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies

Knuckles, Red *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Kobluk, Mike *See* The Chad Mitchell Trio

Koerner, "Spider" John *See* Koerner, Ray & Glover

Kolodner, Ken *See* Helicon

Kootch, Dan *See* The Fugs

Kovac, Paul *See* Critton Hollow String Band

Kovit, Paul *See* Whirligig

Krauss, Alison *See* Alison Krauss/Alison Krauss & Union Station

Kreutzmann, Bill *See* Grateful Dead

Kristen, Ashley *See* Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai

Kropp, Mike *See* Northern Lights

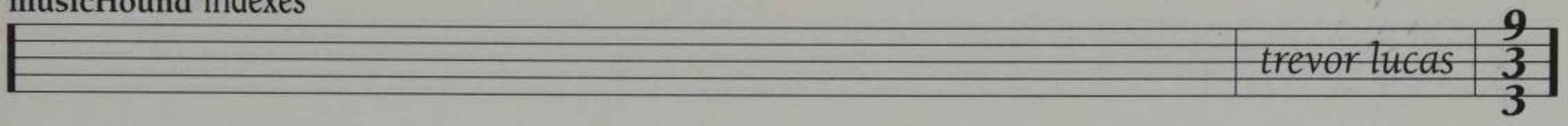
Kuferberg, Tuli *See* The Fugs

Kunkel, Bruce *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Kurvink, Molly *See* Tamarack

Kuykendall, Pete *See* The Country Gentlemen

Kweskin, Jim *See* Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band



LaBour, Fred (Too Slim) *See* Riders in the Sky

Lacy, Edwin *See* Skeeter & the Skidmarks

Lamb, Barbara *See* Ranch Romance

Lamble, Martin *See* Fairport Convention

Landes, Roger *See* Connie Dover/Scartaglen

Landry, Tray *See* Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band

Lane, Shawn *See* Blue Highway

Langford, William *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Lantz, Mike *See* Front Range

Laramie, Jeff *See* Free Hot Lunch!

Larkey, Charles *See* The Fugs

Larson, Glen *See* The Four Preps

LaRue, Custer *See* Baltimore Consort

Lathum, Billy Ray *See* The Dillards; The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys; The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Lauber, Karl *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Lauber, Terry *See* The Brothers Four

Lavin, Christine *See* Four Bitchin' Babes

Lawrence, Trevor *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Lawson, Doyle *See* The Country Gentlemen; J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Lax (Lee), Russell *See* The Oyster Band

Lay, Sam *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Layne, Bert *See* The Skillet Lickers

Layton, Tom *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Le Maistre, Malcolm *See* Incredible String Band

Lea, Mary *See* Bare Necessities

Leadbetter, Phil *See* J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Leadon, Bernie *See* The Eagles; Flying Burrito Brothers; The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Leaf, Christopher *See* Klezmorim

Leahy, Larry *See* The Country Gentlemen

Leary, Vinnie *See* The Fugs

Ledbetter, Huddie *See* Leadbelly/Huddie Ledbetter

Ledet, Tammy *See* Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Lee, Arthur *See* Love

Lee, Frank *See* The Freight Hoppers

Lee, Lorraine *See* Lorraine (Lee) Hammond/Lorraine & Bennett Hammond/Solomon's Seal/Rick & Lorraine Lee

Lee, Richard *See* The Fugs

Lee, Stan *See* Incredible String Band

Leet, Charlie *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Leet, Mary Jo *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Leftwich, Brad *See* Brad Leftwich/Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham

LeJeune, Homer *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Leone, Dan *See* Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Leone, Dom *See* Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Leonino, Terry *See* Magpie

Lesh, Phil *See* Grateful Dead

Leslie, Chris *See* Fairport Convention

LeSurf, Cathy *See* The Oyster Band

Levenson, Dan *See* Boiled Buzzards

Levenson, Eric *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Levy, Bertram *See* Hollow Rock String Band

Levy, Howard *See* Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones

Lewis, Chris *See* The All Girl Boys

Lewis, Earlene *See* Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Lewis, Hambone *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Lewis, James Roy "Pop" *See* The Lewis Family

Lewis, Laurie *See* Good Ol' Persons

Lewis, Miggie *See* The Lewis Family

Lewis, Nada *See* Klezmorim

Lewis, Pauline "Mom" *See* The Lewis Family

Lewis, Roy "Little Roy" Jr. *See* The Lewis Family

Lewis, Travis *See* The Lewis Family

Lewis, Wallace *See* The Lewis Family

Libbea, Gene *See* The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Liberman, Lev *See* Klezmorim

Licht, David *See* The Klezmatics

Liebert, Billy *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Light, Stuart *See* Trapezoid

Lilly, Everett *See* Lilly Brothers/Lilly Brothers & Don Stover

Lilly, Everett A. *See* The Charles River Valley Boys

Lilly, John *See* Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers

Lilly, Michell Burt "Bea" *See* Lilly Brothers/Lilly Brothers & Don Stover

Linden, Mick *See* Skyedance

Lindsey, Pink *See* John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw/Dilly & the Dill Pickles

Lindsey, Raymond "Shorty" *See* John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw/Dilly & the Dill Pickles

Liners, Bill *See* Stoney Lonesome

Liners, Kathleen *See* Stoney Lonesome

Linscott, Kevin *See* Klezmorim

Lipkis, Larry *See* Baltimore Consort

Little, Keith *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Littlefield, Ed Jr. *See* Marley's Ghost

Littleton, Linda *See* Simple Gifts

Loggins, Kenny *See* Loggins & Messina/Kenny Loggins

London, Frank *See* The Klezmatics

Lorimer, Roddy *See* The Waterboys

Lormand, Ward *See* Filé

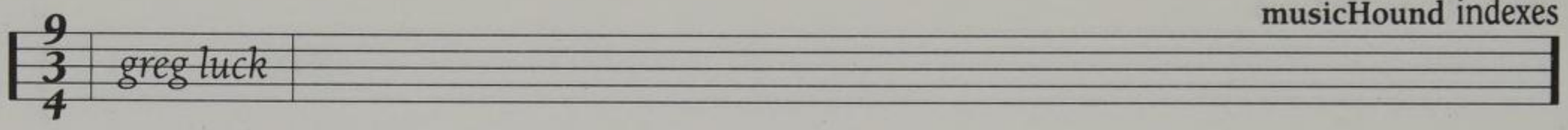
Loughnane, Kathleen *See* Mary Bergin/Dordan

Louvin, Charlie Elzer *See* Louvin Brothers/Charlie Louvin

Louvin, Lonnie Ira *See* Louvin Brothers/Charlie Louvin

Lowe, Jez *See* Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies

Lucas, Trevor *See* Sandy Denny/Fotheringay; Fairport Convention



Luck, Greg *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals; J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Luff, Ian *See* Blowzabella

Lundy, Jerry *See* Country Ham

Lunny, Dónal *See* The Bothy Band; Moving Hearts; Planxty

Lyman, Mel *See* Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Lynam, Ron *See* Front Range

Lynch, Bobby *See* The Dubliners

Lynch, Kirk *See* Connie Dover/Scartaglen

Lyons, Barry *See* Mr. Fox

MacArthur, Quee *See* Mouth Music

MacDonald, Barbara Kooyman *See* Timbuk 3

MacDonald, Calum *See* Runrig

MacDonald, Pat *See* Timbuk 3

MacDonald, Robert *See* Runrig

MacDonald, Rory *See* Runrig

MacGowan, Shane *See* The Pogues

Machlis, Paul *See* Skyedance

Mack, LeRoy *See* The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys

Macken, Niall *See* The Devlins

MacKenzie, Kate *See* Stoney Lonesome

MacKenzie, Wayne *See* Wolfstone

MacKintosh, James *See* Shooglenifty

MacLachlan, Joan *See* Capercaillie

Maclean, Bryan *See* Love

Macleod, Iain *See* Shooglenifty

MacLeod, Iain *See* The House Band

Macleod, Martin *See* Capercaillie

Macmaster, Mary *See* Sileas

MacNeil, Kyle *See* The Barra MacNeils

MacNeil, Lucy *See* The Barra MacNeils

MacNeil, Sheumas *See* The Barra MacNeils

MacNeil, Stewart *See* The Barra MacNeils

Madaio, Steve *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Madden, Joanie *See* Cherish the Ladies

Maddox, Cal *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Maddox, Cliff *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Maddox, Colby *See* Special Consensus

Maddox, Don *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Maddox, Fred *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Maddox, Henry *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Maddox, Rose *See* The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox

Magnie, John *See* The subdudes

Mairs, Vaughan *See* Mando Mafia

Makem, Tommy *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

Makintosh, James *See* Mouth Music

Mallery, Ajay "Grabby-Grab" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Mallory, M.D. *See* Country Ham

Malone, Tommy *See* The subdudes

Mangsen, Cindy *See* Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

Manuel, Richard *See* The Band

Marchany, Randy *See* No Strings Attached

Marrella, John *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Marrone, Marty *See* Special Consensus

Marshall, Mike *See* Psychograss

Marshall, Pete *See* Mando Mafia

Martin, Bill *See* Red Mountain White Trash

Martin, Dewey *See* Buffalo Springfield

Martin, John *See* Ossian

Marxer, Marcy *See* Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

Mason, Bob *See* The Fugs

Mason, Molly *See* Fiddle Fever; Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Massey, Andrew *See* Mr. Fox

Mastriani, Vic *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Masuko, Taki *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Matheson, Colin *See* Ceolbeg

Matheson, David *See* Moxy Früvous

Matheson, Karen *See* Capercaillie

Mattacks, Dave *See* Fairport Convention

Matthews, Iain *See* Fairport Convention

Maugh, Bugsy *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Maund, Peter *See* Skyedance

Maynard, Bobby *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

McCall, Dwight *See* Union Springs

McCann, Jim *See* The Dubliners

McCaslin, Mary *See* Jim Ringer/Jim Ringer & Mary McCaslin

McCauley, Cory *See* Tasso

McCauley, Lisa *See* Magnolia Sisters

McComiskey, Billy *See* Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey; Trian

McConnell, Cathal *See* Boys of the Lough

McCoury, Del *See* The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury

McCoury, Rob *See* The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury

McCoury, Ronnie *See* The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury

McCullough, Henry *See* Sweeney's Men

McCusker, John *See* Battlefield Band

McDade, Butch *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

McDonagh, Brian *See* Dervish

McDonagh, Johnny "Ringo" *See* De Danann/De Dannan

McDonald, Country Joe *See* Country Joe and the Fish

McDonough, Megon *See* Four Bitchin' Babes

McDowell, Wilcil *See* Irish Rovers

McEuen, John *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

McFarlane, Elaine "Spanky" *See* The Mamas & the Papas

McFarlane, Ronn *See* Baltimore Consort

McGee, Kirk *See* Sam & Kirk McGee/The Fruit Jar Drinkers/The Dixieliners

McGee, Sam *See* Sam & Kirk McGee/The Fruit Jar Drinkers/The Dixieliners

McGinley, Martin *See* Dervish

McGinnis, Joe *See* Union Springs

McGlynn, Arty *See* Patrick Street

McGuinn, Roger *See* The Byrds; The Chad Mitchell Trio

McGuire, Barry *See* The New Christy Minstrels

McIntosh, Andra Faye *See* Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

McKenna, Barney *See* The Dubliners

McKenna, Christina "Licorice" *See* Incredible String Band

McKenna, Connie *See* Ceoltoiri

McKeown, Susan *See* Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner

McKeown, Kevin *See* Irish Rovers

McKernan, Ron "Pig Pen" *See* Grateful Dead

McLaughlin, David *See* Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin; Johnson Mountain Boys; The Lynn Morris Band

McMenemy, Jamie *See* Battlefield Band

McMichen, Clayton *See* The Skillet Lickers

McMillan, Buzzby *See* Old Blind Dogs

McMillan, Jerry *See* Lonesome River Band

McNally, James *See* The Pogues

McNeill, Brian *See* Battlefield Band

McPhail, Fran *See* The Voice Squad

McReynolds, Jesse *See* Jim & Jesse

McReynolds, Jim *See* Jim & Jesse

McShee, Jacqui *See* Pentangle

Mead, Whitt *See* Rhythm Rats

Meadows, Joe *See* Country Ham

Meisner, Randy *See* The Eagles

Melton, Barry *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Meltzer, Tom *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Memphis Minnie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Mendelsohn, Barbara *See* Good Ol' Persons

Mensor, Bob *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Menton, Todd *See* Boiled in Lead

Merker, Meghan *See* The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra

Messina, Jim *See* Buffalo Springfield; Loggins & Messina/Kenny Loggins

Metcalfe, Andy *See* Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians

Miles, Chris *See* Northern Lights

Milheim, Keith *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Millar, George *See* Irish Rovers

Millar, Joe *See* Irish Rovers

Millar, Will *See* Irish Rovers

Miller, Drew *See* Boiled in Lead

Miller, Jackie *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Miller, Jo *See* Ranch Romance

Miller, Robin *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Mindel, Valerie *See* Any Old Time String Band

Mitchell, Chad *See* The Chad Mitchell Trio

Mitchell, Shane *See* Dervish

Moloney, Mick *See* The Johnstons

Moloney, Paddy *See* The Chieftains

Monroe, Bill *See* Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Monroe, Charlie *See* Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Monson, Ingrid *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Montana Slim *See* Wilf Carter/Montana Slim

Montoro, Barbara *See* Any Old Time String Band

Moore, Byrd *See* Earl Johnson/Earl Johnson & His Dixie Entertainers/Earl Johnson & His Clodhoppers

Moore, Christy *See* Moving Hearts; Planxty

Moore, Russell *See* IIIrd Tyme Out

Moran, Leo *See* The Saw Doctors

Morand, Grace *See* The Chenille Sisters

Morgan, Pamela *See* Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan

Morgan, Tom *See* The Country Gentlemen; The Country Gentlemen

Morris, Dale *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Morris, Lynn *See* The Lynn Morris Band

Morrison, Claude *See* The Nylons

Morrissett, Paul *See* The Klezmatics

Morton, Robin *See* Boys of the Lough

Mosbaugh, Garth *See* The Nylons

Moscatiello, Lisa *See* The New St. George; Whirligig

Moynihan, Johnny *See* Arcady; Sweeney's Men

Muir, Ann Mayo *See* Bok, Muir & Trickett

Muldaur, Geoffrey *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days; Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Muldaur, Maria *See* The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Mullarky, Pat *See* The Bing Brothers

Mullins, Joe *See* Longview

Mullins, Mike *See* Acousticats

Mullins, Paul *See* Boys from Indiana

Mulvihill, Brendan *See* Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey

Mumford, Eugene *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Munde, Al *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Munro, Donnie *See* Runrig

Murphy, Julie *See* Eddie from Ohio

Myatt, John *See* Mr. Fox

Mydland, Brent *See* Grateful Dead

Naftalin, Mark *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Nallie, Luther *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Nash, Graham *See* Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills

Netsky, Hancus *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Netsky, Steve *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Newman, Chris *See* Boys of the Lough

Newman, Paul *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Newton-Davis, Billy *See* The Nylons

Ní Mhaonaigh, Mairéad *See* Altan

Ní Uallacháin, Eithne *See* Lá Lugh

Nickerson, Charlie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Nicol, Simon *See* Fairport Convention

Nield, David *See* The Nields

Nield, Katryna *See* The Nields

Nield, Nerissa *See* The Nields

Niemann, John *See* Stoney Lonesome

Nolan, Bob *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Norman, Chris *See* Baltimore Consort; Helicon; Skyedance

Norris, Fate *See* The Skillet Lickers

Nunley, Bill *See* The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Nunley, Jim *See* The Chestnut Grove Quartet

ó Brian, Garry *See* Skylark

O'Brien, Andy *See* Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey

O'Brien, Eoghan *See* Déanta

O'Brien, Kate *See* Déanta

O'Brien, Mollie *See* Tim O'Brien/Tim & Mollie O'Brien

O'Brien, Tim *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers; Tim O'Brien/Tim & Mollie O'Brien

O'Bryant, Alan *See* The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Oceans, Lucky *See* Asleep at the Wheel

O'Connell, Robbie *See* The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy

O'Connor, Gerry *See* Lá Lugh; Skylark

O'Connor, Máirtin *See* Skylark

O'Connor, Mark *See* Strength in Numbers

ó Domhnaill, Micheál *See* Nightnoise

O'Hara, Jamie *See* Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes

O'Leary, Christy *See* Boys of the Lough

Oliver, Kristine *See* Sweethearts of the Rodeo

Olsen, Andy *See* Stoney Lonesome

Olson, Eric *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

O' Maonlai, Liam *See* Hothouse Flowers

O'Neill, Eoin *See* Moving Hearts

Oorts, Paul *See* Simple Gifts

O'Riordan, Cait *See* The Pogues

Osborne, Bobby *See* The Osborne Brothers

Osborne, Hoyle *See* Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne

Osborne, Sonny *See* The Osborne Brothers

Oskay, Billy *See* Nightnoise

Oss, Cath *See* Cordelia's Dad

O'Sullivan, Jerry *See* Whirligig

O'Toole, Bill *See* Blowzabella

Overton, Aaron Chauncey "A.C." *See* Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Owen, Blanton *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Owen, Malcolm *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Owen, Vickie *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Owens, Buck *See* The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Owens, Henry *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Padgett, Woody *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Pagter, Carl *See* Country Ham

Pahinui, Cyril *See* The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui

Pahinui, James "Bla" *See* The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui

Pahinui, Martin *See* The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui

Paine, John *See* The Brothers Four

Paley, Tom *See* The New Lost City Ramblers

Palmer, Bruce *See* Buffalo Springfield

Palmer, Clive *See* Incredible String Band

Palmer, Sam *See* Blowzabella

Para, Dave *See* Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Parker, Christopher *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Parker, Ebin *See* Ebin-Rose

Parker, Ian *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Parket, Johnnie *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Parkinson, Chris *See* The House Band

Parks, Danny *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Parks, Walter *See* The Nudes

Parmley, David *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Parmley, Don *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Parsons, Gene *See* The Byrds; Flying Burrito Brothers

Parsons, Gram *See* The Byrds; Flying Burrito Brothers

Paterson, Rod *See* Ceolbeg

Paton, Caroline *See* Sandy & Caroline Paton

Paton, Sandy *See* Sandy & Caroline Paton

Paulin, Roderick "Claude" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Paulsen, Pat *See* Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen

Pavao, Dennis *See* Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana

Peak, Leandra *See* Neal & Leandra

Pearson, Mark *See* The Brothers Four

Pearson, Tony *See* The Flatlanders

Pedersen, Herb *See* The Dillards; The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Peek, Dan *See* America

Pegg, Bob *See* Mr. Fox

Pegg, Carole *See* Mr. Fox

Pegg, Dave *See* Fairport Convention

Perdue, Kelly *See* Mando Mafia

Perkins, Al *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Perkins, Larry *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Perkins, Wilson "Lefty" *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Perrodin, Gabriel Pandy Jr. *See* Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin'

Perrotta, Neno *See* Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Perry, Brendan *See* Dead Can Dance

Perry, Cliff *See* Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss

Perry, Dale *See* Lonesome River Band

Perryman, Lloyd *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Petruccelli, Rico *See* The New St. George

Petteway, Al *See* The New St. George

Phelan, Mike *See* Marley's Ghost

Phillips, Barry *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

Phillips, Diana *See* Special Consensus

Phillips, Janis Lewis *See* The Lewis Family

Phillips, John *See* The Mamas & the Papas

Phillips, Lewis *See* The Lewis Family

Phillips, Mackenzie *See* The Mamas & the Papas

Phillips, Michelle *See* The Mamas & the Papas

Phillips, Todd *See* Good Ol' Persons; Psychograss

Piazza, Sammy *See* Hot Tuna

Pierce, Charlie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Piggot, Charlie *See* De Danann/De Dannan

Piggott, Mike *See* Pentangle

Pilnick, Paul *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Pine, Ken *See* The Fugs

Pitt, Bill *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Pittman, Tom *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Plehn, Don *See* Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Podell, Art *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Polk, Charlie *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Pollard, Randy *See* Union Springs

Ponder, Ed *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Pons, Jim *See* The Leaves

Poole, Charlie *See* Charlie Poole/Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers

Porter, Ted *See* Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Portman-Smith, Nigel *See* Pentangle

Potter, Terry *See* Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band

Pottier, Steve *See* Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Poullard, Danny *See* California Cajun Orchestra

Powell, Dirk *See* Balfa Toujours

Preston, Leroy *See* Asleep at the Wheel

Price, Kenny *See* The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Prichard, Lewis *See* Mando Mafia

Prior, Maddy *See* Steeleye Span

Prosser, Alan *See* The Oyster Band

Puckett, Riley *See* The Skillet Lickers

Putnam, Kit *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Pyrtle, Keith *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Quesenberry, Jake *See* Country Ham

Quinton, Derek *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Rabson, Ann *See* Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Rabson, Miriam *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Rafferty, Gerry *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Raine, Bethany *See* Good Ol' Persons

Rainwater, Cedric *See* Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Rainwater, Dave *See* Piney Creek Weasels

Rainwater, Lonnie *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Ramey, Ben *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Ramos, Larry *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Ranger Doug (Douglas B. Green) *See* Riders in the Sky

Ranken, Andrew *See* The Pogues

Rankin, Carol Jean "Cookie" *See* The Rankin Family

Rankin, Heather *See* The Rankin Family

Rankin, Jimmy *See* The Rankin Family

Rankin, John Morris *See* The Rankin Family

Rankin, Raylene *See* The Rankin Family

Raskin, John *See* Klezmorim

Ratshin, Andrew *See* Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai

Ray, "Snaker" Dave *See* Koerner, Ray & Glover

Ray, Amy *See* Indigo Girls

Read, Bob *See* Trapezoid

Reagon, Bernice Johnson *See* Sweet Honey in the Rock

Reed, Mitchell *See* Tasso

Reed, Roger *See* The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Reid, Alan *See* Battlefield Band

Reid, Ellen *See* Crash Test Dummies

Reid, Lou *See* The Seldom Scene

Reidy, Jim *See* The Chicken Chokers; Primitive Characters

Reilly, Paddy *See* The Dubliners

Reiner, Robert *See* The Leaves

Reischman, John *See* Good Ol' Persons

Reisler, Paul *See* Trapezoid

Reiss, Scott *See* Hesperus

Reitz, Marv *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Renbourn, John *See* Pentangle

Reno, Don *See* Don Reno & Red Smiley

Resnick, Boo *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Reynolds, Archie *See* The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Reynolds, John *See* Irish Rovers

Reynolds, Nick *See* The Kingston Trio

Rhodes, Kenny *See* The Foremen

Rice, Dave *See* Boiled Buzzards

Rice, Joseph *See* The Fairfield Four

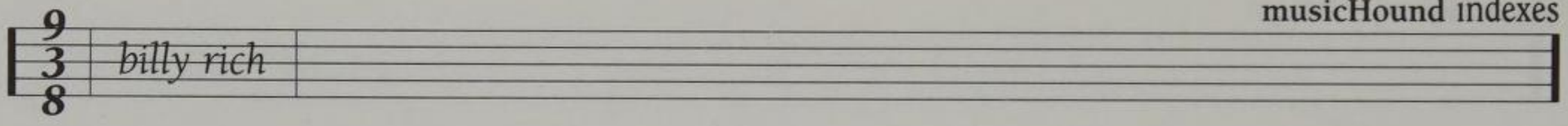
Rice, Larry *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Rice, Ron *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Rice, Syl *See* The Flatlanders

Rice, Tony *See* Norman Blake and Tony Rice; J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South; Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Rice, Wyatt *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass



Rich, Billy *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Richards, Rusty *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Richards, Sue *See* Ceoltoiri; Ensemble Galilei

Richardson, Dave *See* Boys of the Lough

Richardson, "Jammin'" Al *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Richmond, Fritz *See* The Charles River Valley Boys; Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Riddick, Clyde *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Rigler, Eric *See* Skyedance

Rigsby, Don *See* Lonesome River Band; Longview

Riley, Steve *See* Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Ringer, Jim *See* Jim Ringer/Jim Ringer & Mary McCaslin

Rinzler, Ralph *See* The Greenbriar Boys

Rioux, Rocky *See* Piney Creek Weasels

Ritter, Leslie *See* Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon

Rizzetta, Sam *See* Trapezoid

Robbins, Larry *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Roberts, Brad *See* Crash Test Dummies

Roberts, Dan *See* Crash Test Dummies

Roberts, Joe *See* The Bing Brothers

Roberts, John *See* John Roberts & Tony Barrand

Roberts, Rick *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Robertson, Robbie *See* The Band

Robie, Milton *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Robinson, Arnold *See* The Nylons

Robinson, Dave *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Robinson, Robby "Mann" *See* Zydeco Force

Robinson, Tom *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Roche, Maggie *See* The Roches

Roche, Suzzy *See* The Roches

Roche, Terre *See* The Roches

Roe, Ray *See* The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Rogers, Kenny *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Romanoff, Chuck *See* Schooner Fare

Romanoff, Steve *See* Schooner Fare

Roper, Bruce *See* Sons of the Never Wrong

Rose, Billy *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Rose, Eric *See* The New St. George

Rose, Saul *See* Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt

Rosenthal, Phil *See* The Seldom Scene

Ross, Billy *See* Ossian

Rossbach, John *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Rothfield (Thompson), Suzy *See* Any Old Time String Band, Klezmorim

Rothman, Sandy *See* Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Rouse, Don *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Rowan, Michaela *See* Mouth Music

Rowan, Peter *See* Muleskinner

Rowe, Tom *See* Schooner Fare

Rowland, Bruce *See* Fairport Convention

Rubin, Mark *See* Bad Livers

Ruffins, Kermit *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Russell, Alistair *See* Battlefield Band

Russell, Bonnie *See* Russell Family

Russell, Dan *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Russell, Roscoe *See* Russell Family

Russell, Roy *See* Russell Family

Rutstein, Sonia *See* disappear fear

Ryan, Cathie *See* Cherish the Ladies

Ryan, Jimmy *See* Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies

Ryan, Mark *See* Country Joe and the Fish

Sackett, Dick *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Saco, Javier Perez *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Saint, Stevie *See* Wolfstone

Salazar, Phil *See* Acousticats

Saliers, Emily *See* Indigo Girls

Salley, Roly *See* The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Sanborn, David *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Sandefer, Martha *See* Trapezoid

Sanders, Bev *See* Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies

Sanders, Ed *See* The Fugs

Sanders, Markie *See* Good Ol' Persons

Sanders, Ric *See* Fairport Convention

Sandmel, Ben *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Saperstone, Debby *See* Rude Girls

Sass, Jon *See* Hans Theessink/Blue Groove

Savoy, Ann *See* Magnolia Sisters; Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Savoy, Marc *See* The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa; Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Sawtelle, Charles *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Saxon, Steve *See* Klezmorim

Sayles, Jim *See* Country Ham

Scap, Mike *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Scarlet, Will *See* Hot Tuna

Schaefer, Robbie *See* Eddie from Ohio

Schmidt, Bill *See* The Double Decker String Band

Schmit, Timothy B. *See* The Eagles

Schwab, Jacqueline *See* Bare Necessities

Schwarz, Peter *See* Balfa Toujours; Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Schwarz, Tracy *See* The New Lost City Ramblers; Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker; Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio; Strange Creek Singers

Schwimmer, Peter *See* Front Range

Scott, Mike *See* The Waterboys

Scruggs, Earl *See* Flatt & Scruggs; Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Seals, Jim *See* Seals & Crofts

Sebastian, John *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Seddon, Patsy *See* Sileas

Seeger, Mike *See* The New Lost City Ramblers; Strange Creek Singers

Senauke, Alan *See* California Cajun Orchestra

Senders, Stefan *See* The Chicken Chokers

Settles, Walter *See* The Fairfield Four

Shabazz, Solomon "Nine" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Shadd, Allen *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Shade, Will *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Shane, Bob *See* The Kingston Trio

Shankerman, Janet *See* Incredible String Band

Shannon, Sharon *See* The Waterboys

Shaw, Charlie *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Shaw, Donald *See* Capercaillie

Shaw, Lauchlin *See* Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Sheahan, John *See* The Dubliners

Shearin, Kevin *See* Filé

Shelasky, Paul *See* Good Ol' Persons

Shelasky, Sue *See* Good Ol' Persons

Shelor, Sammy *See* Lonesome River Band

Shezbie, Derrick "Khabuky" *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Shove, Patty *See* Stoney Lonesome

Shrader, Erin *See* Ensemble Galilei

Shreve, Floyd *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Siggins, Bob *See* The Charles River Valley Boys; Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Siggins, Sam *See* California Cajun Orchestra

Signer, Ethan *See* The Charles River Valley Boys

Silvius, Paul *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Simon, Paul *See* Simon & Garfunkel

Simpkins, Ronnie *See* The Seldom Scene

Simpson, Bland *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Simpson, Jessica Ruby *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

Simpson, Martin *See* Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels

Simpson, Rose *See* Incredible String Band

Sinclair, Alex *See* Tamarack

Sinnott, Declan *See* Moving Hearts

Sizemore, Herschel *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Skaggs, Ricky *See* Boone Creek; J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Skelton, John *See* The House Band

Sklamberg, Lorin *See* The Klezmatics

Skuse, David *See* Klezmorim

Sloane, Bobby *See* The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys

Slye, Leonard *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Smiley, Red *See* Don Reno & Red Smiley

Smillie, Phil *See* Tannahill Weavers

Smith, Chip *See* Primitive Characters

Smith, Chip Taylor *See* The Chicken Chokers

Smith, Debi *See* Four Bitchin' Babes; Smith Sisters/Debi Smith

Smith, Grant *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Smith, Kenny *See* Lonesome River Band

Smith, Robin *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Smith, Russell *See* The Amazing Rhythm Aces

Smith, Tim *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Smothers, Dick *See* Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen

Smothers, Smokey *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Smothers, Tom *See* Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen

Snodderly, Ed *See* The Brother Boys

Snyder, Stephen *See* Bright Morning Star

Sommerville, David *See* The Four Preps

Sonnier, Lennis *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Southards, Wayne *See* Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle

Sparks, Randy *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Spencer, Hilary *See* Artisan

Spencer, Mark *See* Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies

Spencer, Tim *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Spillane, Davy *See* Moving Hearts

Spriggins, Deuce *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Sproule, Daithi *See* Trian

St. Julien, Gerard Jr. *See* Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers

Stacy, Spider *See* The Pogues

Stafford, Tim *See* Blue Highway

Stahl, Ilene *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Stahl, Jeanie *See* Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring

Stamper, Tom *See* Klezmorim

Stampfel, Peter *See* The Fugs; The Holy Modal Rounders

Standun, Dearbhaill *See* Mary Bergin/Dordan

Stanley, Carter *See* The Stanley Brothers

Stanley, Ralph *See* Ralph Stanley/Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys; The Stanley Brothers

Stark, Sandy *See* The Chicken Chokers; Primitive Characters

Starling, John *See* The Seldom Scene

Stearns, Rich *See* The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies

Stecher, Jody *See* Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin

Steele, Andrew *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Steele, Davy *See* Battlefield Band; Ceolbeg

Steeler, Bob *See* Hot Tuna

Steffey, Adam *See* Lonesome River Band

Stein, Andy *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Stemple, Adam *See* Boiled in Lead

Stenshoel, Dave *See* Boiled in Lead

Stephen, Amy *See* Mad Pudding

Stephens, Liz *See* Boiled Buzzards

Stephenson, Larry *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Stevens, Michael *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Stevens, Peter *See* Filé

940 vol stevens

Stevens, Vol *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Steward, Reginald *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Stewart, Andy M. *See* Silly Wizard

Stewart, Harvey *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Stewart, John *See* The Kingston Trio

Stewart, Ron *See* The Lynn Morris Band

Stewart, Wendy *See* Ceolbeg

Stills, Stephen *See* Buffalo Springfield; Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills

Stinson, Henry *See* Sunshine Skiffle Band

Stirratt, John *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Stockard, Ocie *See* Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Stokes, JoAnn "Claire June" *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Stokes, Lowe *See* The Skillet Lickers

Stoneman, Ernest *See* Ernest Stoneman/The Stoneman Family

Stoneman, Scott *See* The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys

Stookey, Noel "Paul" *See* Peter, Paul & Mary

Stover, Don *See* Lilly Brothers & Don Stover

Stover, Evan *See* Fiddle Fever

Stradling, Barnaby *See* Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt

Street, Grant *See* Laurie Lewis & Grant Street

Strong, Tim *See* Union Springs

Strother, Paul *See* The Chicken Chokers; Primitive Characters

Stuart, Chad *See* Chad & Jeremy

Stuart, Michael *See* Love

Stuart, Mindy *See* Rooftop Singers

Stubbs, Eddie *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Surgeoner, Billy *See* Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies

Surgeoner, Bob *See* Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies

Surrick, Carolyn Anderson *See* Ensemble Galilei

Sutherland, Pete *See* Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars

Sutphin, Paul *See* The Camp Creek Boys

Svanoe, Bill *See* Rooftop Singers

Svigals, Alicia *See* The Klezmatics

Swan, Martin *See* Mouth Music

Swarbrick, Dave *See* Fairport Convention

Swayne, Jon *See* Blowzabella

Sweeney, Paul *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Sykes, Ernie *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Tamsula, Mark *See* Boiled Buzzards

Tarlton, Jimmie *See* Darby and Tarlton

Taylor, Brian "Dolphin" *See* Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27

Taylor, Chris *See* The Oyster Band

Taylor, Gary *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Taylor, Gil *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Taylor, Lynne *See* Rooftop Singers

Taylor, Marcia *See* Bright Morning Star

Taylor, Wayne *See* Blue Highway

Telfer, Ian *See* The Oyster Band

Terry, Kenneth *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Tharp, Al *See* Beausoleil

Theessink, Hans *See* Hans Theessink/Blue Groove

Thelfa, Ali *See* Hans Theessink/Blue Groove

Theo, Lisa *See* Ranch Romance

Thistlethwaite, Anthony *See* The Waterboys

Thomas, Bob *See* No Strings Attached

Thomas, Jason *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Thomas, Linda *See* Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey

Thomas, Neil *See* Five Chinese Brothers

Thomas, Raymond *See* Zydeco Force

Thomas, Suzanne *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Thomason, Ron *See* Dry Branch Fire Squad

Thompson, Bobbie *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band; Hollow Rock String Band

Thompson, Danny *See* Pentangle

Thompson, Eric *See* California Cajun Orchestra; Eric & Suzy Thompson

Thompson, Les *See* The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Thompson, Linda *See* Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson

Thompson, Richard *See* Fairport Convention; Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson

Thompson, Suzy *See* California Cajun Orchestra; Eric & Suzy Thompson

Thompson, Tommy *See* Hollow Rock String Band; Red Clay Ramblers

Thorburn, Andy *See* Ceolbeg

Thornton, Donald *See* Klezmorim

Thurman, Lynn Cox *See* The Cox Family

Tichy, John *See* Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Tidwell, Bob *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Timmins, Margo *See* Cowboy Junkies

Timmins, Michael *See* Cowboy Junkies

Timmins, Peter *See* Cowboy Junkies

Too Slim (Fred LaBour) *See* Riders in the Sky

Touchet, Wallace *See* Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys

Trainor, Kevin *See* Five Chinese Brothers

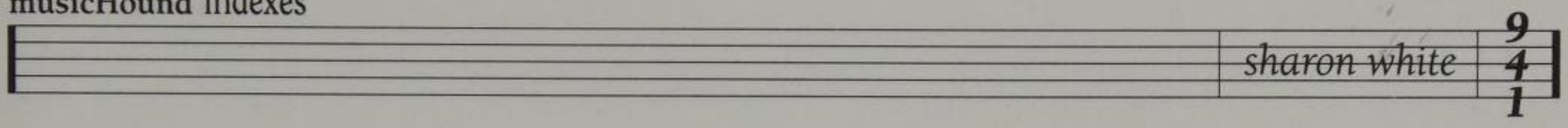
Traum, Artie *See* Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum; The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Traum, Happy *See* Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum; The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Travers, Fred *See* The Seldom Scene

Travers, Mary *See* Peter, Paul & Mary

Treat, Clarence *See* The New Christy Minstrels



Trickett, Ed *See* Bok, Muir & Trickett

Trietsch, Ken "Rudy" *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Trietsch, Paul "Hezzie" *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Trimble, Annie *See* Boiled Buzzards

Trischka, Tony *See* Psychograss

Tucker, James *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Tuckett, Jerry *See* Country Ham

Tweedy, Jeff *See* Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt

Tyminski, Dan *See* Lonesome River Band

Tyson, Ian *See* Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Fricker Tyson

Tyson, Sylvia Fricker *See* Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Fricker Tyson

Ulrich, Peter *See* Dead Can Dance

Underwood, Richard *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Ungar, Jay *See* Fiddle Fever; Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Val, Joe *See* The Charles River Valley Boys; Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Valdes, Tim *See* Trapezoid

Vallely, Cillian *See* Whirligig

Van Meter, Sally *See* Good Ol' Persons

Vasile, Bob *See* Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude

Verret, Errol *See* Basin Brothers; Beausoleil

Viator, Deborah Helen *See* Magnolia Sisters

Vickers, Bernie *See* The Watersons

Vidrine, Jane *See* Magnolia Sisters

Vidrine, Randy *See* Tasso

Vignaud, Robert *See* Beausoleil

Vigour, Pete *See* Trapezoid

Vincson, Walter *See* Mississippi Sheiks

Voss, Jane *See* Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne

Wakefield, Frank *See* The Greenbriar Boys

Walker, Nancy *See* Sons of the Never Wrong

Wallace, Bill *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Waller, Charlie *See* The Country Gentlemen

Waller, Gordon *See* Peter & Gordon

Wallin, Doug *See* Doug & Jack Wallin

Wallin, Jack *See* Doug & Jack Wallin

Wallinger, Karl *See* The Waterboys

Walsh, Joe *See* The Eagles

Walters, Neal *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Ward, Kendra *See* Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

Ward, Otto "Gabe" *See* The Hoosier Hot Shots

Ware, Billy *See* Beausoleil

Warnock, Clódagh *See* Déanta

Warren, Dale *See* Sons of the Pioneers

Warschauer, Jeff *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Wash, Ralph *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Washart, Peter *See* Runrig

Waters, Wilson *See* The Fairfield Four

Waterson, Elaine (Lal) *See* The Watersons

Waterson, Mike *See* The Watersons

Waterson, Norma *See* Waterson:Carthy; The Watersons

Waterson, Rachel *See* The Watersons

Watkin, Ted *See* Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Watkins, Allen *See* Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass

Watkins, Julius *See* The Fugs

Watson, Doc *See* Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson

Watson, Jim *See* Red Clay Ramblers

Watson, Merle *See* Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson

Wayne, Dallas *See* Special Consensus

Weaver, Ken *See* The Fugs

Webb, Darrell *See* J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Webb, Dean *See* The Dillards

Webb, Gale *See* The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Webb, Jim *See* Kentucky Standard Band

Weber, Steve *See* The Fugs; The Holy Modal Rounders

Webster, Duane *See* Front Range

Weider, Jim *See* The Band

Weil, Beth *See* Good Ol' Persons

Weinberger, Marvin *See* Klezmer Conservatory Band

Weiner, Sarah *See* Ensemble Galilei

Weir, Bob *See* Grateful Dead

Weisberger, Jon *See* Union Springs

Weissberg, Eric *See* The Greenbriar Boys

Weldon, Will *See* Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band

Wells, Andi *See* Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt

Werner, Joe *See* Hackberry Ramblers

Wernick, Pete *See* Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers

Werts, Diana *See* The Plaid Family

Werts, Kelly *See* The Plaid Family

Wertz, Kenny *See* Flying Burrito Brothers

Wesson, Steve *See* The Flatlanders

West, Gary *See* Ceolbeg

Wheetman, Dan *See* Marley's Ghost

Whitaker, Gabe *See* The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

White, Anne Louise *See* Trapezoid

White, Bob *See* Country Ham

White, Buck *See* The Whites/Buck White & the Down Home Folks

White, Cheryl *See* The Whites/Buck White & the Down Home Folks

White, Clarence *See* The Byrds; The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys; Muleskinner

White, Eric *See* The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys

White, Helen *See* Farmer's Daughters

White, Ralph *See* Bad Livers

White, Roland *See* The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys; The Nashville Bluegrass Band

White, Sharon *See* The Whites/Buck White & the Down Home Folks

Whitley, Keith *See* J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South

Whitney, Doug *See* The Foremen

Whitstein, Charles *See* The Whitstein Brothers

Whitstein, Robert *See* The Whitstein Brothers

Whitted, Dennis *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Whittemore, Tim *See* Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Wickham, Steve *See* The Waterboys

Wicklund, Brian *See* Stoney Lonesome

Wig, Chris *See* Boiled Buzzards

Wiggins, Phil *See* Cephas & Wiggins

Wilborn, Marshall *See* Longview; The Lynn Morris Band

Wilcox, Jon *See* Marley's Ghost

Wiley, Derek *See* The ReBirth Brass Band

Willborn, Marshall *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Williams, Kirk *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Williams, Linda *See* Robin & Linda Williams

Williams, Nathan *See* Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas/Nathan Williams

Williams, Polly Lewis *See* The Lewis Family

Williams, Robin *See* Robin & Linda Williams

Williams, Roger *See* Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Williams, Tony *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Williamson, Robin *See* Incredible String Band

Wilson, Cam *See* Mad Pudding

Wilson, Dan *See* The Bing Brothers

Wilson, David *See* Kentucky Standard Band

Wilson, Orlandus *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Wilson, Philip *See* Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days

Wilson, Tim *See* Austin Lounge Lizards

Wimmer, Kevin *See* Balfa Toujours; Good Ol' Persons

Wincott, Terry *See* Amazing Blondel

Windsor, Morris *See* Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians

Winter, Jonah *See* Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Winters, Stephanie *See* The Nudes

Wintour, Dave *See* Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty

Wise, Chubby *See* Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys

Wishnefsky, Brian *See* Klezmorim

Wisor, Jeff *See* Country Ham

Wolf, Bill *See* The Fugs

Wolf, Eugene *See* The Brother Boys

Wolfe, Bruno *See* Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Wood, Heather *See* Young Tradition

Wood, Royston *See* Young Tradition

Woods, Gay *See* Steeleye Span

Woods, Nick *See* The New Christy Minstrels

Woods, Terry *See* The Pogues; Steeleye Span; Sweeney's Men

Wooten, Roy "Future Man" *See* Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones

Wooten, Victor Lemonte *See* Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones

Wright, Clyde *See* Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet

Wright, Johnnie *See* Johnnie & Jack

Wright, Norman *See* The Bluegrass Cardinals

Yager, Earl *See* Johnson Mountain Boys

Yanovsky, Zal *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Yarbrough, Glenn *See* The Limeliters

Yarrow, Peter *See* Peter, Paul & Mary

Yeaton, Paul *See* Trapezoid

Yellin, Bob *See* The Greenbriar Boys

Yester, Jerry *See* Lovin' Spoonful

Yester, Lena *See* Lovin' Spoonful

York, John *See* The Byrds

Young, Jimmy *See* The House Band

Young, Keith *See* Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Young, Neil *See* Buffalo Springfield; Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills

Young, Victoria *See* Dick Harrington & Victoria Young

Youngson, Mop *See* Wolfstone

Zaffron, Dick *See* Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Zavala, Catherine *See* The Mollys

Zimmerman, Roy *See* The Foremen

Zwigoff, Terry *See* The Cheap Suit Serenaders

musicHound producer index

The Producer Index lists the albums in MusicHound Folk *that have a producer noted for them. Under each producer's name is the name of the artist or group in whose entry the album can be found, followed by the album title. If an album is produced by more than one individual/group, the album name will be listed separately under the names of each of the producers. (Note: The entry in which the album can be found is not necessarily that of the artist or group whose album it is. The album could be a compilation album, a film soundtrack, an album on which the artist or group appears as a guest, etc. Consult the artist or group's entry for specific information.)*

Herb Abrahamson
Blind Willie McTell, *Atlanta 12 String*

Rick Abrams
Piney Creek Weasels, *Squirrel Heads and Gravy*

Mark Abramson
Michael Bloomfield, *East-West*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *East-West*
Judy Collins, *Fifth Album*
Judy Collins, *In My Life*
Judy Collins, *Judy Collins #3*
Judy Collins, *Whales & Nightingales*
Judy Collins, *Wildflowers*
Phil Ochs, *In Concert*

William Ackerman
Scott Cossu, *A Windham Hill Retrospective*
Malcolm Dalglish, *Jogging the Memory*
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit, *Windham Hill Guitar Sampler*
John Gorka, *Jack's Crows*
Michael Hedges, *Breakfast in the Field*
Patty Larkin, *Tango*

John Adams
Artisan, *Breathing Space*

Nancy Adams
Morgan Sexton, *Shady Grove*

Paul Adams
Frankie Armstrong, *Till the Grass O'ergrew the Corn*
A.L. Lloyd, *Classic A.L. Lloyd*
Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies, *Tenterhooks*

Terry Adams
Boozoo Chavis, *Boozoo Chavis*

Steve Addabbo
Eric Andersen, *Ghosts Upon the Road*
Shawn Colvin, *Steady On*
David Massengill, *Coming up for Air*
Richard Shindell, *Sparrows Point*
Suzanne Vega, *Solitude Standing*
Suzanne Vega, *Suzanne Vega*

Lou Adler
Carole King, *A Natural Woman: The Ode Collection 1968–1976*
Carole King, *Tapestry*

Rich Adler
Claire Lynch/The Front Porch String Band, *Silver & Gold*
David Mallett, *Parallel Lives*

John Aeto
Sonny Chillingworth, *Sonny*

Michael Aharon
Solas, *When Juniper Sleeps*

Brian Ahern
Emmylou Harris, *Cimarron*
Emmylou Harris, *Last Date*
Emmylou Harris, *Roses in the Snow*
George Jones, *The Bradley Barn Sessions*

Caroline Aiken
Caroline Aiken, *Live at the Attic*
Caroline Aiken, *Live Bait*

Howard and Ron Albert
Harry Chapin, *Remember When the Music*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Slippin' Away*

Ray Alden
Balfa Toujours, *The American Fogies, Volume 1*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *The American Fogies, Vol. 1*
Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers, *Offshore Blues and Zydeco*
Tommy Jarrell, *Tommy & Fred: Best Fiddle-Banjo Duets Played by Tommy Jarrell & Fred Cockerham*
Horace Trahan, *The American Fogies, Volume I*

Mary Katherine Aldin
Richard and Mimi Fariña/Mimi Fariña, *Folk Music at Newport, Part 1*
The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys, *Long Journey Home*

The Kingston Trio, *Live at Newport*
Carol McComb, *Folk Music Newport Part One*
The New Lost City Ramblers, *The New Lost City Ramblers & Friends*
Rooftop Singers, *The Best of the Rooftop Singers*
Eric Von Schmidt, *Blues with a Feeling, Part Two*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Doc Watson: The Vanguard Years*

Kavichandran Alexander
Ry Cooder, *A Meeting by the River*
Taj Mahal, *Mumtaz Mahal*

Morten Alfred
The American Cafe Orchestra, *Egyptian Dominoes*

Pat Alger
Pat Alger, *True Love & Other Short Stories*

Johnnie Allen
Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon, *Cleoma B. Falcon: A Cajun Music Classic*

Terry Allen
Terry Allen, *Amerasia*
Terry Allen, *Bloodlines*
Terry Allen, *Human Remains*
Terry Allen, *Lubbock (on Everything)*
Terry Allen, *Songs from Chippy*

Kent Allyn
Cosy Sheridan, *Quietly Led*
Cosy Sheridan, *Saturn Return*

Peter Alsop
Peter Alsop, *Chris Moos Holidays*
Peter Alsop, *Uniforms*
Peter Alsop, *Wha'D'Ya Wanna Do?*

Altan
Altan, *Blackwater*
Altan, *Island Angel*
Altan, *Runaway Sunday*

Billy Altman
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *I Hear Music in the Air!*
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *Travelin' Shoes*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Are You from Dixie? Great Country Brother Teams of the 1930s*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys: Muleskinner Blues*
Blind Alfred Reed, *Something Got a Hold of Me: A Treasury of Sacred Music*

Dave Alvin
Dave Alvin, *Blue Blvd*
Dave Alvin, *Museum of Heart*
Rosie Flores, *Tulare Dust*

Amazing Blondel
Amazing Blondel, *Restoration*

Eric "Roscoe" Ambel
Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies, *The Crying Tree*
Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies, *The Knitter*

The Amidons
The Amidons, *This Longest Night—Songs of Christmas, Chanukah, and the Winter Solstice*

David Anderle
Judy Collins, *Who Knows Where the Time Goes*

Chris Andersen
Magpie, *Spoken in Love*

Eric Andersen
Eric Andersen, *Blue River*
Eric Andersen, *Ghosts Upon the Road*

Dale Anderson
Ani DiFranco, *Ani DiFranco*

Greg Anderson
James Keane, *With Friends Like These*
Whirligig, *The Wheel*

Pete Anderson
Rosie Flores, *A Honky Tonk Reprise*
Steve Forbert, *The American in Me*
Michelle Shocked, *Captain Swing*
Michelle Shocked, *Short Sharp Shocked*

Molly Andrews
Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews, *American Traditional*

Darol Anger
Psychograss, *Like Minds*
Psychograss, *Psychograss*

David Anthony
Rooftop Singers, *Border Town at Midnight*

Scott Anthony
John Pinamonti, *Tragico Magico*

Clifford Antone
James Cotton, *Mighty Long Time*

Philip Antoniades
Barbara Kessler, *Stranger to This Land*

Scott Appel
Scott Appel, *Glassfinger*
Scott Appel, *Nine of Swords*

Lawrence Ardoin
Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin', *Lick It Up!*

Scott Ardoin
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Now and Then*

Rod Argent
Nanci Griffith, *Late Night Grande Hotel*

Joan Armatrading
Joan Armatrading, *Hearts and Flowers*

Frankie Armstrong
Frankie Armstrong, *Till the Grass O'ergrew the Corn*

Gary Arnold
Kate Jacobs, *What about Regret*

Greg Artzner
Magpie, *Circle of Life*
Magpie, *Seed on the Prairie*

Moses Asch
Leadbelly/Huddie Ledbetter, *The Original Asch Recordings*
The New Lost City Ramblers, *The New Lost City Ramblers, the Early Years, 1958–1962*

Karen Ashbrook
Karen Ashbrook, *Knock on the Door*

Roy Ashby
Ceolbeg, *An Unfair Dance*

Peter Asher
Linda Ronstadt, *Hasten down the Wind*
Linda Ronstadt, *Heart like a Wheel*
Linda Ronstadt, *Mad Love*
Linda Ronstadt, *Prisoner in Disguise*
James Taylor, *James Taylor*
James Taylor, *J.T.*
James Taylor, *Sweet Baby James*

Johan Asherton
Scott Appel, *Songwriter*

Audie Ashworth
J.J. Cale, *Five*
J.J. Cale, *Naturally . . . J.J. Cale*
J.J. Cale, *Special Edition*

Association Culture et Musique Irlandaises
Frankie Gavin, *Irlande*

Chet Atkins
Chet Atkins, *Galloping Guitar: The Early Years*
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack*
Garrison Keillor, *Garrison Keillor & the Hopeful Gospel Quartet*

Dawn Atkinson
Scott Cossu, *A Windham Hill Retrospective*

Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit, *Windham Hill Guitar Sampler*
John Gorka, *Jack's Crows*
Nightnoise, *Shadow of Time*

Atwater-Donnelly
Atwater-Donnelly, *Simple Sentences*
Atwater-Donnelly, *Where the Wild Birds Do Whistle*

Lynn August
Lynn August, *Lynn August: Creole Cruiser*

Seth Austen
Carrie Crompton, *Bach Dances*
Carrie Crompton, *Come Let Us Be Merry*
Carrie Crompton, *Girls and Boys, Come Out to Play*
Madeline MacNeil, *All through the Night*
Madeline MacNeil, *Heart's Ease*
Madeline MacNeil, *Lone Wild Bird*
Madeline MacNeil, *A Place Apart*
Madeline MacNeil, *Soon It's Going to Rain*
Simple Gifts, *Other Places, Other Times*

James Austin
Mose Allison, *Allison Wonderland: The Mose Allison Anthology*
Clifton Chenier, *Zydeco Dynamite: The Clifton Chenier Anthology*
Lefty Frizzell, *The Best of Lefty Frizzell*
John Lee Hooker, *The Ultimate Collection*
Leo Kottke, *The Leo Kottke Anthology*
Merle Travis, *Best of Merle Travis*
Bob Wills, *Anthology, 1935–73*

Judy Austin
Judy Austin, *Country Radio*
Judy Austin, *Pickles and Wine*

Ron Bach
Carol Thompson, *Wild Swans*

Judi Bachrach
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon, *Flyin' on the Wings of Heaven*

Bad Livers
Bad Livers, *The Golden Years*

Duck Baker
Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews, *American Traditional*

Butch Baldassari
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Old Town*
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *A Touch of the Past*

Jeff Balding
Janis Ian, *Breaking Silence*

Balfa Toujours
Balfa Toujours, *A Vielle Terre Haute*

Matt Balitsaris
Frank Christian, *From My Hands*
Frank Christian, *Somebody's Got to Do It*

Earl Ball
Jo-El Sonnier, *Cajun Life*

Patrick Ball
Patrick Ball, *Christmas Rose*
Patrick Ball, *Finnegans Wake*
Patrick Ball, *Fiona*
Patrick Ball, *Storyteller: Gwilan's Harp and Other Celtic Tales*

The Band
The Band, *Islands*
The Band, *Moondog Matinee*
The Band, *Rock of Ages*
The Band, *Stage Fright*
Bob Dylan, *Basement Tapes*

Freeland Barbour
Sileas, *Beating Harps*
Sileas, *Delighted with Harps*

Bare Necessities
Bare Necessities, *English Country Dances*
Bare Necessities, *Take a Dance*

Russ Barenberg
Russ Barenberg, *Moving Pictures*
Russ Barenberg, *Skip, Hop & Wobble*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Skip, Hop & Wobble*

Craig Barker
Tish Hinojosa, *Taos to Tennessee*

Les Barker
Les Barker, *A Cardi and Bloke*

Danny Barnes
Bad Livers, *Horses in the Mines*

Tina Louise Barr
Tina Louise Barr, *Breakin' Tradition*

Tony Barrand
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Eat Bertha's Mussels*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Hail Smiling Morn!*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Mellow with Ale from the Horn*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Nowell Sing We Clear Volume IV*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *A Present from the Gentlemen*

Paul Barrett
Luka Bloom, *The Acoustic Motorbike*
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*

Daryn Barry
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Downstream*

John Barry
Chad & Jeremy, *Best of Chad & Jeremy*

Steve Barry
Patty Griffin, *Let Him Fly*
Patty Griffin, *Living with Ghosts*

Fred Bartenstein
Mac Wiseman, *Classic Bluegrass*

Bill Barth
Skip James, *She Lyin'*

Geoff Bartley
Scott Alarik, *Old Fashioned*

Peter Bartok
The New Lost City Ramblers, *The New Lost City Ramblers, the Early Years, 1958–1962*

Cathy Barton
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Ballad of the Boonslick*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Johnny Whistletrigger*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Movin' on Down the River*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Rebel in the Woods*

Basin Brothers
Basin Brothers, *Dans la Louisiana*

Ralph Bass
John Lee Hooker, *The Real Folk Blues*

Jim Bateman
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *Alright Again!*
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *Gate Swings*

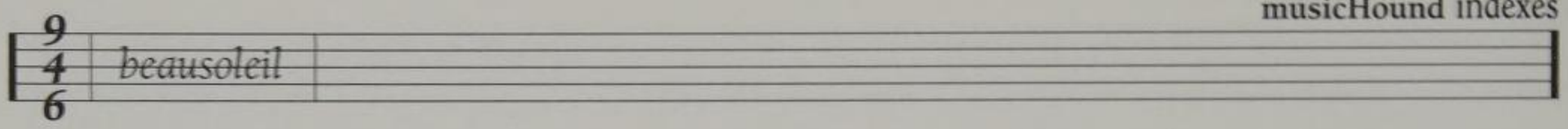
Tom Bates
Pete Seeger, *Pete*

Milton Batiste
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Do Whatcha Wanna*

Robin Batteau
David Buskin/Buskin and Batteau, *B&B*
Mason Daring/Jeanie Stahl and Mason Daring, *The Early Years*
Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *The Early Years*

Harold Battiste
Dr. John, *Dr. John's Gumbo*
Dr. John, *Gris Gris*

Rick Bauer
Peter Mulvey, *Brother Rabbit Speaks*



Beausoleil
Beausoleil, *La Danse de la Vie*

C. Roscoe Beck
Jennifer Warnes, *Famous Blue Raincoat: The Songs of Leonard Cohen*

Walter Becker
Rickie Lee Jones, *Flying Cowboys*

Barry Beckett
John Prine, *Storm Windows*

George Bedard
Dick Siegel, *Tomorrow Morning*

Brian Bedford
Artisan, *Our Back Yard*

Robert Bell
The Devlins, *Drift*

Bob Bellamy
Jerry Rockwell, *American Architecture*
Jerry Rockwell, *As Silent Stars Go By*
Jerry Rockwell, *Rise over Run*

Peter Bellamy
Young Tradition, *Both Sides Then*

Bill Belmont
Country Joe and the Fish, *Live! At the Fillmore West*

Bob Bence
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Dulcimer Country*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *The Hammered Dulcimer Christmas Sampler*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Some Glad Morning!*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Way Down Yonder*

Mac Benford
Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars, *1/2 Century in C*
Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars, *Willow*

Al Bennett
Mary Jane Lamond, *From the Land of the Trees (Bho Thír Nan Craobh)*

Alex Bennett
Patrick Sky, *Songs That Made America Famous*

Richard Bennett
Steve Earle, *I Feel Alright*
Emmylou Harris, *At the Ryman*
Emmylou Harris, *Cowgirl's Prayer*
Bill Miller, *Raven in the Snow*
Bill Miller, *The Red Road*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Come on Joe*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Have a Little Faith*

Ray Benson
Asleep at the Wheel, *Asleep at the Wheel: Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys*
Asleep at the Wheel, *Collison Course*
Asleep at the Wheel, *Greatest Hits (Live & Kickin')*
Don Walser, *Rolling Stone from Texas*
Don Walser, *Texas Top Hand*

Pierre Bensusan
Pierre Bensusan, *Musiques*
Pierre Bensusan, *Solilai*
Pierre Bensusan, *Spices*

Al Berard
Basin Brothers, *Let's Get Cajun*

Tony Berg
Ted Hawkins, *The Next Hundred Years*

Glenn Berger
Fiddle Fever, *The Best of Fiddle Fever*
Tom Rush, *Tom Rush: New Year/Live at Symphony Hall*

Mary Bergin
Mary Bergin/Dordan, *Feadoga Stain 2*

The Bergmann Brothers
Tina Bergmann, *The Bergmann Brothers—Fine Artiste*

Tina Bergmann
Tina Bergmann, *Shady Grove*

Steve Berkowitz
Jeff Buckley, *Live at Sin-E*

Steve Berlin
Dave Alvin, *Romeo's Escape*
Crash Test Dummies, *The Ghosts That Haunt Me*
Stephen Fearing, *The Assassin's Apprentice*
John Wesley Harding, *Pett Levels: The Summer EP*
Tish Hinojosa, *Homeland*
Leo Kottke, *Great Big Boy*

Byron Berline
Byron Berline, *Fiddle & a Song*
Byron Berline, *Jumpin' the Strings*

Jeff Berman
Frank Christian, *From My Hands*
Frank Christian, *Somebody's Got to Do It*

Danny Bernini
disappear fear, *Almost Chocolate*

Peter Bernstein
Jonathan Richman, *Jonathan Sings!*

Cindy Lee Berryhill
Cindy Lee Berryhill, *Garage Orchestra*
Cindy Lee Berryhill, *Straight Outta Marysville*

Lou and Peter Berryman
Lou and Peter Berryman, *Cow Imagination*
Lou and Peter Berryman, *Double Yodel*
Lou and Peter Berryman, *No Relation*
Lou and Peter Berryman, *We Don't Talk about That!*
Lou and Peter Berryman, *What, Again?!*

Nick Bicât
De Danann/De Dannan, *Song for Ireland*

Michael Billingsley
Helen Schneyer, *Somber, Sacred & Silly*

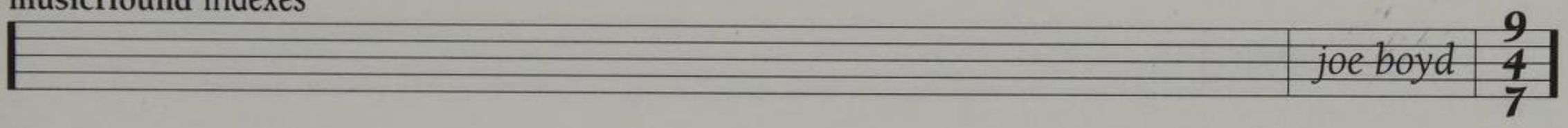
Scott Billington
Chris Ardoin/Chris Ardoin and Double Clutchin', *Gon' Be Jus' Fine*
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *Alright Again!*
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *The Original Peacock Recordings*
Buckwheat Zydeco, *Waitin' for My Ya-Ya*
Geno Delafose, *French Rockin' Boogie*
Geno Delafose, *Pere et Garcon Zydeco*
Geno Delafose, *That's What I'm Talking About!*
John Delafose, *Blues Stay Away from Me*
Beau Jocque, *Beau Jocque & the Zydeco Hi-Rollers*
Beau Jocque, *Beau Jocque Boogie*
Beau Jocque, *Pick up on This!*
Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas/Nathan Williams, *Creole Crossroads*
Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas/Nathan Williams, *I'm a Zydeco Hog*
Willis Prudhomme, *Zydeco Live!, Volume II*
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys, *La Toussaint*

Russ Birch
Alan Mager, *Hear the Colors*

Jeff Bird
Tamarack, *The 15th Anniversary Concert*
Tamarack, *Frobisher Bay*

Tony Bird
Tony Bird, *Bird of Paradise*
Tony Bird, *Sorry Africa*

Joni Bishop
Joni Bishop, *Everyday Miracles*
Joni Bishop, *Threads*



Piers Bishop
The Copper Family, *Coppersongs 2*

Roy Bittan
disappear fear, *Seed in the Sahara*

Cary Black
Magical Strings, *Islands Calling*
Linda Waterfall, *A Little Bit at a Time*

Mary Black
The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black, *Time for Touching Home*

Robin Black
June Tabor, *Silly Sisters*

Black Dog Productions
Bob Shank, *At the Wednesday Night Waltz*

Becky Blackley
Becky Blackley, *The Flower of Loudoun County*
Becky Blackley, *Gathering the Harvest*

Lee Blackwell
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio, *Mes Amis!*

Dean Blackwood
Dock Boggs, *Country Blues*

Gary Blair
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Pat Paulsen for President*

Ian Blake
Eric Bogle, *Small Miracles*

Norman Blake
Norman Blake/Norman & Nancy Blake/Norman Blake and Tony Rice, *Blake & Rice*
Norman Blake/Norman & Nancy Blake/Norman Blake and Tony Rice, *The Norman and Nancy Blake Compact Disc*
Norman Blake/Norman & Nancy Blake/Norman Blake and Tony Rice, *Whiskey before Breakfast*

Archie Bleyer
Everly Brothers, *All They Had to Do Was Dream*
Everly Brothers, *Cadence Classics: Their 20 Greatest Hits*

Blix Street
Grace Griffith, *GRACE*

Andy Bloch
The Roches, *No Trespassing*

Ron Block
The Forbes Family, *In the Shadow of Your Wings*

Rory Block
Rory Block, *The Early Tapes 1975/1976*
Rory Block, *High Heeled Blues*

Blood Oranges
Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies, *Corn River*

Blue Highway
Blue Highway, *It's a Long, Long Road*
Blue Highway, *Midnight Storm*
Blue Highway, *Wind to the West*

The Bluegrass Association
Lyman Enloe, *Fiddle Tunes I Recall*

Dave Blume
Carolyn Hester, *Warriors of the Rainbow*

Richard Bock
The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys, *Appalachian Swing!*

Eric Bogle
Eric Bogle, *I Wrote This Wee Song*
Eric Bogle, *Scraps of Paper*

Thomas M. Bohrer
Mitzie Collins, *Scotland the Brave*

Boiled in Lead
Boiled in Lead, *From the Ladle to the Grave*
Boiled in Lead, *Old Lead*

Gordon Bok
Cindy Kallet, *Neighbors*

Bill Bolick
Blue Sky Boys, *In Concert, 1964*

Bob Bollard
Harry Belafonte, *Belafonte at Carnegie Hall*
Odetta, *Belafonte Returns to Carnegie Hall*

Polly Bolton
Polly Bolton, *Loveliest of Trees*
Polly Bolton, *Songs from a Cold Open Field*
Polly Bolton, *Woodbine and Ivy*

Helen Bommarito
Martin Hayes, *Martin Hayes*

Christian Bonneau
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *Golden Years (1949–1952)*

Boone Creek
Boone Creek, *Boone Creek*

Laura Boosinger
Laura Boosinger, *Sing It Yourself*

Jimmy Borsdorf
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Cactus Gumbo and Alligator Enchiladas*

Rick Boston
Rickie Lee Jones, *Ghostyhead*

The Bothy Band
The Bothy Band, *Afterhours*

Bruce Botnick
Love, *Forever Changes*

Bob Bovee
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil, *Rural Route 2*

Dennis Bovell
Sharon Shannon, *Mind the Gap*

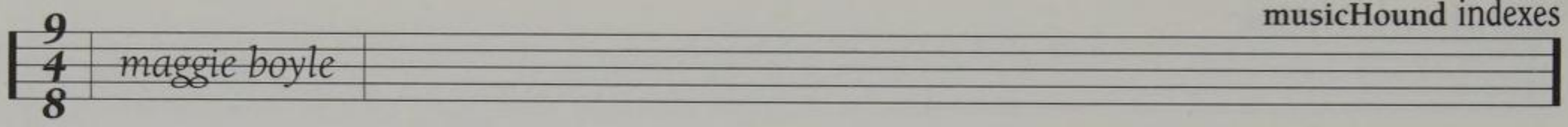
Jimmy Bowen
Jimmy Buffett, *Last Mango in Paris*

Bryan Bowers
Bryan Bowers, *The View from Home*

Ronnie Bowman
Lonesome River Band, *Cold Virginia Night*

Amos Box
Boiled in Lead, *Old Lead*

Joe Boyd
Billy Bragg, *Workers Playtime*
Sandy Denny/Fotheringay, *Fotheringay*
Nick Drake, *Bryter Layter*
Nick Drake, *Five Leaves Left*
Nick Drake, *Fruit Tree*
Nick Drake, *Time of No Reply*
Fairport Convention, *House Full*
Fairport Convention, *Liege and Lief*
Fairport Convention, *What We Did on Our Holidays*
Richard Greene/The Grass Is Greener, *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam*
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *Rise up like the Sun*
Incredible String Band, *The 5000 Spirits or the Layers of the Onion*
Incredible String Band, *The Incredible String Band*
Kate & Anna McGarrigle, *Dancer with Bruised Knees*
Kate & Anna McGarrigle, *Kate & Anna McGarrigle*
Maria Muldaur, *Maria Muldaur*
Maria Muldaur, *Pottery Pie*
Maria Muldaur, *Waitress in a Donut Shop*
Muleskinner, *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam*
June Tabor, *Some Other Time*
Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson, *Richard Thompson Live! (More or Less)*



Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson, *Shoot out the Lights*

Maggie Boyle
Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle, *All under the Sun*

Boys of the Lough
Boys of the Lough, *The Boys of the Lough*
Boys of the Lough, *Farewell and Remember Me*
Boys of the Lough, *Live at Carnegie Hall*
Boys of the Lough, *Live at Passim*
Boys of the Lough, *Lochaber No More*
Boys of the Lough, *A Midwinter Night's Dream*
Boys of the Lough, *The Piper's Broken Finger*
Boys of the Lough, *To Welcome Paddy Home*

Owen Bradley
Burl Ives, *Greatest Hits!*
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack*
k.d. lang, *Shadowland*
Jimmy Martin, *Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1950–1958*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1959–1969*

Sandy Bradley
Peter Ostroushko, *First Generation*

Harry Bradshaw
Michael Coleman, *Michael Coleman*

Paul Brady
Paul Brady, *Full Moon*
Paul Brady, *Hard Station*
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*
Paul Brady, *True for You*
Seán Keane, *Jig It in Style*
Tommy Peoples, *Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples*

Tommy Peoples, *Welcome Here Kind Stranger*

Delaney Bramlett
Eric Clapton, *Eric Clapton*

Brave Combo
Brave Combo, *Girl*
Brave Combo, *Group Dance Epidemic*
Brave Combo, *The Hokey Pokey*
Brave Combo, *Musical Varieties*
Brave Combo, *No, No, No, Cha Cha Cha*
Brave Combo, *Polkas for a Gloomy World*

Maire Breatnach
The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black, *What a Time*

Gary Brewer
Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr., *Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr. from Roan Mountain, TN*

David Briggs
Tom Rush, *The Best of Tom Rush*
Neil Young, *After the Gold Rush*
Neil Young, *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*
Neil Young, *Old Ways*
Neil Young, *Rust Never Sleeps*
Neil Young, *Tonight's the Night*
Neil Young, *Unplugged*

Frank Briggs
Bukka White, *The Complete Bukka White*

Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band
Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band, *The Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band*

Bright Morning Star
Bright Morning Star, *Sweet and Sour*

Gary Bristol
Red Clay Ramblers, *A Lie of the Mind*

Robin Broadbank
Kevin Burke, *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America*
Liz Carroll, *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America*
Jerry Holland, *Traditional Music from Cape Breton Island*
Billy McComiskey, *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America*

Jerry Brock
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Here to Stay*

Chuck Brodsky
Chuck Brodsky, *A Fingerpainter's Murals*

Steve Brogden
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *Smilin'*

Dave Brogren
Fred Eaglesmith, *From the Paradise Motel*

Bruce Bromberg
Dave Alvin, *Blue Blvd*
Dave Alvin, *Museum of Heart*
Ted Hawkins, *Happy Hour*
Ted Hawkins, *Watch Your Step*

David Bromberg
David Bromberg, *David Bromberg*
David Bromberg, *How Late'll Ya Play 'Til*
John Hartford, *Aereo-Plane*

Michael Brook
Mary Margaret O'Hara, *Miss America*
The Pogues, *Waiting for Herb*
Jane Siberry, *When I Was a Boy*

Ed Brooks
Marley's Ghost, *Haunting Melodies*
Marley's Ghost, *Let de Groove Rise Up*

Ernie Brooks
Elliot Murphy, *Party Girl, Broken Poets*

Michael Brooks
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *Swing Down, Chariot*
Bessie Smith, *Bessie Smith*

Rich Brotherton
Ed Miller, *At Home with the Exiles*
Ed Miller, *Border Background*
Ed Miller, *The Edinburgh Rambler*
Ed Miller, *Home and Away*
Ed Miller, *Scottish Voice*

Stuart Brotman
Klezmorim, *Metropolis*

Alex Broussard
Jo-El Sonnier, *Cajun Life*

John Broven
Iry LeJeune, *Cajun's Greatest: The Definitive Collection*

Michael Brovsky
Joe Ely, *Hi-Res*
Joe Ely, *Musta Notta Gotta Lotta*
Dave Van Ronk, *Songs for Aging Children*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *The Best of Jerry Jeff Walker*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *A Man Must Carry On, Volume I*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *A Man Must Carry On, Volume II*

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *The Original Peacock Recordings*

Douglas Brown
Baltimore Consort, *On the Banks of Helicon: Early Music of Scotland*
Baltimore Consort, *A Trip to Killburn: Playford Tunes and Their Ballads*
Baltimore Consort, *Tunes from the Attic*
Chris Norman, *Lullaby Journey*
Carol Thompson, *The Enchanted Isles*

Ginger Brown
Pete Seeger, *Pete Seeger's Family Concert*

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Greg Brown
Greg Brown, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*

Jim Brown
Pete Seeger, *Pete Seeger's Family Concert*

Paul Brown
Paul Brown, *Old Time, New Times*
Paul Brown, *Way Down in North Carolina*
The Double Decker String Band, *Chasing Rainbows*
Mike Seeger, *Way down in North Carolina*
Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels, *A Cut Above*

Steve Brown
The Pogues, *Pogue Mahone*

Tony Brown
Steve Earle, *Guitar Town*
Joe Ely, *Love and Danger*
Nanci Griffith, *Lone Star State of Mind*
Nanci Griffith, *One Fair Summer Evening*
Walter Hyatt/Uncle Walt's Band, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *Love and Danger*
Lyle Lovett, *Lyle Lovett*
Lyle Lovett, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Lyle Lovett, *Pontiac*
Mac McAnally, *Knots*
Mac McAnally, *Live and Learn*
Todd Snider, *Songs for the Daily Planet*

Jackson Browne
Jackson Browne, *"I'm Alive"*
Jackson Browne, *Late for the Sky*
Jackson Browne, *Running on Empty*
David Lindley, *El Rayo-X*

Peter Browne
Séamus Ennis, *The Return from Fingal*

Bob Brozman
Bob Brozman, *Kika Kila Meets Ki Hoalu*
Bob Brozman, *A Truckload of Blues*

Stephen Bruton
Sue Foley, *Big City Blues*
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *After Awhile*
Chris Smither, *Up on the Lowdown*

B.R.V. Productions, Inc.
Tom Rush, *Tom Rush: New Year/Live at Symphony Hall*

James Bryan
James Bryan, *The First of May*
James Bryan, *Lookout Blues*

Billy Bryans
Raffi, *Evergreen Everblue*

Rachel Buchman
Rachel Buchman, *Jewish Holiday Songs for Children*
Rachel Buchman, *Sing a Song of Seasons*

Peter Buck
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *March 16–20, 1992*

The Buckhannon Brothers
The Buckhannon Brothers, *The Buckhannon Brothers*

Jeff Buckley
Jeff Buckley, *Grace*
Jeff Buckley, *Live at Sin-E*

Tim Buckley
Tim Buckley, *Starsailor*

Norton Buffalo
Roy Rogers, *Travellin' Tracks*

Jimmy Buffett
Jimmy Buffett, *Songs You Know by Heart: Jimmy Buffett's Greatest Hit(s)*

Karla Buhlman
Gene Autry, *Gene Autry with the Legendary Singing Groups of the West*
Gene Autry, *The Singing Cowboy, Chapter One*

Robin Bullock
Robin Bullock, *Green Fields*
Robin Bullock, *Midnight Howl*

Al Bunetta
Steve Goodman, *Tribute to Steve Goodman*

Jan Burda
Anne Hills, *On This Day the Earth Shall Ring*

John Burgess
Peter & Gordon, *I Go to Pieces*

Steve Burgh
David Bromberg, *How Late'll Ya Play 'Til*
Steve Forbert, *Alive on Arrival*
Steve Forbert, *Steve Forbert*

Kevin Burke
Kevin Burke, *Eavesdropper*
Kevin Burke, *Portland*
Jackie Daly, *Eavesdropper*
Mark Nelson, *After the Morning: Irish, Scottish, and American Fiddle Music for Dulcimer*

Malcolm Burn
The Devlins, *Drift*

Bucks Burnett
Brave Combo, *Girl*

T-Bone Burnett
T-Bone Burnett, *Trap Door*
Bruce Cockburn, *Nothing but a Burning Light*
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *Braver Newer World*
Gillian Welch, *Revival*

Barry "Byrd" Burton
The Amazing Rhythm Aces, *Stacked Deck*

Kay Busbey
Kristen Hall, *Real Life Stuff*

Henry Bush
Albert King, *I'll Play the Blues for You*

Kate Bush
Alan Stivell, *Again*

Kristian Bush
Chuck Brodsky, *Letters in the Dirt*

Sam Bush
Sam Bush, *Glamour & Grits*
Chris Thile, *Stealing Second*

David Buskin
David Buskin/Buskin and Batteau, *B&B*

Larry Butler
Don McLean, *Chain Lightning*

Paul Butterfield
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *Better Days*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *It All Comes Back*

Jean Buzelin
Memphis Minnie, *Me and My Chauffeur 1935–46*

Joseph Byrd
Ry Cooder, *Jazz*

Dennis Cahill
Martin Hayes, *The Lonesome Touch*

Greg Cahill
Special Consensus, *Hey Y'All*

Charles Caldarola
Tom Russell, *Poor Man's Dream*

J.J. Cale
J.J. Cale, *Closer to You*
J.J. Cale, *Five*
J.J. Cale, *Number 10*
J.J. Cale, *Special Edition*
John Hammond Jr., *Trouble No More*

John Cale
Jonathan Richman, *Modern Lovers*

Charlie Calello
Laura Nyro, *Eli & the 13th Confession*

Andrew Calhoun
Andrew Calhoun, *Hope*

Tom Callahan
Rod MacDonald, *Circles in the Stream—Volume I*

Virginia Callaway
David Holt, *Stellaluna*

Duncan Cameron
Alaska's Hobo Jim, *Lost & Dyin' Breed*

Bob Camp
Bob Gibson, *Bob Gibson and Bob Camp at the Gate of Horn*

Paul Campagne
Connie Kaldor, *Small Cafe*

Eamonn Campbell
The Dubliners, *Celebration*
The Dubliners, *30 Years a-Greying*

Jeff Campbell
The New St. George, *Hungry for Music: A Holiday Feast*

Larry Campbell
Richard Shindell, *Reunion Hill*

Rosamund Campbell
Rosamund Campbell, *A Tender Recollection*

Troy Campbell
Jo Carol Pierce, *Bad Girls Upset by the Truth*

Fred Campeau
Elaine Purkey, *Mountain Music, Mountain Struggle*
Rhythm Rats, *Pretty Crowing Chicken*

Mitch Cantor
Cliff Eberhardt, *The Greenwich Village Folk Festival: 1989–1990*

Al and Emily Cantrell
Emily & Al Cantrell/The Cantrells, *Dancing with the Miller's Daughter*
Emily & Al Cantrell/The Cantrells, *Under a Southern Moon*

Capercaillie
Capercaillie, *Crosswinds*
Capercaillie, *Get Out*

Arnold S. Caplin
Son House, *Delta Blues*
Skip James, *Greatest of the Delta Blues Singers*
Furry Lewis, *When I Lay My Burden Down*
Walt Michael, *Light Our Way Along the Highway*
Walt Michael, *A Rumor in Their Own Time*

Evan Carawan
Guy Carawan/The Carawan Family, *Home Brew*

Guy Carawan
Guy Carawan/The Carawan Family, *Home Brew*

David J. Card
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *Live at Poor David's Pub*

Mark Andrew Cardiff
Stan Rogers, *Home in Halifax*

Bob Carlin
Bob Carlin, *Banging and Sawing*
Bob Carlin, *The Fun of Open Discussion*
Bob Carlin, *Melodic Clawhammer Banjo*
Marvin Gaster, *Uncle Henry's Favorites*
John Hartford, *Wild Hog in the Red Brush and a Bunch of Others You Might Not Have Heard*

Pete Carlson
Bob Brozman, *A Truckload of Blues*

Nick Carlton
Dana Cooper, *Roughly Speaking*

Danny Carnahan
Mark Nelson, *Southern Light*

Mary Chapin Carpenter
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Come On Come On*
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Shootin' Straight in the Dark*
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Stones in the Road*

Janis Carper
Heidi Muller, *Giving Back*

Chubby Carrier
Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band, *Dance All Night*

David Carroll
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Aesop's Fables—The Smothers Brothers Way*
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Pat Paulsen—Live at the Ice House*
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Sibling Revelry*

Liz Carroll
Liz Carroll, *Liz Carroll*
Trian, *Trian*
Trian, *Trian II*

Drew Carson
Lee Murdock, *Fertile Ground*

Gil Carter
Sunshine Skiffle Band, *Beat It, Blow It, Strum It, Hum It*

Jason Carter
Jason Carter, *On the Move*

Pat Carter
Steve Earle, *Early Tracks*

Russell Carter
Indigo Girls, *1200 Curfews*

Eliza Carthy
Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt, *Heat Light & Sound*

Paul Caruso
Les Sampou, *Sweet Perfume*

Ann Case
Ann and Phil Case, *The Springtime of Life*

Phil Case
Ann and Phil Case, *The Springtime of Life*

Mike Casey
Mike Casey, *The Hourglass*

Johnny Cash
Johnny Cash, *Classic Cash*

Rosanne Cash
Rosanne Cash, *Interiors*
Rosanne Cash, *Ten Song Demo*

Terry Cashman
Jim Croce, *Photographs & Memories: His Greatest Hits*
Jim Croce, *You Don't Mess Around with Jim*

Peter Casperson
Jonathan Edwards, *Jonathan Edwards*

The Chambers Brothers
The Chambers Brothers, *The Chambers Brothers' Greatest Hits*

Tina Chancey
Hesperus, *Early American Roots*

Jim Chapdelaine
Margo Hennebach, *Big Love*

Stephen Chapin
Harry Chapin, *Dance Band on the Titanic*
Harry Chapin, *Harry Chapin Tribute*

Tom Chapin
Tom Chapin, *Doing Our Job*

Tracy Chapman
Tracy Chapman, *Matters of the Heart*

Fred Charlie
Keith Frank, *You'd Be Surprised*

Sam Charters
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, *The Ardoin Family Band with Dewey Balfa: A Couple of Cajuns*
Country Joe and the Fish, *Electric Music for the Mind and Body*
Country Joe and the Fish, *I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag*
Rockin' Dopsie, *Big Bad Zydeco*
John Fahey, *The Essential John Fahey*
Canray Fontenot, *The Cajuns Vol. 1*
Buddy Guy, *A Man and the Blues*
Furry Lewis, *Shake 'Em on Down*

Dave Van Ronk, *Hummin' to Myself*
Eric Von Schmidt, *Baby, Let Me Lay It on You*

Chinga Chavin
Kinky Friedman, *Old Testaments & New Revelations*

John Chelew
Martin Carthy, *Life and Limb*
Waterson:Carthy, *Norma Waterson*

C.J. Chenier
C.J. Chenier, *Hot Rod*
C.J. Chenier, *My Baby Don't Wear No Shoes*

Ed Cherney
Jann Arden, *Living under June*

Chesapeake
Chesapeake, *Full Sail*

Leonard Chess
Bo Diddley, *Bo Diddley: His Best*
Muddy Waters, *His Best 1947–55*

Phil Chess
Bo Diddley, *Bo Diddley: His Best*

Kathy Chiavola
Kathy Chiavola, *Kathy Chiavola*

Chicken Chokers
The Chicken Chokers, *Chokers and Flies*
The Chicken Chokers, *Shoot Your Radio*

Edward Chmelewski
Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band, *Dance All Night*

Adrian Chornowol
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *All the Good 'Uns*
Ian Tyson, *Cowboyography*

Frank Christian
Frank Christian, *Mister So and So*

Cindy Church
Cindy Church, *Just a Little Rain*

Michael Cicone
Cindy Kallet, *Only Human*

Carolyn Cirimele
The All Girl Boys, *Lookin' for Ida Rose*

Liam Clancy
Etta Baker, *Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians*

Patrick Clancy
A.L. Lloyd, *Blow Boys Blow*

Eric Clapton
Eric Clapton, *From the Cradle*
Buddy Guy, *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play the Blues*

Guy Clark
Guy Clark, *Boats to Build*
Guy Clark, *Dublin Blues*
Guy Clark, *Old Friends*

Rick Clark
Leo Kottke, *The Leo Kottke Anthology*

Royce Clark
The Flatlanders, *More a Legend Than a Band*
Butch Hancock, *Two Roads: Live in Australia*

Cyrus Clarke
Acousticats, *The Cat's Meow*
Acousticats, *Down at Evangelina's*

Paul Clayton
Etta Baker, *Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians*

Bettine Clemen
Kim Robertson, *Love Song to a Planet*

Jack Clement
The Carter Family/The Carter Sisters/Maybelle Carter, *Wildwood Flower*
Johnny Cash, *The Sun Years*
Johnny Cash, *Water from the Wells of Home*
Townes Van Zandt, *At My Window*
Townes Van Zandt, *The Late Great Townes Van Zandt*
Townes Van Zandt, *Our Mother the Mountain*

Vassar Clements
Vassar Clements, *Crossing the Catskills*
Vassar Clements, *Vassar's Jazz*

Bill Clifton
Bill Clifton, *The Early Years, 1957–1958*
Bill Clifton, *River of Memories*

Bobby Cochran
Adrian Legg, *Waiting for a Dancer*

Mike Cogan
Any Old Time String Band, *Any Old Time String Band*
Any Old Time String Band, *I Bid You Goodnight*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *An Album of Songs*

John Cohen
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *High Atmosphere*

Paul Cohen
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack*
Jimmy Martin, *Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1950–1958*

Lawrence Cohn
Amédée Ardoin, *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do*
Gene Autry, *Blues Singer 1929–1931: Booger Rooger Saturday Night*
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles, *White Country Blues: 1926–1938, A Lighter Shade of Pale*
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, *Irish Drinking Songs*
Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon, *Abbeville Breakdown*
Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon, *Cajun Dance Party: Fais Do Do*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Avalon Blues: The Complete 1928 OKeh Recordings*
Blind Willie Johnson, *The Complete Willie Johnson*
Taj Mahal, *World Music*
Dennis McGee, *Cajun Music: Fais Do-Do*
Blind Willie McTell, *The Definitive Blind Willie McTell*
Memphis Minnie, *Hoodoo Lady (1933–37)*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *16 Gems*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *The Essential Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys 1945–1949*
Pete Seeger, *A Link in the Chain*
Bessie Smith, *The Complete Recordings, Volume I*
Bessie Smith, *The Complete Recordings, Volume II*
Bessie Smith, *The Complete Recordings, Volume III*
Bessie Smith, *The Complete Recordings, Volume IV*
Bessie Smith, *The Complete Recordings, Volume V: The Final Chapter*

Paula Cole
Paula Cole, *This Fire*

Denardo Coleman
Timbuk 3, *Edge of Allegiance*

T. Michael Coleman
Chesapeake, *Docabilly*
The Seldom Scene, *Scene 20: 20th-Anniversary Concert*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Docabilly*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Remembering Merle*

Pat Collier
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Fegmania!*
The Oyster Band, *The Shouting End of Life*

Daniel Michael Collins
Liz Carroll, *A Friend Indeed*
Liz Carroll, *Kiss Me Kate*
Frankie Gavin, *Traditional Music of Ireland*
Tommy Peoples, *The High Part of the Road*
Tommy Peoples, *The Iron Man*

Judy Collins
Judy Collins, *Forever . . . The Judy Collins Anthology*

Mitzie Collins
Mitzie Collins, *Sackett's Harbor*

Peter Collins
Indigo Girls, *Swamp Ophelia*

Phil Collins
Eric Clapton, *August*
Eric Clapton, *Behind the Sun*

Christine Collister
Christine Collister, *Blue Aconite*
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, *Love Is a Strange Hotel*

Susan Colson
Robin Flower, *More Than Friends*

Shawn Colvin
Shawn Colvin, *Cover Girl*
Shawn Colvin, *Steady On*
Lucy Kaplansky, *The Tide*

Mike Compton
David Grier, *Climbing the Walls*

Rita Connolly
Rita Connolly, *Rita Connolly*

Séamus Connolly
Liz Carroll, *Gaelic Roots*
Martin Hayes, *Gaelic Roots*
James Keane, *Gaelic Roots*

Stompin' Tom Connors
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Believe in Your Country*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Bud the Spud*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Dr. Stompin' Tom . . . Eh?*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Fiddle and Song*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Long Gone to the Yukon*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *More of the Stompin' Tom Phenomenon*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *My Stompin' Grounds*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *On Tragedy Trail*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *A Proud Canadian*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Stompin' Tom and the Hockey Song*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *Stompin' Tom Connors Meets Big Joe Mufferaw*
Stompin' Tom Connors, *To It and At It*

Joachim Cooder
Ry Cooder, *Music by Ry Cooder*

Ry Cooder
Ry Cooder, *Bop Till You Drop*
Ry Cooder, *Chicken Skin Music*
Ry Cooder, *Crossroads*
Ry Cooder, *Get Rhythm*
Ry Cooder, *Jazz*
Ry Cooder, *Johnny Handsome*
Ry Cooder, *The Long Riders*
Ry Cooder, *Music by Ry Cooder*
Ry Cooder, *Paris, Texas*
Ry Cooder, *Ry Cooder*
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, *The Pahinui Bros.*

Rod Cook
Laura Love, *Helvetica Bold*

Chris Coole
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole, *Five Strings Attached with No Backing*

Steven Cooney
Déanta, *Déanta*

Dana Cooper
Dana Cooper, *Roughly Speaking*

Daniel Cooper
Roger Miller, *King of the Road: The Genius of Roger Miller*

Cordelia's Dad
Cordelia's Dad, *Comet*
Cordelia's Dad, *Cordelia's Dad*
Cordelia's Dad, *The Joy Fun Garden*

Denny Cordell
Willis Alan Ramsey, *Willis Alan Ramsey*

Larry Cordle
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Larry Cordle, Glen Duncan & Lonesome Standard Time*
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Lonesome As It Gets*

Stan Cornelius
Jimmy C. Newman, *Jimmy C. Newman & Cajun Country*
Jimmy C. Newman, *More Cajun Music*

Elvis Costello
The Pogues, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash*

James Cotton
James Cotton, *High Compression*

Tommy Couch
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *I Do Not Play No Rock 'n' Roll*

Phil Coulter
The Dubliners, *30 Years a-Greying*
Andy Irvine, *Planxty*
Planxty, *Cold Blow and the Rainy Night*
Planxty, *Planxty*
Planxty, *The Planxty Collection*
Planxty, *The Well below the Valley*

Country Ham
Country Ham, *Fiddle Instrumentals Featuring Joe Meadows*
Country Ham, *I'll Be Leaving*
Country Ham, *Music for Clogging*
Country Ham, *My Old Paint Mare*
Country Ham, *Songs of Mother and Home*
Country Ham, *Sounds of Yesterday*
Country Ham, *Where the Mountain Laurel Blooms*
Jimmie Davis, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Red Foley, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Grandpa Jones, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Uncle Dave Macon, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Blind Alfred Reed, *The Bristol Sessions*
Roy Rogers, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Leo Soileau, *Raise Yur Window—A Cajun Music Anthology, Volume II*
Sons of the Pioneers, *Country Music Hall of Fame*
Ernest Tubb, *Country Music Hall of Fame*

Country Music Foundation
Nathan Abshire, *Le Grand Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology: The Historic Victor/Bluebird Sessions, 1928–1941*

John Court
Michael Bloomfield, *A Long Time Coming*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *The Resurrection of Pigboy Crabshaw*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *In Concert*

Eric Cowell
Artisan, *The Season of Holly and Ivy*

Kenny Craddock
Robin and Barry Dransfield, *Wings of the Sphinx*

Dan Crary
Dan Crary, *Guitar*
Dan Crary, *Lady's Fancy*
Dan Crary, *Take a Step Over*

Crash Test Dummies
Crash Test Dummies, *God Shuffled His Feet*

Kerry Crawford
Bruce Cockburn, *Stealing Fire*
Jane Siberry, *No Borders Here*

Kevin Crawford
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *D Flute*
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *Maiden Voyage*
Tommy Peoples, *Maiden Voyage*

Seamus Creagh
Jackie Daly, *Jackie Daly Agus Seamus Creagh*

Gary Cristall
Frankie Armstrong, *Let No One Deceive You: Songs of Bertholt Brecht*

Critton Hollow String Band
Critton Hollow String Band, *By and By*

Jim Croce
Jim Croce, *Faces I've Been*

Andrew Cronshaw
June Tabor, *Abyssinians*
June Tabor, *Aqaba*

Lee Crooks
Free Hot Lunch!, *Eat This*
Free Hot Lunch!, *Penguin Love*

Steve Cropper
John Prine, *Common Sense*

David Crosby
The Byrds, *Byrds*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *If I Could Only Remember My Name*

Crosby, Stills and Nash
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Crosby, Stills & Nash*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Live It Up*

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *4 Way Street*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Deja Vu*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *So Far*

Mike Cross
Mike Cross, *Carolina Sky*
Mike Cross, *Live & Kickin*
Mike Cross, *Solo at Midnight*

J.D. Crowe
J.D. Crowe/J.D. Crowe and the New South, *Flashback*

Rodney Crowell
Rosanne Cash, *King's Record Shop*
Rosanne Cash, *Right or Wrong*
Rosanne Cash, *Seven Year Ache*

Lynn Cruise
Garrison Keillor, *Lake Wobegon Days*

Chick Crumpacker
Harry Belafonte, *All-Time Greatest Hits Vol. 1–3*

Tony Cuffe
Ossian, *When First I Went to Caledonia*

Cultural Center for Social Change
Magpie, *The Long Walk to Freedom Reunion Concert*

Johnny Cunningham
Kevin Burke, *The Celtic Fiddle Festival*
Cherish the Ladies, *New Day Dawning*
Cherish the Ladies, *Out and About*
Johnny Cunningham, *The Celtic Fiddle Festival*
Johnny Cunningham, *Fair Warning*
Johnny Cunningham, *Peter and Wendy*
Johnny Cunningham, *The Soul of Christmas: A Celtic Music Celebration with Thomas Moore*
Cathie Ryan, *Out and About*
Fred Small, *Everything Possible*
Solas, *Solas*
Solas, *Sunny Spells and Scattered Showers*
Brooks Williams, *Back to Mercy*

Phil Cunningham
Altan, *Horse with a Heart*
Ceolbeg, *Not the Bunnyhop*
Phil Cunningham, *Airs and Graces*
Phil Cunningham, *The Palomino Waltz*
Phil Cunningham, *The Pearl*
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *If Ever I Return*
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *Somebody*
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *The Wishing Well*
Silly Wizard, *Live Wizardry*
Andy M. Stewart, *By the Hush*
Wolfstone, *The Chase*
Wolfstone, *Year of the Dog*

John Curtis
Maria Sangiolo, *Follow Your Own Road*
Fred Small, *Heart of the Appaloosa*

P.J. Curtis
Altan, *Harvest Storm*
Altan, *The Red Crow*
Arcady, *After the Ball*
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *The Sanctuary Sessions*
Dolores Keane, *Broken Hearted I'll Wander*
Skylark, *All of It*
Skylark, *Skylark*

Lou Curtiss
Roy Acuff, *Roy Acuff & the Smoky Mountain Boys 1939–41*
Roy Acuff, *Roy Acuff: 1936–1939 "Steamboat Whistle Blues"*

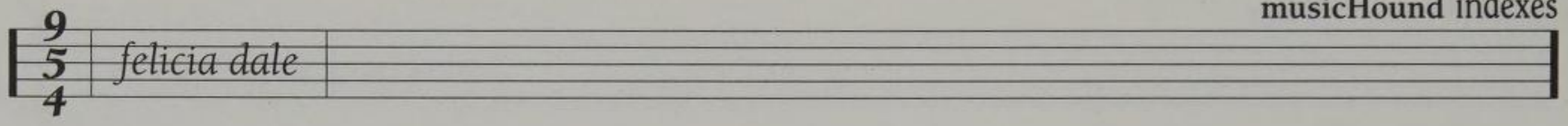
Michael Cuscuna
Buddy Guy, *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play the Blues*
Bonnie Raitt, *Give It Up*
Chris Smither, *Don't It Drag On*
Chris Smither, *I'm a Stranger Too*
Eric Von Schmidt, *Second Right Third Row*

Jennifer Cutting
The New St. George, *High Tea*

Pierre Daigle
Paul Daigle, *Est-Ce Que Tu Pleur*
Paul Daigle, *Paul Daigle—Robert Elkins & Cajun Gold*

Bruce Daigrepont
Bruce Daigrepont, *Coeur Des Cajuns*
Bruce Daigrepont, *Stir Up the Roux*

Pappy Daily
George Jones, *George Jones Sings Bob Wills*
George Jones, *Homecoming in Heaven*



Felicia Dale
Tom Lewis, *Making Waves*
Tom Lewis, *Surfacing*

Malcolm Dalglish
Malcolm Dalglish, *Hymnody of Earth*
Malcolm Dalglish, *Jogging the Memory*
Malcolm Dalglish, *Pleasure*

Jackie Daly
Kevin Burke, *Eavesdropper*
Jackie Daly, *Eavesdropper*
Jackie Daly, *Jackie Daly Agus Seamus Creagh*
Jackie Daly, *Many's a Wild Night*

Mark Dann
Jack Hardy, *The Cauldron*
Jack Hardy, *The Collected Works: 1965–1995*
Rod MacDonald, *Bring on the Lion*
Rod MacDonald, *Highway to Nowhere*
Rod MacDonald, *The Man on the Ledge*
Rod MacDonald, *White Buffalo*

Charles Bud Dant
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Hawaiian Style Guitars*

Mason Daring
Mason Daring/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *The Early Years*
Mason Daring/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *Matewan*
Les Sampou, *Fall from Grace*
Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *The Early Years*
Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *Mysteries*
Bill Staines, *The First Million Miles*
Bill Staines, *Redbird's Wing*
Bill Staines, *Tracks and Trails*

Pete Dauncey
The Bothy Band, *Live in Concert*

Shaun Davey
Rita Connolly, *Rita Connolly*
Rita Connolly, *Valparaiso*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Brendan Voyage*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Given Note*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *Granuaile*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *Out to an Other Side*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Pilgrim*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Relief of Derry Symphony*

Guy Davis
Guy Davis, *Call Down the Thunder*

Julie Davis
Julie Davis, *Heart Full of Song*
Julie Davis, *Journey to the Fluted Mountain*
Julie Davis, *Traveling Light*

Bob Dawson
John Jennings, *Buddy*
John McCutcheon, *Sprout Wings and Fly*
The New St. George, *High Tea*

Julian Dawson
Julian Dawson, *Move Over, Darling*

Norman Dayron
Michael Bloomfield, *Living in the Fast Lane*

Hughes de Courson
Planxty, *2e Festival Pop' Celtic Kertalg 73*

De Danann
De Danann/De Dannan, *Ballroom*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Hibernian Rhapsody*
De Danann/De Dannan, *The Mist Covered Mountain*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Song for Ireland*
De Danann/De Dannan, *The Star Spangled Molly*

Alex de Grassi
Scott Cossu, *Reunion*

Roy Dea
Steve Earle, *Early Tracks*

Dead Can Dance
Dead Can Dance, *Aion*
Dead Can Dance, *Dead Can Dance*
Dead Can Dance, *The Serpent's Egg*
Dead Can Dance, *Spleen and Ideal*

Déanta
Déanta, *Déanta*

Conrad Deisler
Austin Lounge Lizards, *The Highway Cafe of the Damned*

Jerry Del Giudice
Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band, *Dance All Night*

Dan DeLancey
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Among Old Friends*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *The Gathering Place*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Merry Christmas*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Music from the Heart*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Plain and Simple*

John Delgatto
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Alone . . . Direct*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *The Doc Watson Family*

Marco Delmar
Lisa Moscatiello, *Innocent When You Dream*

Gary Delorme
k.d. lang, *a truly western experience*

Al DeLory
Glen Campbell, *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*
Glen Campbell, *Gentle on My Mind*
Glen Campbell, *Wichita Lineman*

Peter Dempsey
Carson Robison, *Home, Sweet Home on the Prairie*

Paul Dengate
Robin and Barry Dransfield, *Be Your Own Man*

Sandy Denny
Sandy Denny/Fotheringay, *The North Star Grassman and the Ravens*

Ed Denson
Skip James, *She Lyin'*
Bukka White, *1963 Isn't 1962*
Bukka White, *Legacy of the Blues*

Rich DePaolo
The Burns Sisters, *Close to Home*

Joe Derrane
Joe Derrane, *Give Us Another*
Joe Derrane, *Return to Inis Mor*

Deseret String Band
The Deseret String Band/The Bunkhouse Orchestra, *UTAH: Songs of Statehood*

Don DeVito
The Byrds, *20 Essential Tracks from the Boxed Set: 1965–1990*
The Byrds, *The Byrds*

Guy DeVito
Salamander Crossing, *Salamander Crossing*

Dave Dexter Jr.
Peter & Gordon, *I Go to Pieces*

Tom Diamant
Good Ol' Persons, *Anywhere the Wind Blows*
Good Ol' Persons, *I Can't Stand to Ramble*
Kate Wolf, *Close to You*
Kate Wolf, *Give Yourself to Love*

Hazel Dickens
Jimmy Martin, *You Don't Know My Mind*

Jim Dickinson
Ry Cooder, *Into the Purple Valley*

Jim Dickson
Flying Burrito Brothers, *Burrito Deluxe*
The Greenbriar Boys, *Di'an & the Greenbriar Boy*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *The Hillmen*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Morning Sky*

Bo Diddley
Bo Diddley, *Bo Diddley: His Best*

Conrad Diesler
Austin Lounge Lizards, *Live Bait*
Austin Lounge Lizards, *Small Minds*

Ani DiFranco
Ani DiFranco, *Ani DiFranco*
Ani DiFranco, *Like I Said*
Ani DiFranco, *Living in Clip*
Ani DiFranco, *Women in (E)motion*
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, *the past didn't go anywhere*

Richard Digance
Dougie MacLean, *Butterstone*

Joe DiGiorgi
Tom Chapin, *Doing Our Job*

David DiGiuseppe
Mike Casey, *The Hourglass*

Rodney Dillard
The Dillards, *There Is a Time: The Best of the Dillards 1963–1970*

Dwight Diller
Dwight Diller, *Harvest: West Virginia Mountain Music*

Noel Dinn
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Downstream*

Hilary Dirlam
Bruce Greene, *Fiddler's Dozen*
Bruce Greene, *Vintage Fiddle Tunes*

disappear fear
disappear fear, *Live at the Bottom Line*

Don Dixon
James McMurtry, *Where'd You Hide the Body*
Red Clay Ramblers, *King Mackerel and the Blues Are Running*
Red Clay Ramblers, *Unsophisticated Time*

Djoum
Elliot Murphy, *Selling the Gold*

Richard Dodd
Clannad, *Magical Ring*
Steve Earle, *I Feel Alright*

Anne Dodson
Anne Dodson, *Almost Grown*
Anne Dodson, *From Where I Sit*

Craig Doerge
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Chippin' Away*

Gerard Dole
The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa, *J'ai Vu le Loup, le Renard et la Belette*

Gabriel Donahue
James Keane, *That's the Spirit*

Lloyd Paul Donnelly
David Buskin/Buskin and Batteau, *Heaven Is Free Tonight*

Gabriel Donohue
Eileen Ivers, *Eileen Ivers*
Joanie Madden, *A Whistle on the Wind*

Gabrielle Donohue
Cathie Ryan, *The Back Door*

Dordan
Mary Bergin/Dordan, *Jigs to the Moon*
Mary Bergin/Dordan, *The Night Before . . . A Celtic Christmas*

Neil Dorfsman
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*
Paul Brady, *True for You*

Bob D'Orleans
David Rea, *By the Grace of God*

Joel Dorn
Mose Allison, *Allison Wonderland: The Mose Allison Anthology*
Leon Redbone, *Double Time*

Ruthie Dornfeld
The American Cafe Orchestra, *Egyptian Dominoes*

Doug Dorschug
Guy Carawan/The Carawan Family, *Home Brew*

Craig Dory
Carol Thompson, *The Enchanted Isles*

Brian C. Doser
Chuck Brodsky, *A Fingerpainter's Murals*

Double Decker String Band
The Double Decker String Band, *Giddyap Napoleon*
The Double Decker String Band, *Sentimental Songs & Old Time Melodies*

David Doucet
David Doucet, *Quand J'ai Parti*

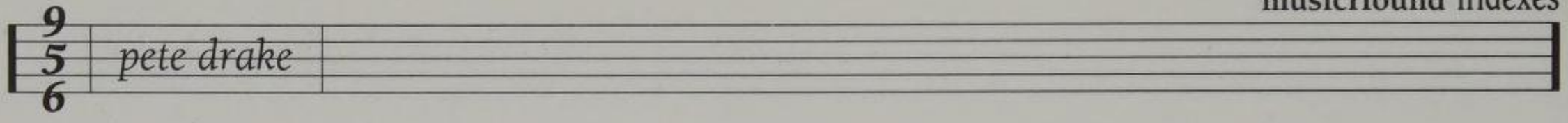
Michael Doucet
Beausoleil, *Cajun Conja*
Beausoleil, *La Danse de la Vie*
California Cajun Orchestra, *Not Lonesome Anymore*
David Doucet, *Beau Solo*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Cajun Roots*
Tasso, *Viens à Ma Maison (Come to My House)*

Alan Douglas
Albert King, *Red House*

Jerry Douglas
Russ Barenberg, *Skip, Hop & Wobble*
Roy Book Binder, *Bookeroo!*
The Brother Boys, *Plow*
Alison Brown, *I've Got That Old Feeling*
Jason Carter, *The Cold Hard Facts*
Jason Carter, *A Deeper Shade of Blue*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Everything Is Gonna Work Out Fine*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *The Great Dobro Sessions*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Skip, Hop & Wobble*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Slide Rule*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Under the Wire*
Tony Furtado, *Within Reach*
The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury, *Cold Hard Facts*
Doris "D.L." Menard, *Cajun Saturday Night*
The Nashville Bluegrass Band, *Unleashed*
The Nashville Bluegrass Band, *Waitin' for the Hard Times to Go*
Tim O'Brien/Tim & Mollie O'Brien, *Oh Boy! O'Boy*
Maura O'Connell, *Blue Is the Colour of Hope*
Maura O'Connell, *Stories*
Sally Van Meter, *All in Good Time*
Sally Van Meter, *The Great Dobro Sessions*

Tom Dowd
Eric Clapton, *461 Ocean Boulevard*
Eric Clapton, *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*
Buddy Guy, *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play the Blues*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Trouble in Paradise*

Nick Drake
Nick Drake, *Pink Moon*



Pete Drake
Ernest Tubb, *Ernest Tubb—The Last Sessions; All-Time Greatest Hits*

Dan Drasin
Patrick Ball, *The Music of Turlough O'Carolan*
Patrick Ball, *Secret Isles*

R.N. Drevo
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *E.C. Ball with Orna Ball*

Frank Driggs
Woody Guthrie, *Dust Bowl Ballads*
Robert Johnson, *King of the Delta Blues Singers*
Robert Johnson, *Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Feast Here Tonight*

Joel Drone
Leon Redbone, *On the Track*

Dry Branch Fire Squad
Dry Branch Fire Squad, *Live! At Last*

Bob Duffey
Tom Waits, *The Early Years*
Tom Waits, *The Early Years, Volume 2*

John Duffey
The Country Gentlemen, *Folk Songs and Bluegrass*

Alan Duffy
Scott Appel, *Brittle Days*

Martha Duffy
Debby McClatchy, *Light Years Away*

Dan Duggan
Dan Duggan, *Between the Seasons*
Dan Duggan, *Trillium Lane*

Glen Duncan
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Larry Cordle, Glen Duncan & Lonesome Standard Time*
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Lonesome As It Gets*

Stuart Duncan
Tony Furtado, *Full Circle*
David Grier, *Lone Soldier*

John Dunford
De Danann/De Dannan, *Anthem*
Sharon Shannon, *Mind the Gap*
Sharon Shannon, *Sharon Shannon*
The Waterboys, *Fisherman's Blues*

Tom Durack
disappear fear, *Live at the Bottom Line*

Robert Duskis
Scott Cossu, *A Windham Hill Retrospective*

Bob Dyer
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Johnny Whistletrigger*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Rebel in the Woods*

Bob Dylan
Bob Dylan, *Basement Tapes*
Bob Dylan, *Blood on the Tracks*

Sue Dyson
Judy Small, *Global Village*

Fred Eaglesmith
Fred Eaglesmith, *Drive-In Movie*

Steve Earle
Steve Earle, *El Corazon*

East Side Flash
Laura Love, *Z Therapy*

Jim Ebert
Magpie, *Circle of Life*
Al Petteway, *The Waters and the Wild*

Dave Edmunds
k.d. lang, *Angel with a Lariat*

Ed's Redeeming Qualities
Ed's Redeeming Qualities, *At the Fish & Game Club*
Ed's Redeeming Qualities, *Big Grapefruit Clean-Up Job*
Ed's Redeeming Qualities, *More Bad Times*

Don Edwards
Don Edwards, *Saddle Songs*

Esmond Edwards
Mose Allison, *Middle Class White Boy*

Jonathan Edwards
Cheryl Wheeler, *Cheryl Wheeler*
Cheryl Wheeler, *Mrs. Pinocci's Guitar*

Kenny Edwards
Karla Bonoff, *Karla Bonoff*
Karla Bonoff, *Restless Nights*

Seamus Egan
Cathie Ryan, *Cathie Ryan*
Solas, *The Brothers McMullen: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*
Solas, *Songlines*
Solas, *A Week in January*
Solas, *When Juniper Sleeps*

Kevin Eggers
Townes Van Zandt, *Our Mother the Mountain*
Townes Van Zandt, *Townes Van Zandt*

Kat Eggleston
Andrew Calhoun, *Hope*
Kat Eggleston, *Outside Eden*
Kat Eggleston, *Second Nature*

Egyptians
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Globe of Frogs*

Dan Einstein
Steve Goodman, *Affordable Art*
John Prine, *John Prine Live*

Jason Eklund
Jason Eklund, *Jason Eklund*
Jason Eklund, *A Streamliner's Duet*

Betty Elders
Betty Elders, *After the Curtain*
Betty Elders, *Crayons*
Betty Elders, *Daddy's Coal*
Betty Elders, *Peaceful Existence*

Chuck Eller
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio, *Mes Amis!*

Neenah Ellis
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, *Legends of Folk*

Tony Elman
Tony Elman, *Winter Creek*

Joe Ely
Terry Allen, *Songs from Chippy*
Joe Ely, *Hi-Res*
Joe Ely, *Love and Danger*
Joe Ely, *Musta Notta Gotta Lotta*
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *Love and Danger*

Bill Emerson
Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass, *Bridging the Gap*

Jim Emrich
Kate Campbell, *Songs from the Levee*
Dan Crary, *Take a Step Over*

Enessay Music
No Strings Attached, *Isles of Langerhans*
No Strings Attached, *Traditional Music of the Future*

Tony Engle
Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt, *Heat Light & Sound*
Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band, *For As Many As Will*
Séamus Ennis, *The Wandering Minstrel*
Archie Fisher, *Will Ye Gang, Love*
Dick Gaughan, *Coppers and Brass*
A.L. Lloyd, *The Bird in the Bush*
A.L. Lloyd, *English and Scottish Folk Ballads*
Ewan MacColl, *The Real MacColl*
Waterson:Carthy, *Common Tongue*

Waterson:Carthy, *Waterson:Carthy*
The Watersons, *For Pence and Spicy Ale*

Lyman Enloe
Lyman Enloe, *Fiddle Tunes I Recall*

Séamus Ennis
Séamus Ennis, *The Best of Irish Piping*

Brian Eno
Jane Siberry, *When I Was a Boy*

Ellen Epstein
Cindy Kallet, *Only Human*

Howie Epstein
John Prine, *The Missing Years*

Wayne Erbsen
Wayne Erbsen, *Southern Mountain Classics*

Susie Erenrich
Magpie, *The Long Walk to Freedom Reunion Concert*

Ahmet Ertegun
Rockin' Dopsie, *Louisiana Music*
Buddy Guy, *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play the Blues*
Blind Willie McTell, *Atlanta 12 String*

Colin Escott
The Stanley Brothers, *Angel Band: The Classic Mercury Recordings*
Hank Williams, *The Original Singles Collection . . . Plus*

Tom Espinola
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit, *Feather River*
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit, *Which Way Waltz*

David Evans
Robert Wilkins, *Remember Me*

Jack Evans
Wendy Stewart, *About Time 2*

Todd Everett
Hoyt Axton, *American Originals*

Jeff Eyrich
T-Bone Burnett, *Proof through the Night*

John Fahey
Dock Boggs, *Country Blues*
John Fahey, *The Essential John Fahey*
Skip James, *She Lyin'*
Bukka White, *1963 Isn't 1962*
Bukka White, *Legacy of the Blues*

Warren Fahey
A.L. Lloyd, *The Old Bush Songs*

Fairport Convention
Fairport Convention, *Jewel in the Crown*

Joe Falsia
Tim Buckley, *Look at the Fool*

Michael Falzarano
Hot Tuna, *Classic Hot Tuna Acoustic*
Hot Tuna, *Classic Hot Tuna Electric*

Georgie Fame
Mose Allison, *Tell Me Something*

Farmer's Daughters
Farmer's Daughters, *Farmer's Daughters*

John Faulkner
Dolores Keane, *Farewell to Eirinn*
Dolores Keane, *Sail óg Rua*

Charlie Faurot
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *E.C. Ball with the Friendly Gospel Singers*
George Pegram, *George Pegram*

Bob Feldman
Greg Brown, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*
Prudence Johnson, *Hi Fly*
Prudence Johnson, *Little Dreamer . . . Lullabies for Young and Old*
Sweet Honey in the Rock, *Ben and Jerry's Newport Folk Festival: Turn of the Decade*

Fennig's All-Stars
Bill Spence, *Fennigmania*
Bill Spence, *The Hammered Dulcimer Returns!*

Mike Fenton
Mike Fenton, *The Best of Mike Fenton 1984–1996*

Joe Ferry
Guy Davis, *Call Down the Thunder*

Fiddle Fever
Fiddle Fever, *The Best of Fiddle Fever*
Fiddle Fever, *Fiddle Fever*

R.S. Field
Mark Germino, *Radartown*

John Strawberry Fields
John Denver, *Minneapolis Does Denver*

Filé
Filé, *La Vie Marron (The Runaway Life)*

Carl Finch
Trout Fishing in America, *Mine!*
Trout Fishing in America, *Over the Limit*

Sally Fingerett
Camille West, *Gabby Road–Out of the Mouths of Babes: Life According to the Bitchin' Babes*

Bob Finiz
Lovin' Spoonful, *Revelation: Revolution '69*

Cathy Fink
Critton Hollow String Band, *By and By*
Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, *A Cathy and Marcy Collection for Kids*
Si Kahn, *Good Times and Bedtimes*
Patsy Montana, *The Cowboy's Sweetheart*
Rude Girls, *Rude Awakening*

Alec Finn
De Danann/De Dannan, *1/2 Set in Harlem*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Anthem*
De Danann/De Dannan, *A Jacket of Batteries*

Archie Fisher
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, *The Makem and Clancy Collection*
Silly Wizard, *So Many Partings*

Bob Fisher
Bob Wills, *Anthology, 1935–73*

Reggie Fisher
T-Bone Burnett, *Trap Door*
T-Bone Burnett, *Truth Decay*
T-Bone Burnett, *When the Night Falls*

Steve Fisher
Steve Fisher, *A Boy's Life in Texas*

Dan Fitzgerald
De Danann/De Dannan, *A Jacket of Batteries*
The Voice Squad, *Good People All*
The Voice Squad, *Many the Foolish Youth*

Five Chinese Brothers
Five Chinese Brothers, *Let's Kill Saturday Night*
Five Chinese Brothers, *Singer Songwriter Beggarman Thief*

Jonas Fjeld
Tom Russell, *Poor Man's Dream*

Béla Fleck
Stuart Duncan, *Stuart Duncan*
Maura O'Connell, *Helpless Heart*
Maura O'Connell, *Just in Time*
Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, *Flight of the Cosmic Hippo*
Béla Fleck/Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, *Tales from the Acoustic Planet*

Joe Fleming
David Olney, *Deeper Well*

Robin Flower
Robin Flower, *Babies with Glasses*
Robin Flower, *More Than Friends*

Flying Burrito Brothers
Flying Burrito Brothers, *The Gilded Palace of Sin*

Kevin Flynn
Planxty, *The Best of Planxty Live*

Dan Fogelberg
Dan Fogelberg, *High Country Snows*
Dan Fogelberg, *Windows and Walls*
Magical Strings, *River of Souls*

Folk-Legacy
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *'Twas on a Night Like This*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *For All the Good People*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *On a Day Like Today*
Cindy Kallet, *Working on Wings to Fly*

David Folks
David Folks, *Refusing to View*
David Folks, *Roadside Park*

Hannes Folterbauer
Blind Blake, *Blind Blake: The Accompanist*

Forbes Family
The Forbes Family, *In the Shadow of Your Wings*

Homer Forbes
The Forbes Family, *Best of the Early Forbes Family*

Ken Ford
Schooner Fare, *The First 10 Years*

Julia Fordham
Julia Fordham, *Falling Forward*

Peter Fornatale
Harry Chapin, *The Bottom Line Encore Collection*

John Forster
John Forster, *Entering Marion*
John Forster, *Helium*

Nick Forster
Kate MacKenzie, *Age of Innocence*
Kate MacKenzie, *Let Them Talk*
Marley's Ghost, *Four Spacious Guys*

Fred Foster
Kris Kristofferson, *Me and Bobby McGee*

Four Bitchin' Babes
Four Bitchin' Babes, *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume II*
Christine Lavin, *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume II*

Paul Fox
Sara Hickman, *Necessary Angels*
Victoria Williams, *Loose*

Michael Fracasso
Michael Fracasso, *Love & Trust*

Amy Fradon
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon, *Flyin' on the Wings of Heaven*

Ronald Frangipane
Chris Smither, *I'm a Stranger Too*

Keith Frank
Keith Frank, *What's His Name?*

Alasdair Fraser
Alasdair Fraser, *The Driven Bow*
Alasdair Fraser, *The North Road*

Scott Fraser
Kim Robertson, *Treasures of the Celtic Harp*
Joemy Wilson, *Beatles on Hammered Dulcimer*
Joemy Wilson, *Carolan's Cottage*
Joemy Wilson, *Carolan's Cup*
Joemy Wilson, *Celtic Dreams*
Joemy Wilson, *Celtic Treasures*
Joemy Wilson, *Dargason: A Dulcimer Sampler*
Joemy Wilson, *Dulcimer Lullabies*

Gail Fratar
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar, *Take Me Up*

Free Hot Lunch!
Free Hot Lunch!, *Penguin Love*

Charles Freeland
The Country Gentlemen, *Calling My Children Home*

Ronnie Freeland
Johnson Mountain Boys, *Blue Diamond*
Magpie, *Seed on the Prairie*

Dave Freeman
The Camp Creek Boys, *Old Time String Band*
The Country Gentlemen, *25 Years*
The Delmore Brothers, *Sand Mountain Blues*
Lilly Brothers/Lilly Brothers & Don Stover, *Early Recordings*

Ed Freeman
Don McLean, *American Pie*
Tom Rush, *The Best of Tom Rush*
Livingston Taylor, *Echoes*

Michael Freeman
Chubby Carrier/Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band, *Who Stole the Hot Sauce?*

Gideon Freudmann
Gideon Freudmann, *Adobe Dog House*
Gideon Freudmann, *Cellobotomy*
Michael Hurley, *WolfWays*

Franklin Fried
The Chad Mitchell Trio, *Slightly Irreverent*

Ed Friedland
Michael Hurley, *WolfWays*

Barry Friedman
Michael Bloomfield, *East-West*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *East-West*

Kinky Friedman
Kinky Friedman, *Kinky Friedman*
Kinky Friedman, *Lasso from El Paso*
Kinky Friedman, *Old Testaments & New Revelations*

Robert Fripp
The Roches, *Keep on Doing*
The Roches, *The Roches*

Front Range
Front Range, *Back to Red River*
Front Range, *The New Frontier*
Front Range, *One Beautiful Day*

Mitchell Froom
Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson, *Rumour and Sigh*

Chris Frymire
Paul Geremia, *Live from Uncle Sam's Backyard*

Garth Fundis
The New Grass Revival, *Hold to a Dream*

Tret Fure
Tret Fure, *Between the Covers*
Tret Fure, *Time Turns the Moon*

Ron Furmanek
The Four Preps, *The Four Preps*

Gary Furniss
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Downstream*
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Figgy Duff*
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Weather out the Storm*

Tony Furtado
Tony Furtado, *Within Reach*

Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Fuzzy Mountain String Band, *Fuzzy Mountain String Band*

Milt Gabler
Burl Ives, *Funny Way of Laughin'*
Burl Ives, *Payin' My Dues Again*
Burl Ives, *Songs of the West*

Pete Gage
Joan Armatrading, *Back to the Night*

Jon Gailmor
Jon Gailmor, *Dirt!*

Jim Gaines
Luther Allison, *Reckless*
Luther Allison, *Soul Fixin' Man*

Gary Gallier
Les & Gary Gallier, *Crossed Roads*
Les & Gary Gallier, *Race to the Gate*

Les and Gary Gallier
Les & Gary Gallier, *On the Wing*

Annie Gallup
Annie Gallup, *Backbone*

Peter Gallway
Cliff Eberhardt, *The Long Road*
Cliff Eberhardt, *Now You Are My Home*
Cormac McCarthy, *Picture Gallery Blues*

Beppe Gambetta
Beppe Gambetta, *Dialogs*

Leon Gamble
Laura Nyro, *Gonna Take a Miracle*

Don Gant
Jimmy Buffett, *Living and Dying in 3/4 Time*

Val Garay
Joan Armatrading, *The Key*

Art Garfunkel
Art Garfunkel, *Angel Clare*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bookends*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bridge over Troubled Water*
Simon & Garfunkel, *The Concert in Central Park*

Terry Garthwaite
Robin Flower, *Green Sneakers*

Albert Garzon
Brenda Kahn, *Goldfish Don't Talk Back*

Dick Gaughan
Ceolbeg, *Seeds to the Wind*
Dick Gaughan, *A Different Kind of Love Song*
Dick Gaughan, *Handful of Earth*

Frankie Gavin
De Danann/De Dannan, *1/2 Set in Harlem*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Anthem*
De Danann/De Dannan, *A Jacket of Batteries*
Frankie Gavin, *Croch Suas é—Up and Away*
Frankie Gavin, *Frankie Goes to Town*
Frankie Gavin, *An Irish Christmas*
Frankie Gavin, *A Tribute to Joe Cooley*

Don Gehman
Tracy Chapman, *New Beginning*
The subdudes, *The subdudes*

Heinz Geissler
Steve Young, *Solo/Live*

Gregg Geller
Flatt & Scruggs, *The Complete Mercury Sessions*
Tracy Nelson, *The Best of Tracy Nelson/Mother Earth*

Lowell George
Grateful Dead, *Shakedown Street*

Nina Gerber
Carol McComb, *Tears into Laughter*
Kristina Olsen, *Hurry on Home*
Kristina Olsen, *Love, Kristina*
Kate Wolf, *The Wind Blows Wild*

Paul Geremia
Paul Geremia, *I Really Don't Mind Livin'/My Kinda Place*

Michael Germaine
Planxty, *The Best of Planxty Live*

Birger Gesthuisen
David Lindley, *World out of Time: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar*
David Lindley, *World out of Time Volume II: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar*

Franck Giboni
Alan Stivell, *A l'Olympia*
Alan Stivell, *Renaissance of the Celtic Harp*

Bob Gibson
Bob Gibson, *Bob Gibson and Bob Camp at the Gate of Horn*
Tom Paxton, *A Child's Christmas*
Tom Paxton, *Even a Gray Day*
Tom Paxton, *The Marvelous Toy and Other Gallimaufry*
Tom Paxton, *The Very Best of Tom Paxton*

Pete Gibson
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Standing at the Burying Ground*

Steve Gibson
Michael Martin Murphey, *Cowboy Songs*
Red Steagall, *Born to This Land*

John Gilbert
Young Tradition, *The Holly Bears the Crown*

Earl Gill
The Dubliners, *A Parcel of Rogues*

Janis Gill
Sweethearts of the Rodeo, *Beautiful Lies*
Sweethearts of the Rodeo, *Rodeo Waltz*

Lee Gillette
Jack Guthrie, *Oklahoma Hills*
Merle Travis, *Folk Songs of the Hills*

Steve Gillette
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Light of the Day*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Live in Concert*

Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *Two Roads: Live in Australia*

Voyle Gilmore
The Kingston Trio, *At Large*
The Kingston Trio, *The Capitol Years*
The Kingston Trio, *The Kingston Trio*
The Kingston Trio, *Live at the Hungry I*
The Kingston Trio, *New Frontier*
The Kingston Trio, *String Along*

Paddy Glackin
Kevin Burke, *An Fhidil Sraith II (The Fiddle, Volume II)*
Martin Hayes, *An Fhidil Sraith I (The Fiddle, Volume I)*
Seán Keane, *An Fhidil Sraith II (The Fiddle, Volume II)*

Keith Glass
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *Two Roads: Live in Australia*

Mick Glossop
The Waterboys, *This Is the Sea*

Anton Glovsky
Ewan MacColl, *Classic Scots Ballads*
Jean Ritchie, *Carols for All Seasons*

Jeffrey Gold
Phil Ochs, *The War Is Over: The Best of Phil Ochs*

Morris Goldberg
Tony Bird, *Sorry Africa*

Mark Goldenberg
Karla Bonoff, *New World*

960 jon goldsmith

Jon Goldsmith
Bruce Cockburn, *Stealing Fire*
Jane Siberry, *No Borders Here*

Thomas Goldsmith
David Olney, *Deeper Well*
David Olney, *Roses*

Jerry Goldstein
Tim Buckley, *Greetings from LA*

Kenneth S. Goldstein
The Rev. Gary Davis, *Say No to the Devil*
Bob Gibson, *Joy Joy! The Young and Wonderful Bob Gibson: The Riverside Folklore Series Vol. I*

Steve Goodman
Steve Goodman, *Affordable Art*
Steve Goodman, *Santa Ana Winds*
John Prine, *Bruised Orange*

Randy Goodrum
Michael Johnson, *Departure*

Dave Gordon
Charlie King, *Food Phone Gas Lodging*

James Gordon
Tamarack, *The 15th Anniversary Concert*

Emory Gordy Jr.
Steve Earle, *Guitar Town*
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *Spinning around the Sun*

Al Gorgoni
Eric Andersen, *More Hits from Tin Can Alley*

Skip Gorman
Skip Gorman, *Greener Prairie*
Skip Gorman, *Lonesome Prairie Love*

Arthur Gorson
Tom Rush, *The Circle Game*

Vern Gosdin
Vern Gosdin, *The Gospel Album*
Vern Gosdin, *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)*

Kieran Goss
Tommy Sands, *Beyond the Shadows*

Richard Gottehrer
Darden Smith, *Little Victories*
David Wilcox, *Big Horizon*

Joe Gracey
Butch Hancock, *Diamond Hill*
Butch Hancock, *Firewater Seeks Its Own Level*
Butch Hancock, *West Texas Waltzes & Dust Blown Tractor Tunes*
Kimmie Rhodes, *West Texas Heaven*

Royce Gracey
Butch Hancock, *Yella Rose*

Wayne Gracey
Butch Hancock, *Cause of the Cactus*

Benny Graeff
Tasso, *1929 and Back: Traditional Cajun Music*
Tasso, *Catch My Hat*
Tasso, *The Old Timey Way*

Michael Graham
Carrie Newcomer, *An Angel at My Shoulder*

Bill Grant
Delia Bell and Bill Grant, *Dreaming*
Delia Bell and Bill Grant, *A Few Dollars More*

Charles "Bud" Grant
Irish Rovers, *On the Shores of Americay*

Dave Grant
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, *Light Enough to Find My Way*

John Grant
disappear fear, *Live at the Bottom Line*

Grateful Dead
Grateful Dead, *American Beauty*
Grateful Dead, *Workingman's Dead*

Nigel Gray
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*

Rick Grech
Gram Parsons, *G.P./Grievous Angel*

Dan Green
Four Bitchin' Babes, *Fax It, Charge It, Don't Ask Me What's for Dinner*

Adam Greenberg
Don Pedi, *The Hog Went through the Fence Yoke and All*

Kenny Greenberg
Joan Baez, *Gone from Danger*

Bruce Greene
Bruce Greene, *Fiddler's Dozen*
Bruce Greene, *Five Miles of Ellum Wood*
Bruce Greene, *Old Time Pickin'*
Bruce Greene, *Vintage Fiddle Tunes*

Charles Greene
Buffalo Springfield, *Buffalo Springfield*

Richard Greene
Richard Greene/The Grass Is Greener, *The Greene Fiddler*
Richard Greene/The Grass Is Greener, *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam*
Muleskinner, *Muleskinner: A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam*

Manny Greenhill
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Old Timey Concert: Doc Watson, Clint Howard, and Fred Price*

Mitch Greenhill
Robin Flower, *1st Dibs*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Watson Country: Doc and Merle Watson*

Robin Williamson, *Wheel of Fortune*

Danny Greenspoon
Spirit of the West, *Save This House*

Clive Gregson
Alison Brown, *I Love This Town*
Clive Gregson, *Carousel of Noise*
Clive Gregson, *I Love This Town*
Clive Gregson, *People and Places*
Clive Gregson, *Welcome to the Workhouse*
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, *A Change in the Weather*
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, *The Last Word*
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, *Love Is a Strange Hotel*
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister, *Welcome to the Workhouse*

Adie Grey
Adie Grey, *Brand New Old Time Music*
Adie Grey, *Grandpa's Advice*

Charlie Grey
Frankie Armstrong, *Ways of Seeing*

Grianan
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *The Maid of Eirin*

David Grier
Jason Carter, *On the Move*
David Grier, *Climbing The Walls*
David Grier, *Freewheeling*

Bill Griffin
Kate Wolf, *Close to You*
Kate Wolf, *Looking Back at You*

Rob Griffin
Beppe Gambetta, *Good News from Home*
Jerry Rockwell, *American Architecture*

Jerry Rockwell, *As Silent Stars Go By*

Grace Griffith
Grace Griffith, *GRACE*

Nanci Griffith
Nanci Griffith, *Last of the True Believers*
Nanci Griffith, *Lone Star State of Mind*
Nanci Griffith, *One Fair Summer Evening*

Nick Griffiths
The Barra MacNeils, *The Question*

David Grisman
Red Allen, *Bluegrass Reunion*
Red Allen, *The Kitchen Tapes*
Rudy Cipolla, *Portrait of an American Original*
Rudy Cipolla, *The World of Rudy Cipolla*
Vassar Clements, *Breakdown*
Vassar Clements, *That High Lonesome Sound*
David Grisman, *David Grisman Quintet*
David Grisman, *DGQ-20*
David Grisman, *Doc & Dawg*
Homer & Jethro, *Swing Low, Sweet Mandolin*
Evan Marshall, *Mandolin Magic*
Peter Rowan, *High Lonesome Sound*
Andy Statman, *Songs for Our Fathers*
Frank Wakefield, *The Kitchen Tapes*
Radim Zenkl, *Galactic Mandolin*

Pieter Groenveld
Good Ol' Persons, *Good n' Live*
Si Kahn, *In My Heart: Live in Holland*

Don Grolnick
James Taylor, *Best Live*
James Taylor, *(Live)*
James Taylor, *Never Die Young*
James Taylor, *New Moon Shine*

Albert Grossman
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Album 1700*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *In Concert*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Peter, Paul, and Mary*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *See What Tomorrow Brings*

Stefan Grossman
Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews, *The Art of Fingerstyle Jazz Guitar*
The Rev. Gary Davis, *Blues & Ragtime*
Sleepy John Estes, *I Ain't Gonna Be Worried No More, 1929–41*
Stefan Grossman, *Black Melodies on a Clear Afternoon*
Mississippi Sheiks, *Stop and Listen*
Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum, *Buckets of Rain*

Barry Gruber
Annie Gallup, *Cause and Effect*

Gryphon Quintet
Carol McComb, *Undecided*

Les and Gwen Gustafson-Zook
Les Gustafson-Zook, *Long Time Traveling*

Buddy Guy
Buddy Guy, *Live! The Real Deal*

Bob Haddad
Beausoleil, *Vintage Beausoleil*

Joe Hadlock
Linda Waterfall, *My Heart Sings*

Ron Haffkine
Shel Silverstein, *Songs and Stories*

Neal Hagberg
Neal & Leandra, *Accidental Dreams*

Roy Halee
Art Garfunkel, *Angel Clare*
Laura Nyro, *New York Tendaberry*
The Roches, *Nurds*
Shel Silverstein, *Freakin' at the Freakers Ball*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bookends*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bridge over Troubled Water*
Simon & Garfunkel, *The Concert in Central Park*
Paul Simon, *Hearts and Bones*
Paul Simon, *Paul Simon*

Bill Hall
Albert Collins, *Complete Imperial Recordings*

Kristen Hall
Kristen Hall, *Fact & Fiction*
Kristen Hall, *Real Life Stuff*

Rachel Hall
Simple Gifts, *Other Places, Other Times*

Tom T. Hall
Tom T. Hall, *Home Grown*

Mark Hallman
Michael Fracasso, *Return to Zero*
Sara Hickman, *Necessary Angels*
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *The Dark Ride*
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *Skeleton Keys*
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *Walking a Changing Line*
Eric Taylor, *Eric Taylor*

Bill Halverson
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *So Far*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Stephen Stills*
Flaco Jimenez, *Flaco Jimenez*
Flaco Jimenez, *Partners*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Come on Joe*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Have a Little Faith*

Dave Hamilton
Cindy Church, *Love on the Range*

Diane Hamilton
Etta Baker, *Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians*

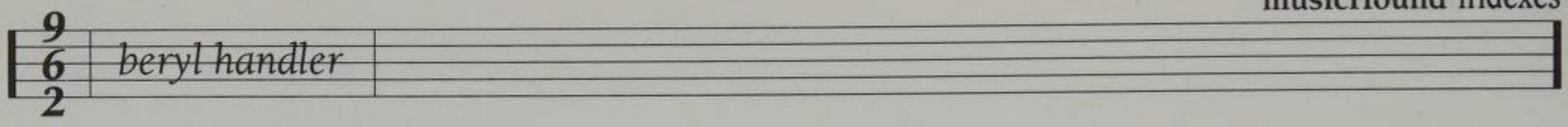
Stuart Hamilton
Mouth Music, *Mo-Di*

John Hammond
Bob Dylan, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*
John Hammond Jr., *Found True Love*
Carolyn Hester, *Carolyn Hester*
Pete Seeger, *American Industrial Folk Ballads*
Pete Seeger, *We Shall Overcome*

Lee Hammond
Tim Buckley, *Dream Letter: Live in London, 1968*

Lorraine & Bennett Hammond
Lorraine (Lee) Hammond/Lorraine & Bennett Hammond/Solomon's Seal/Rick & Lorraine Lee, *Peace on Earth*

Butch Hancock
Jimmie Dale Gilmore, *Two Roads: Live in Australia*
Butch Hancock, *Cause of the Cactus*
Butch Hancock, *Diamond Hill*
Butch Hancock, *Firewater Seeks Its Own Level*
Butch Hancock, *No Two Alike Tape of the Month Club*
Butch Hancock, *West Texas Waltzes & Dust Blown Tractor Tunes*
Butch Hancock, *Yella Rose*



Beryl Handler
Leon Redbone, *From Branch to Branch*
Leon Redbone, *Live*
Leon Redbone, *No Regrets*
Leon Redbone, *Red to Blue*

Matt Haney
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio, *Mes Amis!*

Barry Hansen
John Fahey, *The Essential John Fahey*

Andrew Hardin
Katy Moffatt, *Walkin' on the Moon*
Tom Russell, *Hurricane Season*
Tom Russell, *Poor Man's Dream*

Brian Hardin
Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Dangerous Spirits*
Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Loco Gringo's Lament*

John Wesley Harding
John Wesley Harding, *Dynablob*
John Wesley Harding, *God Made Me Do It: The Christmas EP*
John Wesley Harding, *John Wesley Harding's New Deal*

Mike Hardwick
Michael Fracasso, *Love & Trust*

Jack Hardy
Jack Hardy, *The Cauldron*
Jack Hardy, *The Collected Works: 1965–1995*

Bill Harley
Bill Harley, *Big Big World*
Bill Harley, *I'm Gonna Let It Shine—A Gathering of Voices for Freedom*
Bill Harley, *Sitting on My Hands*
Bill Harley, *Wacka Wacka Woo & Other Stuff*
Sally Rogers, *I'm Gonna Let It Shine*

Chris Harley
Wolfstone, *The Half Tail*

Ben Harper
Ben Harper, *Fight for Your Mind*
Ben Harper, *Welcome to the Cruel World*

Dick Harrington
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young, *Long Journey*
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young, *Lover's Return*

Emmylou Harris
Delia Bell and Bill Grant, *Delia Bell*
Emmylou Harris, *The Ballad of Sally Rose*

Michael Harris
Cindy Lee Berryhill, *Garage Orchestra*
Cindy Lee Berryhill, *Straight Outta Marysville*

Peter Harris
Boys of the Lough, *Farewell and Remember Me*
Boys of the Lough, *Live at Carnegie Hall*
Boys of the Lough, *To Welcome Paddy Home*

Reggie Harris
Magpie, *Spoken in Love*

Brian Harrison
Robin and Barry Dransfield, *The Fiddler's Dream*

Jerry Harrison
Crash Test Dummies, *God Shuffled His Feet*

John Harrod
Roger Cooper, *Going Back to Old Kentucky*

John Hartford
Bob Carlin, *The Fun of Open Discussion*
Owen "Snake" Chapman, *Up in Chapman's Hollow*
Ed Haley, *Forked Deer—Volume 1*
John Hartford, *Wild Hog in the Red Brush and a Bunch of Others You Might Not Have Heard*

Chris Harvey
Les Barker, *Gnus and Roses*
Les Barker, *Oranges and Lemmings*
Les Barker, *Some Love*

Richie Havens
Richie Havens, *Richie Havens Sings the Beatles and Bob Dylan*

Ginny Hawker
Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice, *Come All You Tenderhearted*
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker, *Deep Hollows and High Ridges*

Kerry Hay
Gibson Brothers Band, *Long Forgotten Dream*
Gibson Brothers Band, *Spread Your Wings*
Lilly Brothers/Lilly Brothers & Don Stover, *Live at Hillbilly Ranch*
Piney Creek Weasels, *Squirrel Heads and Gravy*
Joseph "Butch" Robins, *Grounded-Centered-Focused*
Skeeter & the Skidmarks, *Alternate Roots*
Skeeter & the Skidmarks, *Hubbin' It*
Don Stover, *The Lilly Brothers and Don Stover: Live at Hillbilly Ranch*

Martin Hayes
Martin Hayes, *The Lonesome Touch*
Martin Hayes, *Martin Hayes*
Martin Hayes, *The Tulla Ceili Band: A Celebration of 50 Years*
Martin Hayes, *Under the Moon*

Walter Haynes
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1970–1979*

Chip Hayward
Linda Waterfall, *My Heart Sings*

Hazel & Alice
Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard, *Hazel & Alice*

Dan Healy
Grateful Dead, *Shakedown Street*

Mark Heard
Pierce Pettis, *Tinseltown*
Tom Prasada-Rao, *Incoming*

Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *New Mexico Rain*
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *Smilin'*

Michael Hearne
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *New Mexico Rain*
Tish Hinojosa, *Taos to Tennessee*

Michael Hedges
Michael Hedges, *Live on the Double Planet*
Michael Hedges, *Taproot*

Don Heffington
Tammy Rogers, *In the Red*

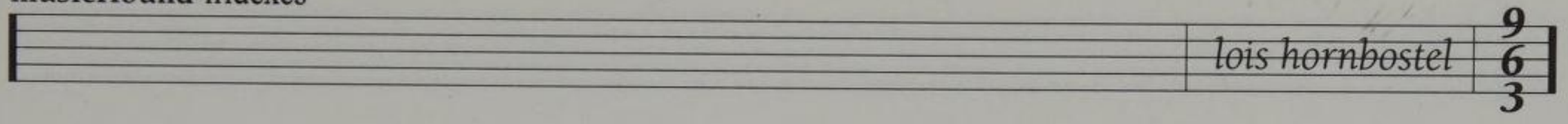
Beth Heidelberg
Judy Austin, *Pickles and Wine*

Gail Heil
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil, *Rural Route 2*

Steve Heinke
Linda Waterfall, *Body English*

Helicon
Helicon, *Horizons: Traditional Music from around the World*
Helicon, *The Titan*

Steven Heller
Laura Boosinger, *My Carolina Home*
David Holt, *Grandfather's Greatest Hits*
David Holt, *I Got a Bullfrog: Folksongs for the Fun of It*
David Holt, *Stellaluna*



Neal Hellman
Neal Hellman, *Oktober Country*

Patrick Henderson
Maria Muldaur, *Open Your Eyes*

Wayne Henderson
Steve Kaufman, *Not Much Work for Saturday*

Margo Hennebach
Margo Hennebach, *Big Love*
Margo Hennebach, *Michaelean*

Nat Hentoff
Lightnin' Hopkins, *Lightnin' in New York*

Priscilla Herdman
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Voices of Winter*
Priscilla Herdman, *Darkness into Light*
Anne Hills, *Voices of Winter*

Heritage Records
Mike Fenton, *The Best of Mike Fenton 1984–1996*

Amy Herot
Eric Andersen, *Stages: The Lost Album*
Taj Mahal, *Rising Sons Featuring Taj Mahal and Ry Cooder*

Jack Herrick
Red Clay Ramblers, *A Lie of the Mind*
Red Clay Ramblers, *Rambler*

Bob Herring
Rafe Stefanini, *Old Paint*

Dennis Herring
Timbuk 3, *Eden Alley*
Timbuk 3, *Greetings from Timbuk 3*

Joe Herrmann
Critton Hollow String Band, *Cowboys and Indians*

John Herrmann
The Freight Hoppers, *Where'd You Come from, Where'd You Go?*
Dirk Powell, *Dirk Powell and John Herrmann*

Carl Hession
Joe Derrane, *Return to Inis Mor*
Frankie Gavin, *An Irish Christmas*

Jack Heyrman
Greg Kihn/The Greg Kihn Band, *Mutiny*

Sara Hickman
Sara Hickman, *Necessary Angels*
Sara Hickman, *Shortstop*

George B. Hicks
Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Dancing in the Aisles*
Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Live! The 13th Anniversary Album*

Linda Higginbotham
Brad Leftwich/Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham, *No One to Bring Home Tonight*

Jim Higgins
The Saw Doctors, *Same Oul' Town*

Highwoods String Band
Mac Benford/Mac Benford and the Woodshed All-Stars, *Feed Your Babies Onions*

John Hill
Bill Staines, *Going to the West*

John & Laurie Hill
Eric Taylor, *Shameless Love*

Laurie Hill
Bill Staines, *Going to the West*

Noel Hill
Noel Hill, *Irish Concertina*

Tommy Hill
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles, *No Help Wanted*

Steve Hillage
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Gravy Deco*

Chris Hillman
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Manassas*

Anne Hills
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Voices of Winter*
Anne Hills, *Angle of the Light*
Anne Hills, *Never Grow Old*
Anne Hills, *On This Day the Earth Shall Ring*
Anne Hills, *Voices of Winter*
Anne Hills, *Woman of a Calm Heart*
Michael Smith, *Michael, Margaret, Pat, and Kate*
Michael Smith, *Michael Smith/Love Stories*
Michael Smith, *Time*

Gordy Hinners
Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers, *Southern Ramble*

Tish Hinojosa
Tish Hinojosa, *Culture Swing*
Tish Hinojosa, *Frontejas*
Tish Hinojosa, *Taos to Tennessee*

Robyn Hitchcock
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Element of Light*
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *I Often Dream of Trains*
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Moss Elixir*

Hank Hoffman
Melanie, *Candles in the Rain*

John Hoke
John Stewart, *Bullets in the Hourglass*

Mr. Hokey
Christine Collister, *The World Is a Wonderful Place: The Songs of Richard Thompson*

Gene Holder
Freedy Johnston, *Unlucky*

Lee Holdridge
John Denver, *Earth Songs*

Jerry Holland
Jerry Holland, *The Fiddlesticks Collection*
Hamish Moore, *Stepping on the Bridge*

Hollow Rock String Band
Hollow Rock String Band, *Traditional Dance Tunes*

Peter Holsapple
Robin Holcomb, *Robin Holcomb*

Aubrey Holt
Boys from Indiana, *Touchin Home*

David Holt
David Holt, *Stellaluna*

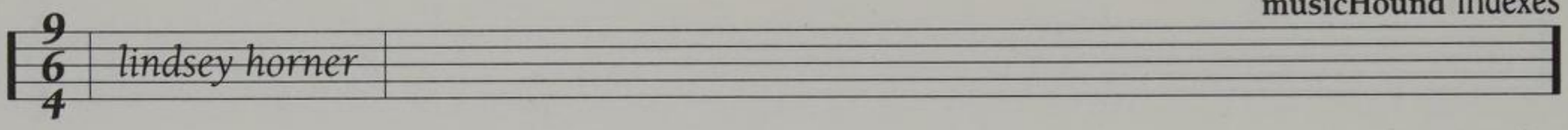
Jac Holzman
Judy Collins, *Fifth Album*
Judy Collins, *Golden Apples of the Sun*
Judy Collins, *In My Life*
Judy Collins, *Judy Collins #3*
Judy Collins, *Maid of Constant Sorrow*
Phil Ochs, *All the News That's Fit to Sing*
Phil Ochs, *I Ain't Marching Anymore*
Phil Ochs, *In Concert*

Alex Hooper
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Standing at the Burying Ground*

Tom Horan
James Keane, *Atlantic Wave*

Ric Hordinski
David Wilcox, *Turning Point*

Lois Hornbostel
Lois Hornbostel, *Dulcimer Enchantment*



Lois Hornbostel, *Dulcimer Jubilee*

Lindsey Horner
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Through the Bitter Frost and Snow*

Ray Horricks
Davey Graham, *Folk Blues and All Points in Between*

Wayne Horvitz
Robin Holcomb, *Robin Holcomb*
Robin Holcomb, *Rockabye*

Thomas Hoskins
Mississippi John Hurt, *Avalon Blues 1963*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Worried Blues*

Hot Rize
Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers, *Take It Home*
Hot Rize/Red Knuckles & the Trailblazers, *Untold Stories*

House Band
The House Band, *Another Setting*
The House Band, *Groundwork*
The House Band, *The House Band*
The House Band, *Pacific*

Serge Hovey
Jean Redpath, *The Songs of Robert Burns, Volumes I and II*

James Newton Howard
Rickie Lee Jones, *The Magazine*
Randy Newman, *Land of Dreams*

Mark Howard
Laura Boosinger, *Sing It Yourself*

Steve Howard
Robin Huw Bowen, *Hunting the Hedgehog*
Robin Huw Bowen, *The Sweet Harp of My Land*

Bones Howe
Michelle Shocked, *Kind Hearted Woman*
Tom Waits, *Anthology of Tom Waits*
Tom Waits, *One from the Heart*
Tom Waits, *Small Change*

Bill Howell
Stan Rogers, *Poetic Justice*

Mike Howlett
Joan Armatrading, *Secret Secrets*

Ray Wylie Hubbard
Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Lost Train of Thought*

Kenny Huff
Laura Nyro, *Gonna Take a Miracle*

Graeme Hughes
Dougie MacLean, *Indigenous*
Dougie MacLean, *Marching Mystery*
Dougie MacLean, *Riof*
Dougie MacLean, *The Search*
Dougie MacLean, *Sunset Song*
Dougie MacLean, *Tribute*

Gilles Hugo
Klezmorim, *Jazz Babies of the Ukraine*

Dakota Dave Hull
Debby McClatchy, *Someday Cafe*

Thomas Hurst
Jez Lowe/Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies, *Galloways*

Ashley Hutchings
Polly Bolton, *No Going Back*
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *The Prospect before Us*
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *Twangin' n' a-Traddin*

Terry Huval
Kristi Guillory, *La Dance des Ancetres*
Kristi Guillory, *Reveille: The New Cajun Generation*
Horace Trahan, *Ossun Blues*
Horace Trahan, *Reveille: The New Cajun Generation*

Bob Hyde
The Byrds, *Never Before*

Janis Ian
Janis Ian, *Breaking Silence*

Bruce Iglauer
Albert Collins, *Frostbite*
Albert Collins, *Frozen Alive!*
Albert Collins, *Live in Japan*
James Cotton, *Harp Attack!*
James Cotton, *High Compression*
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, *Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue*
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, *Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women*

Indigo Girls
Indigo Girls, *1200 Curfews*

Bill Inglot
Tim Buckley, *Dream Letter: Live in London, 1968*
George Jones, *The Best of George Jones*
The Limeliters, *Troubadours of the Folk Era Volume III*
Peter & Gordon, *The Best of Peter and Gordon*
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Sibling Revelry*

Jimmy Iovine
Tracy Chapman, *Matters of the Heart*

Irish Rovers
Irish Rovers, *The Irish Rovers' Gems*

Chad Irschick
Natalie MacMaster, *No Boundaries*
The Rankin Family, *North Country*
The Rankin Family, *The Rankin Family*

Bob Irwin
The Byrds, *The Byrds*
The Byrds, *20 Essential Tracks from the Boxed Set: 1965-1990*
Chad & Jeremy, *Painted Dayglow Smile*
Gene Clark, *Mr. Tambourine Man*
Gene Clark, *Turn! Turn! Turn!*
John Denver, *The Best of John Denver Live*
John Denver, *The Wildlife Concert*
Flatt & Scruggs, *The Essential Flatt & Scruggs: 'Tis Sweet to Be Remembered*
Taj Mahal, *Rising Sons Featuring Taj Mahal and Ry Cooder*

Ken Irwin
Delia Bell and Bill Grant, *Dreaming*
Delia Bell and Bill Grant, *A Few Dollars More*
Blue Sky Boys, *The Blue Sky Boys*
Blue Sky Boys, *In Concert, 1964*
Paul Brown, *Old Time, New Times*
Jason Carter, *Ain't God Good*
Dry Branch Fire Squad, *Live! At Last*
Dry Branch Fire Squad, *Long Journey*
Johnson Mountain Boys, *Blue Diamond*
James King, *Lonesome & Then Some*
Eddie LeJeune, *Cajun Soul*
Eddie LeJeune, *It's in the Blood*
Eddie LeJeune, *Le Trio Cadien*
Longview, *Longview*
Jimmy Martin, *You Don't Know My Mind*
Kimberly M'Carver, *Breathe the Moonlight*
Kimberly M'Carver, *Inherited Road*
Doris "D.L." Menard, *Le Trio Cadien*
Doris "D.L." Menard, *No Matter Where You Are, There You At*
Jimmy C. Newman, *The Alligator Man*
The Whitstein Brothers, *Rose of My Heart*

The Whitstein Brothers, *Sweet Harmony*

Eileen Ivers
Eileen Ivers, *Eileen Ivers*
Eileen Ivers, *Wild Blue*

Ilene Ivers
Cathie Ryan, *The Back Door*

Clayton Ivey
Mac McAnally, *Mac McAnally*

Cy Jack
Whistlebinkies, *Anniversary*
Whistlebinkies, *Inner Sound*
Whistlebinkies, *Pipers of Distinction: Robert Wallace*

Al Jackson Jr.
Albert King, *Born under a Bad Sign*
Albert King, *Live Wire/Blues Power*
Albert King, *Thursday Night in San Francisco*
Albert King, *Wednesday Night in San Francisco*
Otis Redding, *Good to Me*

Carl Jackson
Carl Jackson, *Spring Training*
Jim & Jesse, *Music among Friends*

Kate Jacobs
Kate Jacobs, *What about Regret*

Erik Jacobsen
Tim Hardin, *Hang on to a Dream: The Verve Recordings*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Anthology*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Best of the Lovin' Spoonful*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Best of the Lovin' Spoonful Volume II*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Daydream*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Do You Believe in Magic?*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Hums of the Lovin' Spoonful*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Tarzana Kid*

Bob Jaffe
Bill Harley, *Lunchroom Tales: A Natural History of the Cafetorium*

Doug Jaffe
Jon Gailmor, *Dirt!*

Bob James
Loggins & Messina/Kenny Loggins, *Nightwatch*

Paul James
Blowzabella, *Vanilla*
Debby McClatchy, *Radio Land*

Nick Jameson
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *It All Comes Back*

Phil Jamison
Ralph Blizard/Ralph Blizard and the New Southern Ramblers, *Southern Ramble*

Rick Jarrard
Harry Nilsson, *Harry*

Felton Jarvis
John Hartford, *Earthwords and Music*

S. Jarvis
Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen, *Sleazy Roadside Stories*

John Jennings
Beausoleil, *La Danse de la Vie*
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Come On Come On*
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Shootin' Straight in the Dark*
Mary Chapin Carpenter, *Stones in the Road*
John Jennings, *Buddy*
Bill Morrissey, *Inside*
The Rankin Family, *Endless Seasons*
Smith Sisters/Debi Smith, *In My Dreams*

Michael Jerling
Michael Jerling, *My Evil Twin*
Michael Jerling, *New Suit of Clothes*

Peter Jesperson
Jack Logan, *Bulk*
Jack Logan, *Mood Elevator*

Jim & Jesse
Jim & Jesse, *In the Tradition*

Flaco Jimenez
Flaco Jimenez, *Buena Suerte, Senorita*

Glyn Johns
Joan Armatrading, *Joan Armatrading*
Eric Clapton, *Slowhand*
The Eagles, *Desperado*
The Eagles, *Their Greatest Hits, 1971–1975*
The subdudes, *Annunciation*

Johnson Mountain Boys
Johnson Mountain Boys, *Blue Diamond*

Howard Johnson
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, *Mana*

Mark Johnson
Mark Johnson/Mark Johnson & Clawgrass, *Clawgrass*

Matt Johnson
Hank Williams, *Hanky Panky*

Michael Johnson
Michael Johnson, *Departure*
Michael Johnson, *Then & Now*

Prudence Johnson
Prudence Johnson, *Prudence Johnson Sings the Songs of Greg Brown*

Roger Johnson
Jason Eklund, *A Streamliner's Duet*

Bob Johnston
Michael Bloomfield, *Highway 61 Revisited*
Johnny Cash, *At Folsom Prison/At San Quentin*
Leonard Cohen, *Songs from a Room*
Leonard Cohen, *Songs of Love and Hate*
Bob Dylan, *Blonde on Blonde*
Bob Dylan, *Dylan*
Bob Dylan, *Highway 61 Revisited*
Dan Hicks, *Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks*

Michael Martin Murphey, *Geronimo's Cadillac*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Sounds of Silence*

Stanley Johnston
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Chippin' Away*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Live It Up*

Allen Jones
Albert King, *I'll Play the Blues for You*

Booker T. Jones
Willie Nelson, *Pretty Paper*

Carl Jones
James Bryan, *Two Pictures*

Carol Elizabeth Jones
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, *Light Enough to Find My Way*

Casey Jones
Albert Collins, *Frostbite*

Diane Jones
Diane Jones and & King, *There Are No Rules*

Frank Jones
Jim & Jesse, *Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More*

Gordon Jones
Frankie Armstrong, *The Fair Moon Rejoices*
Sara Grey, *Sara*
Pete Morton, *Courage, Love, and Grace*
Pete Morton, *Frivolous Love*
Pete Morton, *Mad World Blues*

Kenny Jones
Billy Bragg, *Back to Basics*
Billy Bragg, *Talking with the Taxman about Poetry*

Rickie Lee Jones
Rickie Lee Jones, *Ghostyhead*
Rickie Lee Jones, *The Magazine*
Rickie Lee Jones, *Traffic from Paradise*

Robert John Jones
Vern Gosdin, *The Gospel Album*
Vern Gosdin, *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)*

Glen Jordan
Tom Rush, *Work in Progress*

John Jordan
Michael Hurley, *WolfWays*

Nathan Joseph
The Dubliners, *Complete Dubliners*
The Dubliners, *The Definitive Transatlantic Collection*
Bert Jansch, *The Best of Bert Jansch*
The Johnstons, *The Johnstons/The Barleycorn*
John Renbourn, *Sir John Alot of Merry England*
Young Tradition, *The Young Tradition/So Cheerfully Round*

Laurence Juber
Al Stewart, *Between the Wars*

Kay Justice
Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice, *Come All You Tenderhearted*

Shel Kagen
Lightnin' Hopkins, *Swarthmore Concert*

Brenda Kahn
Brenda Kahn, *60-Second Critic*

Jesse M. Kahn
Si Kahn, *In My Heart: Live in Holland*

David Kahne
Shawn Colvin, *Cover Girl*
Brenda Kahn, *Epiphany in Brooklyn*

George Kahumoku Jr.
George Kahumoku Jr., *Drenched by Music*

Henry Kaiser
David Lindley, *World out of Time: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar*
David Lindley, *World out of Time Volume II: Henry Kaiser and David Lindley in Madagascar*

Kaleidoscope
Kate Wolf, *Gold in California*

Cindy Kallet
Cindy Kallet, *Dreaming down a Quiet Line*
Cindy Kallet, *Neighbors*
Cindy Kallet, *Only Human*
Cindy Kallet, *Working on Wings to Fly*

Kathy Kallick
Kathy Kallick, *Use a Napkin (Not Your Mom)*

Karen Kane
The Chicken Chokers, *Chokers and Flies*
The Chicken Chokers, *Shoot Your Radio*

Kieran Kane
Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes, *Dead Reckoning*
Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes, *The O'Kanes*
Tammy Rogers, *In the Red*

Bruce Kaplan
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *E.C. Ball with Orna Ball*

Mike Kappus
John Hammond Jr., *Trouble No More*

Ellen Karas
Greg Brown, *Friend of Mine*
Bill Morrissey, *Bill Morrissey*
Bill Morrissey, *Friend of Mine*
Bill Morrissey, *Night Train*

Elizabeth Karlin
Odetta, *Movin' On*

Mark Karney
Lee Murdock, *Fertile Ground*
Lee Murdock, *Freshwater Highway*

Matthew King Kaufman
Jonathan Richman, *Back in Your Life*

Steve Kaufman
Wayne Henderson, *Not Much Work for Saturday*
Steve Kaufman, *Bullet Train*
Steve Kaufman, *Not Much Work for Saturday*

Jorma Kaukonen
Hot Tuna, *Burgers*
Hot Tuna, *First Pull up, Then Pull Down*

Lenny Kaye
Suzanne Vega, *Solitude Standing*
Suzanne Vega, *Suzanne Vega*

Thomas Jefferson Kaye
Gene Clark, *No Other*

Mark "Kaz" Kazanoff
Bob Margolin, *Down in the Alley*
Bob Margolin, *My Blues & My Guitar*

Brian Keane
Joanie Madden, *Song of the Irish Whistle*

Dolores Keane
Dolores Keane, *Farewell to Eirinn*
Dolores Keane, *Sail óg Rua*

James Keane
James Keane, *That's the Spirit*

John Keane
Vic Chesnutt, *Is the Actor Happy?*
Cowboy Junkies, *Lay It Down*
Indigo Girls, *Strange Fire*

Seán Keane
Seán Keane, *The Fire Aflame*
Seán Keane, *Jig It in Style*
Seán Keane, *Seán Keane*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Fire Aflame*

Orrin Keepnews
Bob Gibson, *Joy Joy! The Young and Wonderful Bob Gibson: The Riverside Folklore Series Vol. I*
Blind Lemon Jefferson, *Blind Lemon Jefferson*

Garrison Keillor
Garrison Keillor, *Comedy Theater*

Shane Keister
Rockin' Dopsie, *Louisiana Music*

Ben Keith
Neil Young, *Harvest Moon*
Neil Young, *Old Ways*

Keith Keller
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Rollin'*
The subdudes, *Annunciation*

Chris Kelly
Union Springs, *Next Train Headed South*

Paul Kelly
Paul Kelly, *Comedy*

Kelly Keneipp
Jack Logan, *Mood Elevator*

Jerry Kennedy
Jim & Jesse, *Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More*
Roger Miller, *Golden Hits*
Roger Miller, *The Return of Roger Miller*
Roger Miller, *Roger and Out*
Roger Miller, *Words and Music by Roger Miller*

Pete Kennedy
The Kennedys/Pete Kennedy/Pete & Maura Kennedy, *Life Is Large*
The Kennedys/Pete Kennedy/Pete & Maura Kennedy, *River of Fallen Stars*

Ray Kennedy
Steve Earle, *El Corazon*
Steve Earle, *I Feel Alright*

Paul Kennerley
Emmylou Harris, *The Ballad of Sally Rose*

David Kenny
The House Band, *Groundwork*
The House Band, *The House Band*
The House Band, *Pacific*

Don Kent
Sleepy John Estes, *I Ain't Gonna Be Worried No More, 1929–41*
Mississippi Sheiks, *Stop and Listen*

Kentucky Standard Band
Kentucky Standard Band, *Angels of Mercy*

Ken Keppeler
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Cactus Gumbo and Alligator Enchiladas*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Following in the Tune Prints*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Songs of New Mexico and Beyond*

David Kershenbaum
Joan Baez, *Diamonds and Rust*
Tracy Chapman, *Tracy Chapman*
Catie Curtis, *Truth from Lies*
Sara Hickman, *Shortstop*
Cat Stevens, *Izitso*

Barbara Kessler
Barbara Kessler, *Stranger to This Land*

Peter Kessler
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar, *Take Me Up*

Liv Khalsa
Kim Robertson, *Celtic Christmas II*
Kim Robertson, *Crimson Collection Volumes I and II*
Kim Robertson, *Crimson Collection Volumes IV and V*
Kim Robertson, *Crimson Collection Volumes VI and VII*
Kim Robertson, *Joy! Joy! Joy!*
Kim Robertson, *Wind Shadows II*

Jamie Kidd
k.d. lang, *a truly western experience*

Michael Kieffer
Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies, *The Complete Recordings of the Father of Western Swing: Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies 1932–1937*

Lionel Kilberg
Kate Wolf, *Breezes*

Eric Kilburn
Ken Perlman, *Island Boy*

Buddy Killen
Vassar Clements, *Superbow*

Kevin Killen
Paula Cole, *Harbinger*

Jim Kimball
Mitzie Collins, *Sackett's Harbor*

Ian Kimmer
Clannad, *Rogha: The Best of Clannad*

Dave Kincaid
Ed Pettersen, *Desperate Times*

Michael Kind
David Folks, *Refusing to View*

Hubie King
Diane Jones and & King, *There Are No Rules*

Leslie D. Kippel
Frank Wakefield, *Frank Wakefield and the Good Old Boys*

John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick, *Force of Habit*
John Kirkpatrick, *Plain Capers*

Larry Kirwin
Black 47, *Fire of Freedom*
Black 47, *Green Suede Shoes*

Gary Klein
Judy Collins, *Hard Times for Lovers*

Larry Klein
Julia Fordham, *Falling Forward*
Joni Mitchell, *Chalk Mark in a Rain Storm*
Joni Mitchell, *Turbulent Indigo*

Klezmorim
Klezmorim, *First Recordings 1976–78*

Moogy Klingman
Rod MacDonald, *No Commercial Traffic*

Randy Knapp
Magpie, *Live at the Dunham Inn*

Mark Knopfler
Chet Atkins, *Neck and Neck*
Randy Newman, *Land of Dreams*

Lester Koenig
Jesse Fuller, *Jazz, Folk Songs, Spirituals & Blues*
Jesse Fuller, *San Francisco Bay Blues*

Robert Koester
Luther Allison, *Love Me Mama*
Sleepy John Estes, *Broke and Hungry*
Sleepy John Estes, *Electric Sleep*

Walt Koken
Walt Koken, *Banjonique*
Walt Koken, *Hei-wa Hoedown*

Paul Kolderie
Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies, *Corn River*
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *No Depression*
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Still Feel Gone*

Bill Kollar
John Gorka, *Land of the Bottom Line*
Christine Lavin, *Good Thing He Can't Read My Mind*

Fred Koller
Fred Koller, *Songs from the Night Before*
Fred Koller, *Where the Fast Lane Ends*

Ken Kolodner
Ken Kolodner, *Daybreak*
Chris Norman, *Daybreak*

Glen Kolotkin
Jonathan Richman, *Back in Your Life*

Al Kooper
Michael Bloomfield, *The Live Adventures of Michael Bloomfield and Al Kooper*
Michael Bloomfield, *Super Session*

Michael Koppelman
Moxy Früvous, *Wood*

Kornbread
Michael Hurley, *Snockgrass*

Frank Kornelussen
Nick Drake, *Time of No Reply*
Fairport Convention, *House Full*

Donna A. Korones
Ronnie Gilbert, *Love Will Find a Way*
Ronnie Gilbert, *The Train Still Runs*
Holly Near, *This Train Still Runs*

Danny Kortchmar
Freedy Johnston, *Never Home*
David Lindley, *Mr. Dave*
James Taylor, *New Moon Shine*

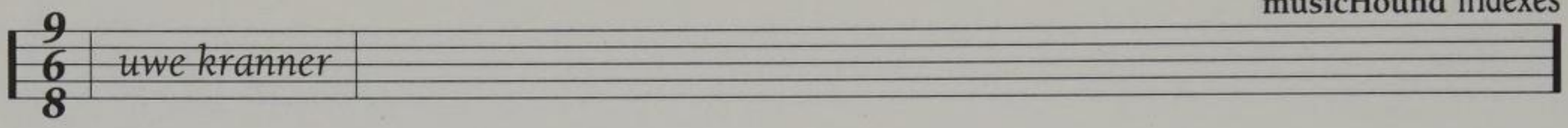
Leo Kottke
Leo Kottke, *Six and Twelve-String Guitar*

Paul Kovac
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, *Light Enough to Find My Way*

Reed Krack
Jake Krack, *How 'bout That*

Eddie Kramer
Buddy Guy, *Live! The Real Deal*
Carly Simon, *Carly Simon*

Craig Krampf
disappear fear, *disappear fear*



Uwe Kranner
Paul Geremia, *Gamblin' Woman Blues*
Paul Geremia, *Self Portrait in Blues*

Miles Krassen
Liz Carroll, *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from Chicago, Vol. 2*

Alison Krauss
The Cox Family, *Just When You're Thinking It's Over*

Alison Krauss & Union Station
Alison Krauss/Alison Krauss & Union Station, *Every Time You Say Goodbye*
Alison Krauss/Alison Krauss & Union Station, *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow*
Mark Simos, *So Long So Wrong*

Viktor Krauss
Michael Johnson, *Then & Now*

Louis Krieg
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, *Good Though*

Murray Krugman
Caroline Aiken, *Butler Field*

Russ Kunkel
Jimmy Buffett, *Banana Wind*
Clannad, *Sirius*

Doug Kupper
Lui Collins, *Stone by Stone*

Pete Kuykendall
The Country Gentlemen, *Folk Session Inside*
The Country Gentlemen, *Folk Songs and Bluegrass*

Greg Ladanyi
Clannad, *Sirius*
David Lindley, *El Rayo-X*
David Lindley, *Mr. Dave*
David Lindley, *Win This Record*

Jimmy LaFave
Jimmy LaFave, *Buffalo Return to the Plains*
Jimmy LaFave, *Highway Trance*

Kenny Laguna
Jonathan Richman, *Back in Your Life*

Tim Lake
Tim Lake, *Jazz with Bluegrass & Blues*
Tim Lake, *Only in the Movies*

Bruce Lampcov
Hank Williams, *Hanky Panky*

Jon Landau
Jackson Browne, *The Pretender*
Livingston Taylor, *Echoes*

Richard Landis
Roy Rogers, *Tribute*

Bill Landow
Les Gustafson-Zook, *Great Hymns*

Hollis Landrum
Hollis Landrum, *Some Enchanted Evening*
Hollis Landrum, *Songs of the Vicksburg Siege*
Hollis Landrum, *Swing Dulcimer*

k.d. lang
k.d. lang, *a truly western experience*
k.d. lang, *Absolute Torch and Twang*
k.d. lang, *Ingenue*

David Lange
Annie Gallup, *Backbone*

Clive Langer
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*
Hothouse Flowers, *People*

Peter Langston
Mark Simos, *Race the River Jordan*

Daniel Lanois
Emmylou Harris, *Wrecking Ball*
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*

Patty Larkin
Patty Larkin, *I'm Fine*
Patty Larkin, *Perishable Fruit*
Patty Larkin, *Strangers World*
Patty Larkin, *Tango*

Grey Larsen
Jake Krack, *How 'bout That*
Pete Sutherland, *Poor Man's Dream*

Custer LaRue
Chris Norman, *Lullaby Journey*

Grit Laskin
Grit Laskin, *A Few Simple Words*

Stephen LaVere
Robert Johnson, *Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings*

Lee Lavergne
Roy Carrier/Roy Carrier and the Night Rockers, *Zydeco Strokin'*
Sheryl Cormier, *La Reine de Musique Cadjine (Queen of Cajun Music)*
Sheryl Cormier, *Sheryl Cormier and Cajun Sounds*
Keith Frank, *Let's Dance: Preston Frank and His Zydeco Family Band*

Christine Lavin
Four Bitchin' Babes, *Laugh Tracks*
Christine Lavin, *Another Woman's Man*
Christine Lavin, *Attainable Love*
Cheryl Wheeler, *Christine Lavin Presents: Laugh Tracks, Volume I*

Don Law
Jim & Jesse, *Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More*
Robert Johnson, *King of the Delta Blues Singers*
Robert Johnson, *Robert Johnson: The Complete Recordings*

Pete Lawrence
Michelle Shocked, *The Texas Campfire Tapes*

Doyle Lawson
Doyle Lawson/Quicksilver, *Heaven's Joy Awaits (A Cappella Quartets)*
Doyle Lawson/Quicksilver, *I'll Wonder Back Someday*
Doyle Lawson/Quicksilver, *Never Walk Away*
Doyle Lawson/Quicksilver, *Rock My Soul*
Doyle Lawson/Quicksilver, *There's a Light Guiding Me*

Gwenn Le Goarnic
Planxty, *2e Festival Pop' Celtic Kertalg 73*

Bill Leader
Bert Jansch, *Bert Jansch/It Don't Bother Me*
Mr. Fox, *Mr. Fox/The Gipsy*
Planxty, *Prosperous*
John Renbourn, *John Renbourn and Bert Jansch*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Gerry Rafferty*
Sweeney's Men, *Time Was Never Here 1968–69*
Young Tradition, *Galleries*

Arthur Lee
Love, *Forever Changes*
Love, *Four Sail*

Dick Lee
Hamish Moore, *The Bee's Knees*

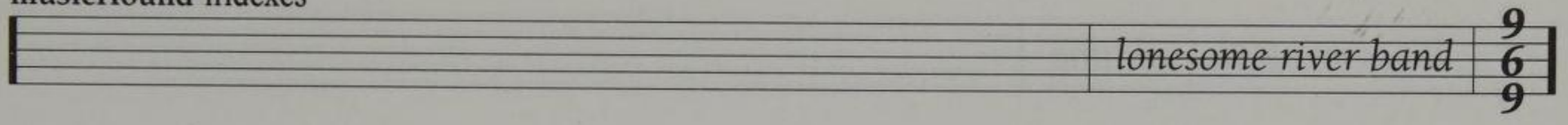
Brad Leftwich
Brad Leftwich/Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham, *No One to Bring Home Tonight*

Kyle Lehning
Cheryl Wheeler, *Circles and Arrows*

Jerry Leiber
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Ferguslie Park*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Stealers Wheel*

Greg Leisz
Dave Alvin, *King of California*

Eddie LeJeune
Doris "D.L." Menard, *Le Trio Cadien*



Charlie Lennon
Frankie Gavin, *Croch Suas é—Up and Away*

Josh Leo
Dana Cooper, *Miracle Mile*
Jo-El Sonnier, *Have a Little Faith*

John Leonard
Dave Burland, *Benchmark*
Dave Burland, *His Master's Choice: The Songs of Richard Thompson*

Terry Leonino
Magpie, *Circle of Life*
Magpie, *Seed on the Prairie*
Magpie, *Spoken in Love*

Philippe Lerichomme
Alan Stivell, *E Langonned*

Stewart Lerman
Julian Dawson, *Move Over, Darling*
Julian Dawson, *Travel On*
The Roches, *A Dove*
Darden Smith, *Deep Fantastic Blue*

Jeffrey Lesser
Lynn Miles, *Slightly Haunted*
Darden Smith, *Little Victories*
Loudon Wainwright III, *Career Moves*
Loudon Wainwright III, *Grown Man*
David Wilcox, *Big Horizon*

James Leva
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, *Light Enough to Find My Way*

Bill Levenson
Eric Clapton, *Crossroads*

Dan Levenson
Boiled Buzzards, *Early Bird Special*
Boiled Buzzards, *Fine Dining*

Harold Leventhal
Pete Seeger, *Pete Seeger's Family Concert*

John Leventhal
Rosanne Cash, *Ten Song Demo*
Shawn Colvin, *Steady On*
Patty Larkin, *Strangers World*
Kimmie Rhodes, *West Texas Heaven*
Loudon Wainwright III, *Little Ship*

Duke Levine
Ellis Paul, *Stories*

Stewart Levine
Dr. John, *Goin' Back to New Orleans*

Bertram Levy
Peter Ostroushko, *First Generation*

Ron Levy
Ann Peebles, *Full Time Love*
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Feel like Funkin' It Up*
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Re-Birth Kickin' It Live*
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Take It to the Street*

George Lewis
The Chicken Chokers, *Chokers and Flies*

Laurie Lewis
Laurie Lewis/Grant Street, *The Oak & the Laurel*
Laurie Lewis/Grant Street, *True Stories*
Peter McLaughlin, *Cliffs of Vermilion*
Peter McLaughlin, *The Oak and the Laurel*
Peter McLaughlin, *True Stories*
Scott Nygaard, *No Hurry*
Mark Simos, *The Oak and the Laurel*
Erica Wheeler, *The Harvest*

Marty Lewis
Dan Fogelberg, *High Country Snows*
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *The Secret Policeman's Ball*

Tom Lewis
Tom Lewis, *Sea-Dog, See Dog!*

Henry Lewy
The Dillards, *The Fantastic Expedition of Dillard and Clark*
Flying Burrito Brothers, *Burrito Deluxe*
Flying Burrito Brothers, *The Gilded Palace of Sin*
Neil Young, *Harvest*

Gordon Lightfoot
Gordon Lightfoot, *Endless Wire*
Gordon Lightfoot, *Summertime Dream*

Steve Lillywhite
Joan Armatrading, *The Key*
The Pogues, *If I Should Fall from Grace with God*
The Pogues, *Peace and Love*
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *Sector 27*

Carsten Linde
De Danann/De Dannan, *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs*
Dick Gaughan, *A Different Kind of Love Song*
Dolores Keane, *Farewell to Eirinn*

Colin Linden
Stephen Fearing, *Industrial Lullaby*
Colin Linden, *South at Eight North at Nine*
Hans Theessink/Blue Groove, *Call Me*
Brooks Williams, *Back to Mercy*

David Lindley
David Lindley, *Mr. Dave*
David Lindley, *Win This Record*

Mark Linett
Dave Alvin, *The Pleasure Barons Live in Las Vegas*
Dave Alvin, *Romeo's Escape*

Tommy LiPuma
Dr. John, *In a Sentimental Mood*
Dan Hicks, *Striking It Rich*
Dan Hicks, *Where's the Money*
Dave Mason, *Alone Together*
Dave Mason, *The Best of Dave Mason*
Dave Mason, *Dave Mason Is Alive*
Dave Mason, *Headkeeper*
Randy Newman, *Land of Dreams*

Scott Litt
Indigo Girls, *Indigo Girls*

Little Village
Ry Cooder, *Little Village*

Linda Littleton
Simple Gifts, *Other Places, Other Times*
Simple Gifts, *A Place Just Right*

A.L. Lloyd
Anne Briggs, *Classic Anne Briggs: The Complete Topic Recordings*

Jim Lockhart
Dervish, *The Boys of Sligo*

Vaughn Lofstead
Debby McClatchy, *Off to California*

Guy Logsdon
Cisco Houston, *The Folkways Years, 1944–1961*

Alan Lomax
Woody Guthrie, *Library of Congress Recordings*
Leadbelly/Huddie Ledbetter, *The Library of Congress Recordings*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *The Blues Roll On*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Roots of the Blues*
Muddy Waters, *Complete Plantation Recordings: The Historic 1941–42 Library of Congress Field Recordings*

John Lomax III
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Player Deluxe*
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Sessions*

Frank London
Boiled in Lead, *Antler Dance*
Boiled in Lead, *Fück the Circus*

Lonesome River Band
Lonesome River Band, *Carrying the Tradition*

Lonesome River Band, *Cold Virginia Night*
Lonesome River Band, *Old Country Town*
Lonesome River Band, *One Step Forward*

Lonesome Standard Time
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *Mighty Lonesome*

Donna Long
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *The Steeplechase*

Larry Long
Larry Long, *Living in a Rich Man's World*

Longview
Longview, *Longview*

Michael Lorant
Indigo Girls, *Jesus Christ Superstar: A Resurrection*

Michael Lord
Laura Love, *Pangea*
Ranch Romance, *Blue Blazes*
Ranch Romance, *Western Dream*

Jack Lothrop
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Good Deal! Doc Watson in Nashville*

John Love
Raffi, *Raffi on Broadway: A Family Concert*

Laura Love
Laura Love, *Helvetica Bold*
Laura Love, *Octoroon*
Laura Love, *Pangea*

Lyle Lovett
Walter Hyatt/Uncle Walt's Band, *King Tears*
Walter Hyatt/Uncle Walt's Band, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Lyle Lovett, *I Love Everybody*
Lyle Lovett, *Joshua Judges Ruth*
Lyle Lovett, *Lyle Lovett*
Lyle Lovett, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Lyle Lovett, *Pontiac*
Lyle Lovett, *The Road to Ensenada*

Trevor Lucas
Sandy Denny/Fotheringay, *Sandy*

Gef Lucena
Robin Huw Bowen, *Harp Music of Wales*

John Lumsdaine
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Adam and Eve Had the Blues*

Dónal Lunny
Altan, *Altan*
Altan, *The First Ten Years, 1986–1995*
The Bothy Band, *The Bothy Band 1975*
The Bothy Band, *Celtic Folkweave*
The Bothy Band, *Old Hag You Have Killed Me*
The Bothy Band, *Out of the Wind Into the Sun*
Kevin Burke, *Andy Irvine, Paul Brady*
Kevin Burke, *If the Cap Fits*
Capercaillie, *Get Out*
Capercaillie, *Sidewaulk*
Clannad, *Clannad 2*
De Danann/De Dannan, *De Danann*
Frankie Gavin, *Rainy Sundays . . . Windy Dreams . . .*
Andy Irvine, *Andy Irvine & Paul Brady*
Donal Lunny, *Donal Lunny*
Matt Molloy, *Matt Molloy*
Matt Molloy, *Stony Steps*
Christy Moore, *The Christy Moore Collection 1981–1991*
Moving Hearts, *Moving Hearts*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *Celtic Folkweave*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *Liam O'Flynn*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Seville Suite*
Tommy Peoples, *Matt Molloy, Paul Brady, Tommy Peoples*
Tommy Peoples, *Welcome Here Kind Stranger*
Planxty, *After the Break*
Planxty, *High Kings of Tara*
Planxty, *The Woman I Loved So Well*
Planxty, *Words and Music*
Sharon Shannon, *Each Little Thing*
Patrick Street, *Patrick Street*

Manus Lunny
Andy M. Stewart, *Dublin Lady*

Bob Lurie
Buffy Sainte-Marie, *I'm Gonna Be a Country Girl Again*

Claire Lynch
Claire Lynch/The Front Porch String Band, *Silver & Gold*

Jeff Lynne
Randy Newman, *Land of Dreams*

Gary Lyons
Grateful Dead, *Go to Heaven*

Robert S. Lyons
Michael Miles, *Counterpoint*

Joel Mabus
Joel Mabus, *Fairies and Fools*
Joel Mabus, *The Naked Truth*
Joel Mabus, *Promised Land*

Graham Maby
Freedy Johnston, *Can You Fly*

MacArthur Family
Margaret MacArthur, *MacArthur Road*
Margaret MacArthur, *Them Stars*

Margaret MacArthur
Margaret MacArthur, *Vermont Heritage Songs*

Grant MacAvoy
Susan Werner, *Midwestern Saturday Night*

Larry MacBride
Elaine Purkey, *Mountain Music, Mountain Struggle*
Chirps Smith, *Midwestern Harvest*

James MacCafferty
Eugene O'Donnell, *The Foggy Dew*

Neill & Calum MacColl
Ewan MacColl, *Black and White*

Laurel MacDonald
Mary Jane Lamond, *Suas e!*

Paul MacDonald
Jerry Holland, *The Fiddlesticks Collection*
Natalie MacMaster, *A Compilation*

Rod MacDonald
Rod MacDonald, *Bring on the Lion*
Rod MacDonald, *Highway to Nowhere*
Rod MacDonald, *The Man on the Ledge*
Rod MacDonald, *White Buffalo*

Páraic MacDonnchadha
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *Maiden Voyage*
Tommy Peoples, *Maiden Voyage*

Teo Macero
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, *Home Boys Home*
Simon & Garfunkel, *The Graduate*

Allister MacGillavry
Buddy MacMaster, *Judique on the Floor*

Paul Machlis
Alasdair Fraser, *The North Road*

Dave MacIsaac
Jerry Holland, *Master Cape Breton Fiddler*
Natalie MacMaster, *Fit As a Fiddle*

Dave MacKenzie
Adie Grey, *Brand New Old Time Music*
Adie Grey, *Grandpa's Advice*

James MacKintosh
Shooglenifty, *Live at Selwyn Hall*

Dougie MacLean
Dougie MacLean, *Fiddle*
Dougie MacLean, *Indigenous*
Dougie MacLean, *Marching Mystery*
Dougie MacLean, *Real Estate*
Dougie MacLean, *Riof*
Dougie MacLean, *The Search*
Dougie MacLean, *Singing Land*
Dougie MacLean, *Sunset Song*
Dougie MacLean, *Tribute*
Dougie MacLean, *Whitewash*

Jennifer MacLean
Dougie MacLean, *Fiddle*
Dougie MacLean, *Marching Mystery*
Dougie MacLean, *Real Estate*
Dougie MacLean, *Riof*
Dougie MacLean, *Singing Land*
Dougie MacLean, *Tribute*
Dougie MacLean, *Whitewash*

Don MacLeod
John Fahey, *The John Fahey Christmas Album*

Iain Macleod
Shooglenifty, *Live at Selwyn Hall*

Buddy MacMaster
Buddy MacMaster, *Glencoe Hall*

Séamus MacMathúna
Tommy Peoples, *Tommy Peoples*

Madeline MacNeil
Madeline MacNeil, *Strawberry Fair*

Avril MacRory
Paul Brady, *Live for Ireland*

Joanie Madden
Joanie Madden, *A Whistle on the Wind*

Alan F. Mager
Alan Mager, *The Fairhaired Boy*
Alan Mager, *Hear the Colors*

David Magill
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *New Mexico Rain*

Taj Mahal
Taj Mahal, *Shake Sugaree—Taj Mahal Sings and Plays for Children*
Taj Mahal, *Taj's Blues*

Brent Maher
Michael Johnson, *Wings*

Ian Maidman
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*

Lloyd Maines
Terry Allen, *Bloodlines*
Terry Allen, *Human Remains*
Richard Buckner, *Bloomed*
Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Dangerous Spirits*
Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Loco Gringo's Lament*
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *No. 2 Live Dinner*
James McMurtry, *It Had to Happen*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *Christmas Gonzo Style*

Cathie Malach
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon, *Delphys: Ocean Born*

Alain Mallet
The Story, *The Angel in the House*

David Mallett
David Mallett, *Parallel Lives*

Jim Malloy
Townes Van Zandt, *Our Mother the Mountain*
Townes Van Zandt, *Townes Van Zandt*

David Maloney
Becky Blackley, *Gathering the Harvest*

Mando Mafia
Mando Mafia, *Mando Liniment*
Mando Mafia, *Take Two*

Cindy Mangsen
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Light of the Day*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Live in Concert*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Long Time Traveling*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Settle Down*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Voices of Winter*
Anne Hills, *Never Grow Old*
Anne Hills, *Voices of Winter*

Owsley Manier
Mark Germino, *Rank & File*

Peter Mann
The Nylons, *Run for Cover*

Terry Manning
Furry Lewis, *Fourth and Beale*

Cary Mansfield
Gene Autry, *Gene Autry with the Legendary Singing Groups of the West*
Gene Autry, *The Singing Cowboy, Chapter One*

Pierre Marchand
The Devlins, *Waiting*
Sarah McLachlan, *Fumbling towards Ecstasy*
Sarah McLachlan, *Solace*

Pathé Marconi
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *The Very Best of the Golden Gate Quartet*

Tom Mardikes
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *Last Night's Fun*

Arif Mardin
Steve Goodman, *Somebody Else's Troubles*
John Prine, *John Prine*

Bob Margolin
Bob Margolin, *Down in the Alley*
Bob Margolin, *My Blues & My Guitar*

Bob Marin
Golden Gate Quartet/Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, *Meet Me at the Golden Gate*

Tony Markellis
Michael Jerling, *My Evil Twin*
Michael Jerling, *New Suit of Clothes*
Camille West, *Mother Tongue*

Larry Marks
Flying Burrito Brothers, *The Gilded Palace of Sin*
Phil Ochs, *Pleasures of the Harbor*
Phil Ochs, *Rehearsals for Retirement*
Phil Ochs, *Tape from California*

Marley's Ghost
Marley's Ghost, *Haunting Melodies*
Marley's Ghost, *How Can I Keep from Singing*
Marley's Ghost, *Let de Groove Rise Up*

Jerry Marotta
Kristen Hall, *Be Careful What You Wish For ...*
Barbara Kessler, *Notion*
Ellis Paul, *A Carnival of Voices*

Michael Marra
Hamish Moore, *Farewell to Decorum*

Bob Marsh
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *E.C. Ball with Orna Ball*

Evan Marshall
Evan Marshall, *Evan Marshall Is the Lone Arranger*

Mike Marshall
Tony Elman, *Earth Tones*
Tony Furtado, *Within Reach*
Beppe Gambetta, *Good News from Home*
Laurie Lewis/Grant Street, *True Stories*
Peter McLaughlin, *True Stories*
Psychograss, *Like Minds*
Psychograss, *Psychograss*

George Martin
Richard Greene/The Grass Is Greener, *Seatrain*

Grady Martin
Kimmie Rhodes, *Just One Love*

Jim Martin
Jenny Allinder, *Jenny Allinder*
The Bing Brothers, *Just for the Sake of It*
Dave Bing, *Dave Bing*
Dave Bing, *Sugar in My Coffee*
Alan Freeman, *The Mountain Dulcimer*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Dulcimer Country*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *The Hammered Dulcimer Christmas Sampler*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Some Glad Morning!*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Way Down Yonder*

Neil Martin
Déanta, *Ready for the Storm*
Déanta, *Whisper of a Secret*

Pat Martin
No Strings Attached, *Dulcimer Dimensions*
No Strings Attached, *Take Five*

Wayne Martin
Etta Baker, *One-Dime Blues*
Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton, *Sally with the Run-down Shoes*
Doug & Jack Wallin, *Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains*

Elane Martone
Maria Muldaur, *Fanning the Flames*

Eugene Martynec
Bruce Cockburn, *Bruce Cockburn*

Marcy Marxer
Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, *A Cathy and Marcy Collection for Kids*

Dave Mason
Dave Mason, *Alone Together*
Dave Mason, *The Best of Dave Mason*
Dave Mason, *Dave Mason Is Alive*
Dave Mason, *Headkeeper*

Jim Mason
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Paul and . . .*

Molly Mason
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, *Brother's Keeper*
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, *The Lover's Waltz*

Phillip Mason
Madeline MacNeil, *Strawberry Fair*

George Massenburg
Lyle Lovett, *Joshua Judges Ruth*
Linda Ronstadt, *Trio*
James Taylor, *(Live)*
James Taylor, *Best Live*

Brian Masterson
Altan, *Blackwater*
Altan, *Island Angel*
Seán Keane, *Contentment Is Wealth*
Seán Keane, *Jig It in Style*
Seán Keane, *Seán Keane*
Matt Molloy, *Contentment Is Wealth*
Planxty, *The Woman I Loved So Well*

Niall Mathewson
Old Blind Dogs, *Five*
Old Blind Dogs, *Legacy*

Ed Mattau
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Paul and . . .*

Iain Matthews
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *The Soul of Many Places: The Elektra Years, 1972–1974*
Eric Taylor, *Eric Taylor*

Scott Matthews
John Wesley Harding, *Pett Levels: The Summer EP*

Susan Maule
Grace Griffith, *Siren Song*

Elliott Mazer
Malcolm Dalglish, *Jogging the Memory*
Neil Young, *Everybody's Rockin'*
Neil Young, *Harvest*
Neil Young, *Old Ways*

Mac McAnally
Mac McAnally, *Knots*
Mac McAnally, *Live and Learn*

Larry McBride
Geoff Seitz, *Fine as Frog's Hair*
Geoff Seitz, *Timely Old Tunes and Beyond*

Robin McBride
Gamble Rogers, *Gamble Rogers Live: The Warm Way Home*
Gamble Rogers, *Sorry Is as Sorry Does*

Nancy McCallion
The Mollys, *This Is My Round*
The Mollys, *Tidings of Comfort and Joy*

Gordon McCann
Lonnie Robertson, *Lonnie's Breakdown!*
Fred Stoneking, *Saddle Old Spike: Fiddle Music from Missouri*

Jimmy McCarthy
De Danann/De Dannan, *A Jacket of Batteries*

Pat McCarthy
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*
David Wilcox, *How Did You Find Me Here*

Paul McCartney
Mary Hopkin, *Post Card*

Mary McCaslin
Mary McCaslin, *Way out West*
Jim Ringer/Jim Ringer & Mary McCaslin, *The Best of Jim Ringer: The Band of Jesse James*

Debby McClatchy
Debby McClatchy, *Lady Luck*
Debby McClatchy, *'Til the Good Times Come*
Debby McClatchy, *Apples in Winter*

Doug McClement
Moxy Früvous, *Bargainville*

John McClure
Garrison Keillor, *Garrison Keillor/Frederica Von Stade: Songs of the Cat*
Garrison Keillor, *Now It's Christmas Time*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Peter, Paul, and Mommy Too*

Don McCollister
Chuck Brodsky, *Letters in the Dirt*
Kristen Hall, *Fact & Fiction*

Carol McComb
Carol McComb, *Tears into Laughter*

Billy McComiskey
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *Makin' the Rounds*
Billy McComiskey, *Makin' the Rounds*
Trian, *Trian*
Trian, *Trian II*

Ronnie McCoury
Jason Carter, *The Cold Hard Facts*
Jason Carter, *A Deeper Shade of Blue*
Jason Carter, *On the Move*
Jason Carter, *Ronnie & Rob McCoury*
The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury, *Cold Hard Facts*
The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury, *A Deeper Shade of Blue*
The Del McCoury Band/The McCoury Brothers/Ronnie & Rob McCoury, *Ronnie & Rob McCoury*

Larry McCullough
Liz Carroll, *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from Chicago, Vol. 2*

John McCusker
Kate Rusby, *Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts*

John McCutcheon
Tom Chapin, *Doing Our Job*
John McCutcheon, *Sprout Wings and Fly*

Drew McDaniel
Sam Rizzetta, *Together at Last*

Brian McDonagh
Dervish, *At the End of the Day*
Dervish, *Harmony Hill*
Dervish, *Live in Palma*
Dervish, *Playing with Fire*

Johnny McDonough
Arcady, *Many Happy Returns*

Bill McElroy
No Strings Attached, *Bellinzona*
No Strings Attached, *Blue Roses*
No Strings Attached, *Coffee at Midnight*
No Strings Attached, *Take Five*
Red Clay Ramblers, *Merchants Lunch*
Bonnie Rideout, *Kindred Spirits*
Trapezoid, *Trapezoid: Another Country*

William E. McEuen
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, *Uncle Charlie and His Dog Teddy*
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*

Eleanor McEvoy
Eleanor McEvoy, *What's Following Me?*

T.J. McFarland
Don Walser, *Rolling Stone from Texas*
Don Walser, *Texas Top Hand*

Ronn McFarlane
Chris Norman, *Beauty of the North*
Chris Norman, *Man with the Wooden Flute*

Eileen McGann
Eileen McGann, *Journeys*
Eileen McGann, *Turn It Around*
Eileen McGann, *Two Thousand Years of Christmas*

David McGinley
Mike Cross, *Carolina Sky*
Mike Cross, *Live & Kickin*

Andy McGloin
Eric Bogle, *I Wrote this Wee Song*
Eric Bogle, *Mirrors*
Eric Bogle, *Voices in the Wilderness*

Arty McGlynn
De Danann/De Dannan, *1/2 Set in Harlem*
Matt Molloy, *Music at Matt Molloy's*

Andy McKaie
B.B. King, *King of the Blues*

Peter McKeel
Jackson C. Frank, *Blues Run the Game*

Al McKenney
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips, *Good Though!*

Loreena McKennitt
Loreena McKennitt, *The Book of Secrets*
Loreena McKennitt, *The Mask and Mirror*
Loreena McKennitt, *The Visit*

Susan McKeown
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Bushes and Briars*
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Through the Bitter Frost and Snow*

Ed McKuen
The Nields, *The Folk Next Door*
The Nields, *Honey, Hide the Banjo! It's the Folk Next Door Again*

Nancy McLaughlin
Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin, *Going Back*

Zan McLeod
Grace Griffith, *Beyond the Horizon*

Jeanie McLerie
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Cactus Gumbo and Alligator Enchiladas*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Following in the Tune Prints*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Songs of New Mexico and Beyond*

Alastair McMillan
Altan, *Runaway Sunday*

Brian McNeill
Eric Bogle, *The Emigrant and the Exile*
Brian McNeill, *The Back o' the North Wind*
Brian McNeill, *The Busker and the Devil's Only Daughter*
Brian McNeill, *Horses for Courses*
Brian McNeill, *Monksgate*
Brian McNeill, *No Gods*
Brian McNeill, *Stage by Stage*

Guthrie Meade
Wilson Douglas, *The Right Hand Fork of Rush's Creek*
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley, *Wild Rose of the Mountain*
Buddy Thomas, *Kitty Puss*

Chic Medley
Mouth Music, *Mouth Music*
Mouth Music, *Shorelife*

Hank Medress
Harry Chapin, *The Bottom Line Encore Collection*

Glen Meisner
Natalie MacMaster, *Fit as a Fiddle*

Martin Meissonnier
Alan Stivell, *Brian Boru*

Robert Meitus
Carrie Newcomer, *My Father's Only Son*

Mel Bay Publications
Rosamund Campbell, *The Parlour Dulcimer*
Rosamund Campbell, *The Victorian Dulcimer*

Terry Melcher
The Byrds, *Mr. Tambourine Man*
Gene Clark, *Mr. Tambourine Man*
Gene Clark, *Turn! Turn! Turn!*
Ry Cooder, *Rising Sons*

Mike Melford
Vassar Clements, *Crossing the Catskills*
John Hartford, *Mark Twang*
John Hartford, *Nobody Knows What You Do*
Bob Shank, *Crossing Devil's Bridge*
Bob Shank, *Fresh Produce*

John Mellencamp
James McMurtry, *Too Long in the Wasteland*

D.L. Menard
Doris "D.L." Menard, *No Matter Where You Are, There You At*

Steve Mendell
James Talley, *Got No Bread/Tryin' like the Devil*

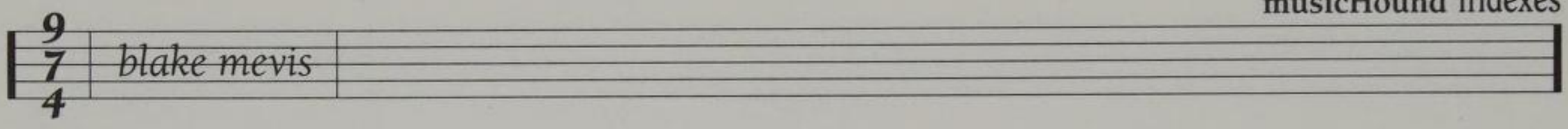
Lewis Merenstein
Van Morrison, *Astral Weeks*

Scott Merritt
Fred Eaglesmith, *Drive-In Movie*
Fred Eaglesmith, *Lipstick Lies & Gasoline*
Fred Eaglesmith, *Things Is Changin'*

Jim Messina
Loggins & Messina/Kenny Loggins, *Sittin' In*

Metamora
Malcolm Dalglish, *Metamora*

Andy Metcalfe
Robyn Hitchcock/Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, *Element of Light*



Blake Mevis
Vern Gosdin, *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)*

Edgar Meyer
Russ Barenberg, *Skip, Hop, & Wobble*
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *Skip, Hop & Wobble*
Mark O'Connor, *Appalachia Waltz*

Richard Meyer
Richard Meyer, *The Good Life!*
Richard Meyer, *Laughing/Scared*
Richard Meyer, *A Letter from the Open Sky*

Walt Michael
Walt Michael, *Music for the Hammered Dulcimer/Bermudaful*
Walt Michael, *Smoky Mountain Gospel*

Lynn Miles
Lynn Miles, *Chalk This One up to the Moon*

Michael J. Miles
Michael Miles, *American Bach*
Michael Miles, *Counterpoint*

Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Mill Run Dulcimer Band, *Long Time Traveling*
Mill Run Dulcimer Band, *You've Been a Friend to Me*

Robin Millar
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *Hope and Glory*

Buddy Miller
Buddy Miller, *Poison Love*
Buddy Miller, *Your Love and Other Lies*

Jo Miller
Ranch Romance, *Blue Blazes*

John Miller
Bob Franke, *For Real*
Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss, *Old Pal*

Mark Miller
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Player Deluxe*
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Sessions*

Mark Alan Miller
Cordelia's Dad, *Comet*

Martin Miller
Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Oy Chanukah!*

Russ Miller
Trapezoid, *Cool of the Day*

Steven Miller
The Nields, *Mortal City*
Dar Williams, *Mortal City*

Alain Millet
Vance Gilbert, *Edgewise*

Paul Mills
Stan Rogers, *Between the Breaks . . . Live*
Stan Rogers, *Fogarty's Cove*
Stan Rogers, *From Fresh Water*
Stan Rogers, *Northwest Passage*
Stan Rogers, *Turnaround*

David Miner
T-Bone Burnett, *T Bone Burnett*
Pierce Pettis, *Making Light of It*

H. Thorp Minister III
Ted Hawkins, *Dock of the Bay: The Venice Beach Tapes*
Ted Hawkins, *On the Boardwalk: The Venice Beach Tapes*
Ted Hawkins, *Songs from Venice Beach*

Ben Mink
k.d. lang, *Absolute Torch and Twang*
k.d. lang, *Ingenue*

Joey Miskulin
Don Edwards, *Songs of the Trail*
Waddie Mitchell, *The Bard and the Balladeer: Live from Cowtown*
Waddie Mitchell, *Buckaroo Poet*
Waddie Mitchell, *Lone Driftin' Rider*
Michael Martin Murphey, *Cowboy Songs III: Rhymes of the Renegades*

Missouri Old Time Fiddler's Association
Lyman Enloe, *Rugged Road*

Grant Mitchell
Julia Fordham, *Porcelain*

Joni Mitchell
Joni Mitchell, *Blue*
Joni Mitchell, *Chalk Mark in a Rain Storm*
Joni Mitchell, *Court and Spark*
Joni Mitchell, *For the Roses*
Joni Mitchell, *The Hissing of Summer Lawns*
Joni Mitchell, *Ladies of the Canyon*
Joni Mitchell, *Turbulent Indigo*

Willie Mitchell
Ann Peebles, *Ann Peebles's Greatest Hits*
Ann Peebles, *The Best of the Hi Records Years*
Ann Peebles, *I Can't Stand the Rain*
Ann Peebles, *If This Is Heaven*

Hugh Moffatt
Katy Moffatt, *Dance Me Outside*

Katy Moffatt
Katy Moffatt, *Dance Me Outside*
Katy Moffatt, *Evangeline Motel*
Katy Moffatt, *Walkin' on the Moon*

Tom Moffatt
Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer, *Pure Hawaiian Magic*
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Live—Tahiti Come on Over*
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Live—Tahiti Come on Over*

Frazier Mohawk
"Spider" John Koerner, *Running, Jumping, Standing Still*

Jackie Mollet
Deb Pasternak, *Trust Me, I'm Soulful*

Matt Molloy
Seán Keane, *The Fire Aflame*
Matt Molloy, *Matt Molloy*
Matt Molloy, *Music at Matt Molloy's*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Fire Aflame*

Mollys
The Mollys, *Hat Trick*
The Mollys, *Wankin' out West*

Kevin Moloney
Eleanor McEvoy, *What's Following Me?*
The Nields, *Gotta Get over Greta*

Mick Moloney
Liz Carroll, *Cherish the Ladies: Irish Women Musicians in America*
Liz Carroll, *Ed Reavy*
Liz Carroll, *Fathers and Daughters from Cherish the Ladies*
Cherish the Ladies, *The Back Door*
Cherish the Ladies, *Cherish the Ladies*
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *The Corner House*
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *Makin' the Rounds*
Eileen Ivers, *Fresh Takes*
James Keane, *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from the East Coast of America, Volume I*
James Keane, *The Rights of Man: The Concert for Joseph Doherty*
James Keane, *Roll away the Reel World*
Seán Keane, *Roll away the Reel World*
Billy McComiskey, *Ed Reavy*

Billy McComiskey, *Irish Traditional Instrumental Music from the East Coast of America, Volume I*
Billy McComiskey, *Makin' the Rounds*
Mick Moloney, *Killkelly*
Mick Moloney, *Live in Concert*
Mick Moloney, *Mick Moloney with Eugene O'Donnell*
Mick Moloney, *There Were Roses*
Mick Moloney, *Uncommon Bonds*
Eugene O'Donnell, *3 Way Street*
Eugene O'Donnell, *Slow Airs & Set Dances*
Eugene O'Donnell, *Uncommon Bonds*
Solas, *The Brothers McMullen: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*
Solas, *Three Way Street*
Solas, *Traditional Music of Ireland*
Solas, *A Week in January*
John Whelan, *Fresh Takes*

Paddy Moloney
Derek Bell, *Carolan's Favourite*
Derek Bell, *Carolan's Receipt*
The Chieftains, *Another Country*
The Chieftains, *The Long Black Veil*
Seán Keane, *Gusty's Frolicks*
Van Morrison, *Irish Heartbeat*

Bruce Molsky
Bruce Molsky, *Bruce Molsky and Big Hoedown*
Bruce Molsky, *Lost Boy*

Buddy Mondlock
Buddy Mondlock, *On the Line*

Country Dick Montana
Dave Alvin, *The Pleasure Barons Live in Las Vegas*

Bob Montgomery
Vern Gosdin, *Chiseled in Stone*

Gerry Mooney
Charlie King, *Old Dreams and New Nightmares*

Pat Mooney
Tamarack, *Frobisher Bay*

Christy Moore
Christy Moore, *The Christy Moore Collection 1981–1991*
Christy Moore, *Live at the Point*

Hamish Moore
Hamish Moore, *The Bee's Knees*

Peter Moore
Cowboy Junkies, *Caution Horses*
Cowboy Junkies, *The Trinity Session*

Vincent Moos
Johnny Cunningham, *Fair Warning*

Pamela Morgan
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Downstream*
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Figgy Duff: A Retrospective, 1974–1993*

Robert Morgan
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, *In Person at Carnegie Hall*
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem/Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, *A Spontaneous Concert Performance*

J. Morgantini
Rosetta Tharpe, *Live at the Hot Club de France*

Gurf Morlix
Butch Hancock, *Eats Away the Night*
Lucinda Williams, *Lucinda Williams*
Lucinda Williams, *Sweet Old World*

Lynn Morris
The Lynn Morris Band, *Mama's Hand*

Lynn Morris Band
The Lynn Morris Band, *The Lynn Morris Band*

Van Morrison
Mose Allison, *Tell Me Something*
Van Morrison, *His Band and the Street Choir*
Van Morrison, *Hymns to the Silence*
Van Morrison, *Inarticulate Speech of the Heart*
Van Morrison, *Irish Heartbeat*
Van Morrison, *Moondance*
Van Morrison, *A Night in San Francisco*
Van Morrison, *St. Dominic's Preview*
Van Morrison, *Too Long in Exile*

Bill Morrissey
Bill Morrissey, *Bill Morrissey*

Iain Morrow
Capercaillie, *Get Out*

Robin Morton
Battlefield Band, *Anthem for the Common Man*
Battlefield Band, *Home Ground*
Battlefield Band, *Home Is Where the Van Is*
Battlefield Band, *Quiet Days*
Battlefield Band, *There's a Buzz*
Alison Kinnaird, *The Quiet Tradition*
Alison Kinnaird, *The Scottish Harp*
Brian McNeill, *Sidetracks*
Brian McNeill, *Unstrung Hero*
Maire Ni Chathasaigh, *The New Strung Harp*

Garth Mosbaugh
The Nylons, *Fabric of Life*

The Moving Cloud
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *The Moving Cloud*

Moxy Früvous
Moxy Früvous, *The B Album*
Moxy Früvous, *Bargainville*
Moxy Früvous, *Wood*
Moxy Früvous, *You Will Go to the Moon*

Karen Mueller
Karen Mueller, *Autoharp Gourmet*
Karen Mueller, *Clarity*

Robert Mugge
Ray Kane/Raymond Kane, *Master of the Slack Key Guitar*

Geoff Muldaur
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *Better Days*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *It All Comes Back*

Maria Muldaur
Maria Muldaur, *Fanning the Flames*
Maria Muldaur, *Jazzabelle*

Heidi Muller
Heidi Muller, *Giving Back*

Tim Mulligan
Neil Young, *Rust Never Sleeps*

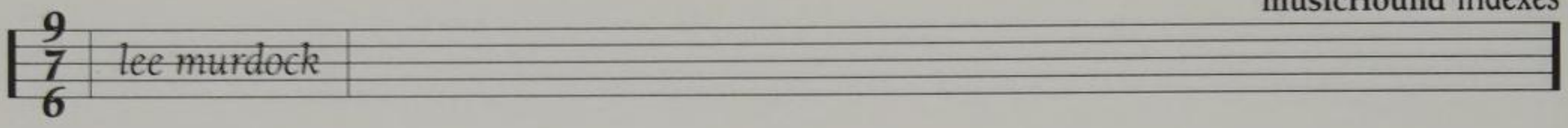
Peter Mulvey
Peter Mulvey, *Brother Rabbit Speaks*
Peter Mulvey, *Rain*
Peter Mulvey, *Rapture*

Brendan Mulvihill
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *The Steeplechase*

Alan Munde
Alan Munde, *Blue Ridge Express*
Alan Munde, *Windy Days and Dusty Skies*

Mark Miller Mundy
Marianne Faithfull, *Broken English*

Bill Murata
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Hawaiian Style Guitars*
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Hawaiian-Style Guitars*



Lee Murdock
Lee Murdock, *Fertile Ground*
Lee Murdock, *Freshwater Highway*

Michael Martin Murphey
Don Edwards, *Songs of the Trail*
Waddie Mitchell, *The Bard and the Balladeer: Live from Cowtown*
Waddie Mitchell, *Lone Driftin' Rider*
Michael Martin Murphey, *Cowboy Songs*
Michael Martin Murphey, *Cowboy Songs III: Rhymes of the Renegades*

Barry Murphy
Séamus Ennis, *Irish Music in London Pubs*

Elliot Murphy
Elliot Murphy, *Going through Something: The Best of Elliott Murphy*
Elliot Murphy, *Party Girl, Broken Poets*
Elliot Murphy, *Selling the Gold*

Hugh Murphy
Paul Brady, *Hard Station*
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Can I Have My Money Back*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *City to City*

Willie Murphy
Boiled in Lead, *From the Ladle to the Grave*

Martin Murray
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *The Maid of Eirin*
Kevin Crawford/The Moving Cloud/Grianan/Raise the Rafters, *Raise the Rafters*
Matt Molloy, *Music at Matt Molloy's*

Robert Musso
The Klezmatics, *Possessed*

Hijaz "Hank" Mustapha
Boiled in Lead, *Orb*

Laila Nabulsi
Todd Snider, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*

Mark Naftalin
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *East West Live*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *Strawberry Jam*

John Nagy
John Hammond Jr., *John Hammond Live*
The Holy Modal Rounders, *Have Moicy!*
Michael Hurley, *Have Moicy!*
Chris Smither, *Another Way to Find You*

Arnie Naiman
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole, *Five Strings Attached with No Backing*

Graham Nash
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *CSN*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *A Little Warmth*

Syd Nathan
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack*

Holly Near
Holly Near, *Singer in the Storm*
Holly Near, *With a Song in My Heart*

Dave Neiman
Steve Schneider, *The Door to Christmas*

Ken Nelson
Jim & Jesse, *Jim & Jesse*

Mark Nelson
Mark Nelson, *Autumn*

Michael Nesmith
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *The Soul of Many Places: The Elektra Years, 1972–1974*
Michael Nesmith, *The Newer Stuff*
Michael Nesmith, *The Older Stuff; The Best of the Early Years*

Hankus Netsky
Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Dancing in the Aisles*
Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Live! The 13th Anniversary Album*

Steve Netsky
Rachel Buchman, *Jewish Holiday Songs for Children*
Rachel Buchman, *Sing a Song of Seasons*

Bob Neuwirth
Vince Bell, *Phoenix*

Richard Nevins
Liz Carroll, *A Friend Indeed*
Liz Carroll, *Kiss Me Kate*
Michael Coleman, *The Wheels of the World*
Sleepy John Estes, *I Ain't Gonna Be Worried No More, 1929–41*
Frankie Gavin, *Traditional Music of Ireland*
Dennis McGee, *The Complete Recordings 1929–1930*
Mississippi Sheiks, *Stop and Listen*
Tommy Peoples, *The High Part of the Road*
Tommy Peoples, *The Iron Man*
Washington Phillips, *I Am Born to Preach the Gospel: The Complete Recorded Works of Washington Phillips*
Blind Alfred Reed, *The Rose Grew 'round the Briar: Early American Rural Love Songs—Volumes I and II*
Russell Family, *Mountain Music Galax Style*
Henry "Ragtime Texas" Thomas, *Texas Worried Blues*
Robert Wilkins, *The Original Rolling Stone*

Carrie Newcomer
Carrie Newcomer, *An Angel at My Shoulder*
Carrie Newcomer, *Visions and Dreams*

Norman Newell
Peter & Gordon, *I Go to Pieces*

Jimmy C. Newman
Jimmy C. Newman, *The Alligator Man*
Jimmy C. Newman, *Whatever Boils Your Crawfish*

Abby Newton
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Voices*
Priscilla Herdman, *Darkness into Light*
Anne Hills, *Voices*
Rude Girls, *Mixed Messages*
Steve Schneider, *Tuesday's Child*

Chris Nicholson
Eric Bogle, *Scraps of Paper*

David Nichtern
Maria Muldaur, *Sweet and Slow*

Simon Nicol
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *The Prospect before Us*

Paul Nienhaus
Ann and Phil Case, *The Springtime of Life*

Nightnoise
Nightnoise, *At the End of the Evening*
Nightnoise, *A Different Shore*
Nightnoise, *Shadow of Time*

Harry Nilsson
Harry Nilsson, *Harry*
Harry Nilsson, *Son of Dracula*

Jack Nitzsche
Neil Young, *Harvest*

Eithne NíUallacháin
Lá Lugh, *Brighid's Kiss*
Lá Lugh, *La Lugh*

No Strings Attached
No Strings Attached, *Bellinzona*
No Strings Attached, *Blue Roses*
No Strings Attached, *Coffee at Midnight*
No Strings Attached, *Dulcimer Dimensions*

Paddy Noonan
Joe Derrane, *Irish Accordion*
Joe Derrane, *Joe Derrane and Jerry O' Brien: Accordion Duets*
James Keane, *Atlantic Wave*
James Keane, *Sweet and Traditional Music of Ireland*

Chris Norman
Ken Kolodner, *Daybreak*
Chris Norman, *Beauty of the North*
Chris Norman, *Daybreak*
Chris Norman, *Lullaby Journey*

Jim Ed Norman
Michael Martin Murphey, *The Best of Michael Martin Murphey*
Mark O'Connor, *The New Nashville Cats*

Neil Norman
Queen Ida/Ida Guillory, *Band on Tour*
Queen Ida/Ida Guillory, *Cookin' with Queen Ida*

Tom North
Irish Rovers, *On the Shores of Americay*

Northampton Harmony
Cordelia's Dad, *The Hookes' Regular Sing*

Northern Lights
Northern Lights, *Living in the City*
Northern Lights, *Take You to the Sky*

Billy Novick
Billy Novick, *The New Pennywhistle Album*
Billy Novick, *Raisin' the Rent*
Billy Novick, *These n' That n' Those*

Lisa Null
Debby McClatchy, *Apples in Winter*
Debby McClatchy, *Debby McClatchy with the Red Clay Ramblers*
Debby McClatchy, *Lady Luck*

Jim Nunally
The All Girl Boys, *Heart's Desire*

Steve Nye
Clannad, *Macalla*

Scott Nygaard
Scott Nygaard, *Dreamer's Waltz*
Scott Nygaard, *No Hurry*
Linda Waterfall, *Everything Looks Different*

Laura Nyro
Laura Nyro, *Eli & the 13th Confession*
Laura Nyro, *Mother's Spiritual*
Laura Nyro, *New York Tendaberry*

Ron Oates
Vern Gosdin, *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)*

Gerry O'Beirne
Kevin Burke, *Promenade*
Kevin Burke, *Up Close*
Patrick Street, *Irish Times*
Andy M. Stewart, *Donegal Rain*
Andy M. Stewart, *Man in the Moon*

Peter O'bleness
Garrison Keillor, *Comedy Theater*

Garry ó Briain
James Keane, *With Friends Like These*
Skylark, *Raining Bicycles*

Brendan O'Brien
Pete Droge, *Find a Door*
Pete Droge, *Necktie Second*

Derek O'Brien
Sue Foley, *Young Girl Blues*

Steve O'Brien
Fred Koller, *Songs from the Night Before*
Fred Koller, *Where the Fast Lane Ends*

Tim O'Brien
Balfa Toujours, *Deux Voyages*
The Chambers Brothers, *The Chambers Brothers' Greatest Hits*
Tim O'Brien/Tim & Mollie O'Brien, *Away out on the Mountain*
Dirk Powell, *Deux Voyages*
Dirk Powell, *If I Go Ten Thousand Miles*
Ranch Romance, *Flip City*

Ric Ocasek
Black 47, *Fire of Freedom*

Megan Lee Ochs
Phil Ochs, *Farewells & Fantasies*

Michael Ochs
Phil Ochs, *Farewells & Fantasies*
Phil Ochs, *There but for Fortune*
Phil Ochs, *A Toast to Those Who Are Gone*

Phil Ochs
Phil Ochs, *Gunfight at Carnegie Hall*

Gerry O'Connor
Lá Lugh, *Brighid's Kiss*
Lá Lugh, *La Lugh*

Mark O'Connor
Evan Marshall, *Mandolin Unlimited*
Mark O'Connor, *Appalachia Waltz*
Mark O'Connor, *The Fiddle Concerto*
Mark O'Connor, *Heroes*
Mark O'Connor, *The New Nashville Cats*

David O'Dell
Wilson Douglas, *Hot from the Kitchen*
Frank George, *The Cedar Point String Band*
Frank George, *Reflections of the Past*

Mícheál ó Domhnaill
The Bothy Band, *The Bothy Band 1975*
The Bothy Band, *Old Hag You Have Killed Me*
The Bothy Band, *Out of the Wind Into the Sun*
Kevin Burke, *Portland*
Kevin Burke, *Promenade*
Noel Hill, *Noel Hill & Tony Linnane*
Matt Molloy, *Matt Molloy*
Nightnoise, *Something of Time*

Eugene O'Donnell
Eugene O'Donnell, *The Foggy Dew*

Liam O'Flynn
Seán Keane, *The Fire Aflame*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Fire Aflame*

Jamie O'Hara
Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes, *The O'Kanes*

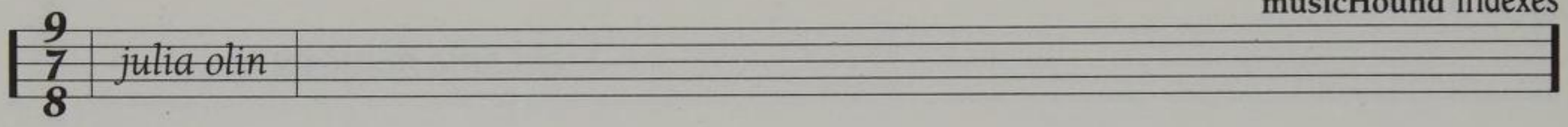
Mary Margaret O'Hara
Mary Margaret O'Hara, *Christmas E.P.*
Mary Margaret O'Hara, *Miss America*

Michael O'hEidhin
Mary Bergin/Dordan, *Feadoga Stain*

Milton Okun
John Denver, *An Evening with John Denver*
John Denver, *Rocky Mountain High*
Irish Rovers, *On the Shores of Americay*
The Chad Mitchell Trio, *At the Bitter End*
Laura Nyro, *The First Songs*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Album 1700*

Old Blind Dogs
Old Blind Dogs, *Five*
Old Blind Dogs, *Legacy*

Old Time Music on the Radio
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Old Time Music on the Air, Vol. 2*



Julia Olin
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *The Morning Dew*

Keith Olsen
Grateful Dead, *Terrapin Station*

Lee Olson
The Fairfield Four, *I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray*
The Fairfield Four, *Standing in the Safety Zone*

Seamus O'Neill
Dolores Keane, *Farewell to Eirinn*

Paul Oorts
Steve Schneider, *Momentum*
Simple Gifts, *A Place Just Right*

Brendan O'Regan
Sharon Shannon, *Ceol Tigh Neachtain*

Hoyle Osborne
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Get to the Heart*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Pullin' Through*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Sparkle and Shine*

Sonny Osborne
The Osborne Brothers, *Once More, Volumes I & II*
Chubby Wise, *An American Original*

Billy Oskay
Alasdair Fraser, *The North Road*
Nightnoise, *Something of Time*

Ossian
Ossian, *The Best of Ossian*
Ossian, *Borders*
Ossian, *The Carrying Stream*
Ossian, *Seal Song*
Ossian, *St. Kilda Wedding*

Peter Ostroushko
Peter Ostroushko, *Buddies of Swing*
Peter Ostroushko, *Pilgrims on the Heart Road*

Mícheál O'Súilleabháin
Kevin Burke, *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America*
Kevin Burke, *My Love is in America—The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival*
Liz Carroll, *Dear Old Erin's Isle: Irish Traditional Music from America*
Liz Carroll, *My Love Is in America: The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival*
Martin Hayes, *My Love Is in America: The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival*
Jerry Holland, *Traditional Music from Cape Breton Island*
Billy McComiskey, *Dear Old Erin's Isle—Irish Traditional Music from America*

Otter Slide Studios
Bob Shank, *Hammer Dulcimer Solos*

John Overton
Elizabeth Cotten, *Live*

Oyster Band
The Oyster Band, *Freedom and Rain*
The Oyster Band, *Little Rock to Leipzig*
June Tabor, *Freedom and Rain*

Kindle Paces
Neil Young, *After the Gold Rush*

Gary Pacheco
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles, *White Country Blues: 1926–1938, A Lighter Shade of Pale*

Gary Paczosa
Michael Johnson, *Then & Now*

Hugh Padgham
Julia Fordham, *Porcelain*

Andy Paley
John Wesley Harding, *Here Comes the Groom*
John Wesley Harding, *Pett Levels: The Summer EP*

Tom Paley
The Foremen, *Folk Heroes*
The Foremen, *What's Left?*

Phil Palmer
Paul Brady, *Full Moon*
Paul Brady, *Songs and Crazy Dreams*

Panini
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, *The Baggy Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1*
Gabby Pahinui, *The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Volume 1*

Felix Pappalardi
David Rea, *Maverick Child*

Dave Para
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Ballad of the Boonslick*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Johnny Whistletrigger*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Movin' on Down the River*
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Rebel in the Woods*

G. Parker
Rod MacDonald, *No Commercial Traffic*

Van Dyke Parks
Ry Cooder, *Ry Cooder*
Randy Newman, *Lonely at the Top*
Randy Newman, *Randy Newman*
Phil Ochs, *Greatest Hits*

Walter Parks
The Nudes, *The Nudes*
The Nudes, *Velvet Sofa*

Gram Parsons
Gram Parsons, *G.P./Grievous Angel*

Johnny Parth
Blind Blake, *Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, Vols. 1–4*
Herschel Brown/J.H. Brown, *Herschel Brown 1928–1929*
John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw/Dilly & the Dill Pickles, *John Dilleshaw (Seven Foot Dilly) Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, 1929–1930*
Blind Lemon Jefferson, *Blind Lemon Jefferson: Complete Works 1926–29*
Furry Lewis, *Complete Record Works (1927–29)*
Blind Willie McTell, *Blind Willie McTell: Complete Recorded Works (1927–35), Volumes I–III*
Memphis Jug Band/Picaninny Jug Band/Jed Davenport & His Beale Street Jug Band, *Complete Recorded Works, Volume III (1930)*
Memphis Minnie, *Memphis Minnie & Kansas Joe—1929–34 Recordings in Chronological Order, Volumes I–IV*
Mississippi Sheiks, *Complete Recorded Works Volumes I–IV*
Rosetta Tharpe, *Sister Rosetta Tharpe Complete Recorded Works*
Henry "Ragtime Texas" Thomas, *Henry Thomas 1927–29*

Bruce Jay Paskow
Annie Gallup, *Cause and Effect*

Tim Patalan
Brenda Kahn, *Destination Anywhere*

Johnny Pate
B.B. King, *Live at the Regal*

Sandy Paton
Bok, Muir & Trickett, *And So Will We Yet*
Bok, Muir & Trickett, *Bok, Muir & Trickett: The First 15 Years, Vol. I*

Bok, Muir & Trickett, *Bok, Muir & Trickett: The First 15 Years, Vol. II*
Archie Fisher, *The Man with a Rhyme*
Cindy Kallet, *Cindy Kallet II*
Ed Miller, *At Home with the Exiles*

Sandy and Caroline Paton
Sara Grey, *Five Days Singing, Volumes I and II*
Sandy & Caroline Paton, *Sandy and Caroline Paton*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Dark Ships in the Forest*

Patrick Street
Patrick Street, *Corner Boys*
Patrick Street, *Irish Times*
Patrick Street, *Made in Cork*
Patrick Street, *No.2 Patrick Street*

Beverly Patterson
Doug & Jack Wallin, *Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains*

Daniel Patterson
Doug & Jack Wallin, *Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains*

Curtis Paul
Gayla Drake Paul, *Gayla Drake Paul*
Gayla Drake Paul, *How Can I Keep from Singing? Works for Solo Guitar*
Gayla Drake Paul, *Waiting for the Spark*

Brian Paulson
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Anodyne*
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Trace*

Gary S. Paxton
Vern Gosdin, *Warning: Contains Country Music (The Great Ballads of Vern Gosdin)*

Tom Paxton
Tom Paxton, *Paxton Primer*

Leandra Peak
Neal & Leandra, *Accidental Dreams*

Paul Pearcy
Dick Siegel, *Angels Aweigh*

Ed Pearl
The Kentucky Colonels/The Country Boys, *Appalachian Swing!*

Herb Pedersen
The Dillards, *Homecoming and Family Reunion*
The Dillards, *There Is a Time: The Best of the Dillards 1963–1970*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Bakersfield Bound*
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers, *Blue Rambler 2*
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers, *Rambler's Blues*

Don Pedi
Don Pedi, *The Hog Went through the Fence Yoke and All*

Ralph Peer
Jimmie Rodgers, *America's Blue Yodeler, 1930–1931*
Jimmie Rodgers, *First Sessions, 1927–1928*
Jimmie Rodgers, *Jimmie Rodgers*

Nigel Pegrum
Dougie MacLean, *C.R.M.*
Dougie MacLean, *Caledonia*
Dougie MacLean, *On a Wing and a Prayer*
Dougie MacLean, *The Plant Life Years*
Dougie MacLean, *Snaigow*

Gail Pellet
Bernice Johnson Reagon, *The Songs Are Free*

Eric Peltoniemi
Prudence Johnson, *Little Dreamer . . . Lullabies for Young and Old*
"Spider" John Koerner, *Raised by Humans*
Claudia Schmidt, *Essential Tension*

Fred Pement
Don Stover, *The Lilly Brothers and Don Stover: Live at Hillbilly Ranch*

Ron Penix
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Reflections on the Carter Family*

Don Pennington
James Keelaghan, *My Skies*
James Keelaghan, *A Recent Future*

Ray Pennington
Grandpa Jones, *Grandpa Jones Live*
The Whites/Buck White & the Down Home Folks, *Give a Little Back*

Greg Penny
k.d. lang, *Absolute Torch and Twang*
k.d. lang, *Ingenue*
Maura O'Connell, *A Real Life Story*

Pentangle
Pentangle, *Open the Door*

Al Perkins
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Desert Rose*

Larry Perkins
Lonesome Standard Time/Larry Cordle, *A Touch of the Past*

Ken Perlman
Ken Perlman, *Island Boy*
Ken Perlman, *Melodic Clawhammer Banjo*

Nick Perls
Blind Blake, *Ragtime Guitar's Foremost Fingerpicker*
The Cheap Suit Serenaders, *R. Crumb and his Cheap Suit Serenaders*
Mississippi John Hurt, *1928 Sessions*

Richard Perry
Harry Nilsson, *Nilsson Schmilsson*
Carly Simon, *No Secrets*

Peter, Paul and Mary
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Children*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Eugene McCarthy for President—If You Love Your Country*

Billy Peterson
Larry Long, *Run for Freedom, Sweet Thunder*

Scott Petito
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon, *Take Me Home*
Anne Hills, *Angle of the Light*
Artie Traum, *Letters from Joubee*
Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum, *The Test of Time*
Diane Zeigler, *Sting of the Honeybee*

Rob Petruccelli
The New St. George, *High Tea*

Al Petteway
Al Petteway, *Caledon Wood*
Al Petteway, *The Waters and the Wild*

Nance Pettit
David Wilcox, *East Asheville Hardware*

Kelly Joe Phelps
Kelly Joe Phelps, *Lead Me On*

Jerry Phillips
John Prine, *Pink Cadillac*

Knox Phillips
John Prine, *Pink Cadillac*

Todd Phillips
Matt Flinner, *The View from Here*
Kathy Kallick, *Matters of the Heart*
Todd Phillips, *Timeframe*
Todd Phillips, *True Life Blues: The Music of Bill Monroe*

Don Pierce
Bill Clifton, *The Early Years, 1957–1958*

Johnny Pierce
Kate Campbell, *Moonpie Dreams*
Kate Campbell, *Songs from the Levee*

John Pilla
Kevin Burke, *Last of the Brooklyn Cowboys*
Arlo Guthrie, *All over the World*
Arlo Guthrie, *Amigo*
Arlo Guthrie, *Outlasting the Blues*
Arlo Guthrie, *Together in Concert*

Charlie Pilzer
Ceoltoiri, *Silver Apples of the Moon*
Ceoltoiri, *Women of Ireland*
Ensemble Galilei, *Ancient Noels*
Ensemble Galilei, *Following the Moon*
Ensemble Galilei, *The Mystic and the Muse*
Sue Richards, *Hazel Grove*
Sue Richards, *Morning Aire*
Bonnie Rideout, *Celtic Circles*
Maggie Sansone, *Ancient Noels*
Maggie Sansone, *Dance upon the Shore*
Maggie Sansone, *A Scottish Christmas*

John Pinamonti
John Pinamonti, *Tragico Magico*

Piney Creek Weasels
Piney Creek Weasels, *Go Long Mule*
Piney Creek Weasels, *Squirrel Heads and Gravy*

William Pint
Tom Lewis, *Making Waves*
Tom Lewis, *Sea-Dog, See Dog!*
Tom Lewis, *Surfacing*

Dave Pirner
Brenda Kahn, *60-Second Critic*

Tony Platt
Young Tradition, *No Relation*

Neely Plumb
The Limeliters, *Tonight: In Person*
The Limeliters, *Two Classic Albums from the Limeliters*
Glenn Yarbrough, *Baby the Rain Must Fall*

J.P. Plunier
Ben Harper, *Fight for Your Mind*
Ben Harper, *Welcome to the Cruel World*

Mr. Pokey
Christine Collister, *The World Is a Wonderful Place: The Songs of Richard Thompson*

Andy Polon
Ken Perlman, *Clawhammer Banjo and Fingerstyle Guitar Solos*

Bob Porter
Mose Allison, *The Best of Mose Allison*

John Porter
Billy Bragg, *Talking with the Taxman about Poetry*
Buddy Guy, *Damn Right, I've Got the Blues*
Buddy Guy, *Feels like Rain*
Taj Mahal, *Phantom Blues*
Keb' Mo', *Just like You*
Keb' Mo', *Keb' Mo'*

Ted Porter
Big Blow and the Bushwackers, *Off Kilter: A Celtic Outerlude*

Barry Poss
Tommy Jarrell, *Sail away Ladies*
Chris Thile, *Tinsel Tunes*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Riding the Midnight Train*

Steve Pottier
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier, *Bluegrass Guitar Duets*

Dirk Powell
Dirk Powell, *Dirk Powell and John Herrmann*

Timothy R. Powell
Indigo Girls, *Back on the Bus Y'All*

Stephen Powers
Gamble Rogers, *The Lord Gives Me Grace, the Devil Gives Me Style*

Tom Prasada-Rao
Tom Prasada-Rao, *Hear You Laughing*

Precision Audio
Les Gustafson-Zook, *Great Hymns*

Mark Prentice
The Fairfield Four, *I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray*

Bill Price
The Waterboys, *Dream Harder*

Primitive Characters
Primitive Characters, *The Leavin's*

Ian Prince
The Nylons, *Fabric of Life*

John Prine
John Prine, *Aimless Love*
John Prine, *John Prine Live*

Maddy Prior
June Tabor, *Silly Sisters*

Sidney Prosen
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack*

Daniel Protheroe
Marley's Ghost, *How Can I Keep from Singing*

Keith Proud
Kathryn Tickell, *On Kielder Side*

Gerry Putnam
Cosy Sheridan, *Saturn Return*

Norbert Putnam
Jimmy Buffett, *Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes*
Dan Fogelberg, *Home Free*

Bill Quinn
Lightnin' Hopkins, *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 1*
Lightnin' Hopkins, *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 2*
Lightnin' Hopkins, *Texas Blues*

Frank Quintini
Jo Carol Pierce, *Bad Girls Upset by the Truth*

Carol Rachou
Aldus Roger, *A Cajun Legend*
Aldus Roger, *Plays the French Music of South Louisiana*
Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys, *Saturday Night Cajun Music*
Lawrence Walker, *Tribute to the Late Great Lawrence Walker*

David Rachou
Filé, *La Vie Marron (The Runaway Life)*

Radio France
Frankie Gavin, *Irlande*

Gerry Rafferty
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Can I Have My Money Back*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *City to City*

Raffi
Raffi, *Baby Beluga*
Raffi, *Evergreen Everblue*
Raffi, *Raffi's Christmas Album*
Raffi, *Singable Songs Collection*

George Rains
Sue Foley, *Young Girl Blues*

Bonnie Raitt
Bonnie Raitt, *Luck of the Draw*

Kenny Ralph
The Saw Doctors, *Same Oul' Town*

Phil Ramone
Art Garfunkel, *Watermark*
Peter, Paul & Mary, *LifeLines*
Raffi, *Raffi on Broadway: A Family Concert*
Paul Simon, *Live Rhymin'*
Simon & Garfunkel, *The Concert in Central Park*

Bo Ramsey
Greg Brown, *Down in There*

Willis Alan Ramsey
Willis Alan Ramsey, *Willis Alan Ramsey*

Ranch Romance
Ranch Romance, *Western Dream*

Teddy Randazzo
Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer, *Honolulu City Lights*

Paul Rangell
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Cactus Gumbo and Alligator Enchiladas*

Rankin Family
The Rankin Family, *Endless Seasons*

Steve Rashid
Andrew Calhoun, *Hope*
Kat Eggleston, *Outside Eden*
Kat Eggleston, *Second Nature*

Steve Rathe
The New Lost City Ramblers, *New Lost City Ramblers' 20th Anniversary Concert*

Andrew Ratshin
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *But I'm Happy Now*
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *The Inessential Uncle Bonsai*
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *Lounging in the Belly of the Beast*
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *20 Seconds of Pleasure*

Philippe Rault
Mose Allison, *Lesson in Living*

John Ravenhall
The Oyster Band, *Deserters*
June Tabor, *Angel Tiger*

David Rea
David Rea, *Brass Ring*
David Rea, *By the Grace of God*
David Rea, *Slewfoot*

Bob Read
Karen Ashbrook, *Hills of Erin*
Sally Rogers, *Generations*

Bernice Johnson Reagon
Bernice Johnson Reagon, *River of Life/Harmony: One*
Bernice Johnson Reagon, *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs 1960–1966*

Toshi Reagon
Bernice Johnson Reagon, *River of Life/Harmony: One*
Toshi Reagon, *Justice*
Toshi Reagon, *Kindness*

Mac Rebennack
Dr. John, *Trippin' Live*

Rebirth Jazz Band
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Here to Stay*

Red Clay Ramblers
Red Clay Ramblers, *Merchants Lunch*

Red Mountain White Trash
Red Mountain White Trash, *Fire in the Dumpster*

Leon Redbone
Leon Redbone, *From Branch to Branch*
Leon Redbone, *Live*
Leon Redbone, *No Regrets*
Leon Redbone, *Red to Blue*

Jean Redpath
Jean Redpath, *Lowlands*

Greg Reely
Sarah McLachlan, *Touch*

Jan Reichow
Altan, *Ireland*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Ireland*
Frankie Gavin, *Ireland*

Gary Reid
Joel Mabus, *Fairies and Fools*
Sally Rogers, *The Unclaimed Pint*

Gary B. Reid
Kenny Baker/Kenny Baker and Josh Graves, *Master Fiddler*
The Chestnut Grove Quartet, *The Legendary Chestnut Grove Quartet*
Darby and Tarlton, *On the Banks of a Lonely River*
The Delmore Brothers, *Brown's Ferry Blues*
Jim Eanes, *Classic Bluegrass*
Brad Leftwich/Brad Leftwich & Linda Higginbotham, *Say, Old Man*
Uncle Dave Macon, *Travelin' down the Road*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *In the Pines*
Don Reno & Red Smiley, *Reno & Smiley & the Tennessee Cut-Ups, 1951–1959*
Larry Sparks, *Classic Bluegrass*
Ernest Stoneman/The Stoneman Family, *Edison Recordings—28*
Mac Wiseman, *Early Dot Recordings, Volume III*

Pete Reiniger
The Double Decker String Band, *Chasing Rainbows*

Paul Reisler
John McCutcheon, *Howjadoo!*
John McCutcheon, *Water from Another Time*
John McCutcheon, *Winter Solstice*
Sally Rogers, *Generations*
Trapezoid, *Cool of the Day*
Trapezoid, *Long Time down This Road*

Scott Reiss
Hesperus, *Early American Roots*

Rosetta Reitz
Rosetta Tharpe, *Sister R. Tharpe*

Renegades
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva, *I Need to Find*

Manny Rettinger
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Following in the Tune Prints*
Bayou Seco/Bayou Eclectico, *Songs of New Mexico and Beyond*

Allen Reynolds
Asleep at the Wheel, *Asleep at the Wheel: Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys*
Emmylou Harris, *At the Ryman*
Emmylou Harris, *Cowgirl's Prayer*
Kathy Mattea, *A Collection of Hits*
Kathy Mattea, *Walk the Way the Wind Blows*

Debbie Reynolds
Carol Thompson, *The Peacock's Feather*

Ron Rhoads Jr.
The Forbes Family, *I'll Look to Him*

Kimmie Rhodes
Kimmie Rhodes, *West Texas Heaven*

Rhythm Rats
Rhythm Rats, *I Believe I'll Go Back Home*
Rhythm Rats, *Pretty Crowing Chicken*

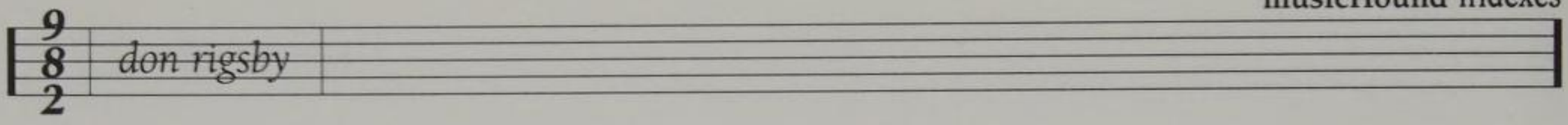
Peter Rice
Alan Stivell, *Live in Dublin*

Tony Rice
Tony Rice, *Mar West*
Tony Rice, *Tony Rice Sings and Plays Bluegrass*

Zachary Richard
Zachary Richard, *Looking Back*
Zachary Richard, *Women in the Room*

Cameron Riddle
Flaco Jimenez, *Buena Suerte, Senorita*

Bonnie Rideout
Bonnie Rideout, *Kindred Spirits*



Don Rigsby
Lonesome River Band, *A Vision*

Doug Riley
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *All the Good 'Uns*

Jim Ringer
Jim Ringer/Jim Ringer & Mary McCaslin, *The Best of Jim Ringer: The Band of Jesse James*

Ralph Rinzler
Clarence "Tom" Ashley, *The Original Folkways Recordings 1960–1962*
The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa, *Louisiana Cajun French Music from the Southwest Prairies: Vol. 1, 1964–1967*
Séamus Ennis, *Irish Music in London Pubs*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Live Duet Recordings 1963–1980—Off the Record, Volume II*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Live Recordings 1965–69: Off the Record, Volume I*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Bill Monroe and Doc Watson: Live Duet Recordings 1963–80—Off the Record, Volume II*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley: The Original Folkways Recordings: 1960–62*
Doc Watson/The Watson Family/Doc & Merle Watson, *The Watson Family*

Pete Ritzema
June Tabor, *June Tabor: The Peel Sessions*

Chris Rival
Deb Pasternak, *More*

John Rivers
Dead Can Dance, *Dead Can Dance*
Dead Can Dance, *The Serpent's Egg*
Dead Can Dance, *Spleen and Ideal*

Carrie Rizzetta
Sam Rizzetta, *In the Garden*

Sam Rizzetta
Sam Rizzetta, *Bucks and Does*
Sam Rizzetta, *In the Garden*

Terry Robb
John Fahey, *The John Fahey Christmas Album*

Sandy Roberton
Iain Matthews/Matthews Southern Comfort/Plainsong/Hamilton's Pool, *The Soul of Many Places: The Elektra Years, 1972–1974*
Steeleye Span, *Please to See the King*

John Roberts
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Eat Bertha's Mussels*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Hail Smiling Morn!*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Mellow with Ale from the Horn*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Nowell Sing We Clear Volume IV*
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *A Present from the Gentlemen*

Robin Roberts
Séamus Ennis, *The Bonny Bunch of Roses*

Steve Roberts
Mark Germino, *Rank & File*

Steve Robertshaw
Dave Burland, *His Master's Choice: The Songs of Richard Thompson*

Kim Robertson
Kim Robertson, *Love Song to a Planet*

Robbie Robertson
Jesse Winchester, *Jesse Winchester*

Duke Robillard
John Hammond Jr., *Found True Love*

Butch Robins
Joseph "Butch" Robins, *The Fifth Child*
Joseph "Butch" Robins, *Fragments of My Imagination*
Joseph "Butch" Robins, *Grounded–Centered–Focused*

Andy Robinson
Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum, *Buckets of Rain*

Robby "Mann" Robinson
Zydeco Force, *It's La La Time*
Zydeco Force, *Zydeco Push*

Tom Robinson
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *Hope and Glory*

Roches
The Roches, *No Trespassing*

Jerry Rockwell
Jerry Rockwell, *Favorite American Folktunes*

Garnet Rogers
Archie Fisher, *Sunsets I've Galloped Into*
Garnet Rogers, *At a High Window*
Garnet Rogers, *Garnet Rogers*
Garnet Rogers, *Night Drive*
Garnet Rogers, *The Outside Track*
Garnet Rogers, *Small Victories*
Garnet Rogers, *Speaking Softly in the Dark*
Garnet Rogers, *Summer Lightning—Live*

Lelan Rogers
Lightnin' Hopkins, *Free Form Patterns*

Roy Rogers
Ramblin' Jack Elliott, *Friends of Mine*
John Lee Hooker, *The Healer*
Bonnie Raitt, *The Healer*
Roy Rogers, *Chops Not Chaps*
Roy Rogers, *Rhythm and Groove*
Roy Rogers, *Slide Zone*
Roy Rogers, *Travellin' Tracks*

Sally Rogers
Sally Rogers, *The Unclaimed Pint*
Sally Rogers, *We'll Pass Them On*
Sally Rogers, *What Can One Little Person Do?*

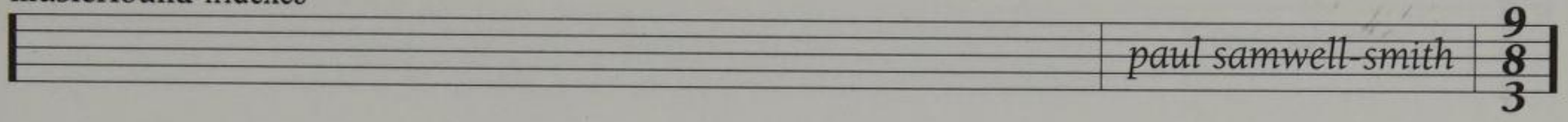
Tammy Rogers
Tammy Rogers, *In the Red*
Tammy Rogers, *Tammy Rogers*

Valerie Rogers
Grit Laskin, *Unmasked*

Linda Ronstadt
David Lindley, *Very Greasy*

James K. Rooney
Eric Von Schmidt, *Second Right Third Row*

Jim Rooney
Pat Alger, *Seeds*
Pat Alger, *True Love & Other Short Stories*
Iris DeMent, *Infamous Angel*
Iris DeMent, *My Life*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *The Ways of the World*
David Grier, *Freewheeling*
Nanci Griffith, *Last of the True Believers*
Nanci Griffith, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *Diamonds in the Rough*
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *All the Good 'Uns*
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *West Textures*
David Olney, *Roses*
Tom Paxton, *Live for the Record*
John Prine, *Aimless Love*
John Prine, *John Prine Live*
Peter Rowan, *Bluegrass Boy*
Barry & Holly Tashian, *Ready for Love*



Townes Van Zandt, *At My Window*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *Live at Gruene Hall*

Fred Rose
Hank Williams, *40 Greatest Hits*

Kim Rosen
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter/Amy Fradon, *Delphys: Ocean Born*

Stuart Rosenberg
Anne Hills, *Woman of a Calm Heart*

Gene Rosenthal
Roy Book Binder, *Travelin' Man*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Memorial Anthology*
Bob Shank, *At the Wednesday Night Waltz*

Hilton Rosenthal
The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies, *Gravity Dance*

Steve Rosenthal
Four Bitchin' Babes, *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume 2*
Christine Lavin, *Buy Me Bring Me Take Me: Don't Mess My Hair!!! Volume II*
Christine Lavin, *Please Don't Make Me Too Happy*
Cheryl Wheeler, *Christine Lavin Presents: Laugh Tracks, Volume I*

Neil Ross
Phil Cunningham, *Airs and Graces*

John Rossbach
Ken Perlman, *Island Boy*

Kevin Roth
Kevin Roth, *The Mountain Dulcimer Instrumental Album*
Kevin Roth, *Mountain Dulcimer Instrumental Album, Volume II: The First Few Words*
Kevin Roth, *Now I Lay Me down to Sleep*
Kevin Roth, *Searching for Angels*
Kevin Roth, *Train Songs and Other Tracks*

Adam Rothberg
The Nields, *The Honesty Room*
Dar Williams, *The Honesty Room*

Paul Rothchild
Michael Bloomfield, *East-West*
Michael Bloomfield, *The Lost Sessions*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *East-West*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *The Lost Sessions*
Paul Butterfield Blues Band/Paul Butterfield's Better Days, *The Paul Butterfield Blues Band*
The Charles River Valley Boys, *Beatle Country*
The Charles River Valley Boys, *Charles River Valley Boys*
Lovin' Spoonful, *John B. Sebastian*
Bonnie Raitt, *Home Plate*

Sandy Rothman
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier, *Bluegrass Guitar Duets*

Jay Round
Cathy Barton and Dave Para, *Reflections on the Carter Family*

The Rounder Collective
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball, *Fathers Have a Home Sweet Home*

Brent Rowan
Kate Wallace, *Kate Wallace*

Peter Rowan
Peter Rowan, *Bluegrass Boy*

Bruce Rowland
Dave Swarbrick, *Swarbrick/Swarbrick II*

Dan Rowles
Garrison Keillor, *Lake Wobegon USA*

Tom Rozum
Laurie Lewis/Grant Street, *The Oak & the Laurel*
Peter McLaughlin, *The Oak and the Laurel*
Mark Simos, *The Oak and the Laurel*

Rick Rubin
Johnny Cash, *American Recordings*

David Rubinson
The Chambers Brothers, *The Chambers Brothers' Greatest Hits*
Taj Mahal, *Giant Step/De Old Folks at Home*
Taj Mahal, *Taj's Blues*

Thomas Ruf
Luther Allison, *Where Have You Been? Live in Montreux 1976–94*

Rick Ruggieri
Carolyn Hester, *Warriors of the Rainbow*

John W. Rumble
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *The Music of Bill Monroe from 1936 to 1994*

Todd Rundgren
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *TRB Two*

Runrig
Runrig, *Maral*

Tom Rush
Tom Rush, *The Best of Tom Rush*

Tom Russell
Rosie Flores, *Tulare Dust*
Katy Moffatt, *Evangeline Motel*
Tom Russell, *Cowboy Real*
Tom Russell, *Hillbilly Voodoo*
Tom Russell, *Hurricane Season*
Tom Russell, *Poor Man's Dream*

Tony Russell
Archie Fisher, *Will Ye Gang, Love*

Sonia Rutstein
disappear fear, *Almost Chocolate*

Dennis Ryan
Jerry Holland, *Master Cape Breton Fiddler*

Nicky Ryan
Altan, *Ceol Aduaidh*
Altan, *Mná na héireann (Women of Ireland)*
Clannad, *Clannad in Concert*
Clannad, *Dulaman*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Selected Jigs, Reels and Songs*
De Danann/De Dannan, *The Star Spangled Molly*
Enya, *The Celts*
Enya, *Christmas EP*
Enya, *Enya Collection*
Enya, *Frog Prince Soundtrack*
Enya, *The Memory of Trees*
Enya, *Oiche Chiun (Silent Night)*
Enya, *Paint the Sky with Stars: The Best of Enya*
Enya, *Shepherd Moon*
Enya, *Watermark*

Saffire
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, *Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue*
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, *Saffire, the Uppity Blues Women*

Sampler Records
Mitzie Collins, *Be Thou My Vision*

Les Sampou
Les Sampou, *Sweet Perfume*

Dave Samuelson
Kenny Baker/Kenny Baker and Josh Graves, *The Puritan*

Paul Samwell-Smith
Amazing Blondel, *Fantasia Lindum*
Mark Germino, *London Town & Barnyard Remedies*

victor sanders

The Roches, *Seductive Reasoning*
Carly Simon, *Anticipation*
Cat Stevens, *Tea for the Tillerman*
Cat Stevens, *Teaser and the Firecat*

Victor Sanders
Buddy Mondlock, *On the Line*
Sons of the Never Wrong, *Three Good Reasons*

Ben Sandmel
Hackberry Ramblers, *Deep Water*

Colum Sands
Tommy Sands, *Beyond the Shadows*
Tommy Sands, *Singing of the Times*

Tommy Sands
Tommy Sands, *Beyond the Shadows*
Tommy Sands, *The Heart's a Wonder*

Maria Sangiolo
Maria Sangiolo, *Follow Your Own Road*

Anton Sanko
Lucy Kaplansky, *Flesh and Bone*
Suzanne Vega, *Days of Open Hand*

Nicholas Sansano
Peter Mulvey, *Deep Blue*

Maggie Sansone
Ensemble Galilei, *Music in the Great Hall*
Al Petteway, *A Scottish Christmas*
Sue Richards, *Grey-Eyed Morn*

Akira Satake
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Bushes and Briars*
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Peter and Wendy*

Art Satherly
Molly O'Day, *Molly O'Day & the Cumberland Mountain Folks*
Sons of the Pioneers, *Columbia Historic Edition*

Fernando Saunders
Susan Werner, *Last of the Good Straight Girls*

Mark Saunders
Margo Hennebach, *Big Love*

Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Two-Step d' Amédée*

Saw Doctors
The Saw Doctors, *Same Oul' Town*

Charles Sawtelle
Front Range, *Back to Red River*
Front Range, *The New Frontier*
Kate MacLeod, *Constant Emotion*
Kate MacLeod, *Trying to Get It Right*

Scartaglen
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *The Middle Path*
Connie Dover/Scartaglen, *Scartaglen*

Mark Schatz
Critton Hollow String Band, *Cowboys and Indians*
Special Consensus, *Strong Enough to Bend*

Elliot Scheiner
Jimmy Buffett, *Feeding Frenzy*
Jimmy Buffett, *Off to See the Lizard*

Peter Schekeryk
Melanie, *Gather Me*

John Scherf
Neal & Leandra, *Accidental Dreams*
Neal & Leandra, *Hearts and Hammers*
Neal & Leandra, *Old Love*

Bob Scherl
Mississippi John Hurt, *The Best of Mississippi John Hurt*

Claudia Schmidt
Claudia Schmidt, *It Looks Fine from Here*

Al Schmitt
Jackson Browne, *Late for the Sky*
Hot Tuna, *Hot Tuna*

Rocky Schnaars
Kate Wallace, *Kate Wallace*

David Schnaufer
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Sessions*

Steve Schneider
Steve Schneider, *The Door to Christmas*
Steve Schneider, *Momentum*

Helen Schneyer
Helen Schneyer, *Somber, Sacred & Silly*

Christian Scholze
Altan, *Ireland*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Ireland*
Frankie Gavin, *Ireland*

Dave Schramm
Cordelia's Dad, *How Can I Sleep?*

Kevin Schramm
The Mollys, *Welt the Floor!*

Bill Schubart
Mary McCaslin, *Way out West*

Geoffrey Schulman
Phil Ochs, *The War Is Over: The Best of Phil Ochs*

John Schumann
Eric Bogle, *Something of Value*

Tracy Schwarz
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio, *Mes Amis!*
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio, *Souvenirs*
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker, *Deep Hollows and High Ridges*

Darrell Scott
Darrell Scott, *Aloha from Nashville*

Hammond Scott
Lynn August, *Lynn August: Creole Cruiser*
Lynn August, *Sauce Piquante*
Buckwheat Zydeco, *100% Fortified Zydeco*
Maria Muldaur, *Louisiana Love Call*

Jim Scott
Zachary Richard, *Women in the Room*

Mike Scott
The Saw Doctors, *If This Is Rock & Roll, I Want My Old Job Back*
The Waterboys, *Best of the Waterboys*
The Waterboys, *Dream Harder*
The Waterboys, *Fisherman's Blues*
The Waterboys, *A Pagan Place*
The Waterboys, *The Secret Life of the Waterboys*
The Waterboys, *This Is the Sea*

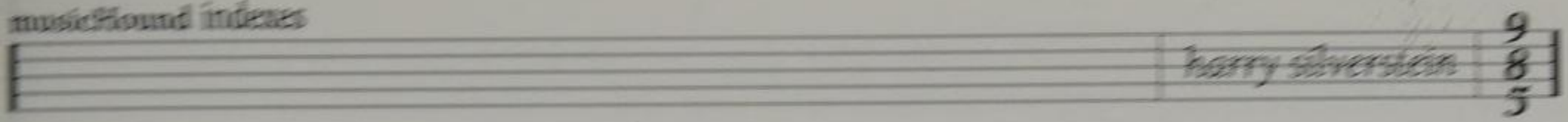
Nauman S. Scott
Buckwheat Zydeco, *100% Fortified Zydeco*

Neil Scott
Dick Siegel, *Snap!*

Randy Scruggs
Iris DeMent, *The Way I Should Be*

John Sebastian
Rory Block, *High Heeled Blues*
Lovin' Spoonful, *I Want My Roots*
Lovin' Spoonful, *Tarzana Kid*

Louis Sedmark
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *All the Good 'Uns*



Anthony Seeger
Leadbelly/Huddie Ledbetter, Last Sessions

Mike Seeger
Paul Brown, Way Down in North Carolina
Elizabeth Cotten, Freight Train and Other North Carolina Folk Songs and Tunes
The Country Gentlemen, Country Songs Old and New
Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard, Get Acquainted Waltz
Lilly Brothers/Lilly Brothers & Don Stover, Folk Songs from the Southern Mountains
The New Lost City Ramblers, The New Lost City Ramblers, the Early Years, 1958–1962
Leslie Riddle, Step by Step
Mike Seeger, Get Acquainted Waltz
Mike Seeger, Solo: Old-Time Country Music
Mike Seeger, Third Annual Farewell Reunion
Mike Seeger, Way Down in North Carolina
Strange Creek Singers, Get Acquainted Waltz

David Seitz
Hugh Blumenfeld, Bonfonded
Hugh Blumenfeld, Wasson's Money
Hugh Blumenfeld, The Strong in Spirit
Annie Sellick, Courage My Love
Margo Hennebach, Michoacan
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, Through the Bitter Frost and Snow
The Nields, The Honesty Room
Richard Shindell, Sparrows Point
Dar Williams, The Honesty Room

Geoff Seitz
Geoff Seitz, The Good Old Days Are Here

Matthew Seligman
Robyn Hitchcock, Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, Groovy Decoy

Alan Senauke
Kathy Kallick, Use a Napkin (Not Your Mom)

Declan Sennott
Mary Black, Babes in the Woods

Larry Serafini
Dan Duggan, Between the Seasons

Linda Severt
Laura Love, Helvetica Bold

Martin Sexton
Martin Sexton, In the Journey

Bob Shad
Lightnin' Hopkins, Blues from Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Hometown Blues

Bob Shank
Bob Shank, Hammer Dulcimer Solos

Jamshied Sharifi
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, Buckets and Briars

Ian Shaw
Paul Robeson, The Peace Arch Concerts

Del Shell
Robin Huw Bowen, The Sweet Harp of My Land

Sammy Shelor
Lonesome River Band, Leaving Rail

Louie Shelton
Seals & Crofts, Summer Breeze

Cory Sheridan
Cory Sheridan, Quietly Led
Cory Sheridan, Saturn Return

Judith Sherman
Robin Holcomb, Little Three

Billy Sherrill
Jim & Jesse, Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More
George Jones, Ladies' Choice

Richard Shindell
Richard Shindell, Sparrows Point

Witt Shingle
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, The Pahinui Bros.

Michelle Shocked
Alison Brown, Arkansas Traveler
Red Clay Ramblers, Arkansas Traveler

Steve Sholes
Chet Atkins, Galloping Guitar: The Early Years
Johnnie & Jack, Johnnie & Jack
Jimmy Martin, Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys

Grant Showbiz
Billy Bragg, Don't Try This at Home
Billy Bragg, The Internationale

Eddie Shuler
Bonsoir Travis, The Lake Charles Atomic Bomb (Original Goldband Recordings)
Iry Lejeune, Cajun's Greatest: The Definitive Collection
Iry Lejeune, The Legendary Iry Lejeune

Bob Shumaker
California Cajun Orchestra, Nonc Adam Two-Step
Eric & Suzy Thompson, Nonc Adam Two-Step

Dick Shurman
Albert Collins, Frostbite
Albert Collins, Frozen Alive!

Jane Siberry
Jane Siberry, Bound by the Beauty
Jane Siberry, No Borders Here
Jane Siberry, When I Was a Boy

Ben Sidran
Mose Allison, Tell Me Something

Dick Siegel
Dick Siegel, Angels Aweigh
Dick Siegel, Dick Siegel Live
Dick Siegel, Snap!
Dick Siegel, Tomorrow Morning

Peter K. Siegel
Red Allen, The Kitchen Tapes
The Charles River Valley Boys, Beatle Country
Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard, Pioneering Women of Bluegrass
Peter Rowan, The Great American Eagle Tragedy
Paul Siebel, Paul Siebel
Joseph Spence, Kneelin' down inside the Gate: The Great Rhyming Singers of the Bahamas
Joseph Spence, The Spring of Sixty-Five
Frank Wakefield, The Kitchen Tapes

Steve Siegfried
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, The Pahinui Bros.

Larry Sifel
Al Petteway, The Waters and the Wild

Chris Silagyi
Dave Alvin, Blue Blvd
Dave Alvin, Museum of Heart

Silly Wizard
Silly Wizard, The Best of Silly Wizard
Silly Wizard, Caledonia's Hardy Sons
Silly Wizard, So Many Partings

Harry Silverstein
Jimmy Martin, Jimmy Martin & the Sunny Mountain Boys

Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1959–1969*
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys, *Bill Monroe—Bluegrass 1970–1979*

Sidney Simien
Rockin Sidney, *My Toot Toot*
Rockin Sidney, *My Zydeco Shoes Got the Zydeco Blues*

John Simon
The Band, *The Band*
The Band, *Music from Big Pink*
Leonard Cohen, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*
Steve Forbert, *Jackrabbit Slim*

Paul Simon
Jackson C. Frank, *Blues Run the Game*
The Roches, *Seductive Reasoning*
Paul Simon, *Graceland*
Paul Simon, *Hearts and Bones*
Paul Simon, *Paul Simon*
Paul Simon, *Still Crazy after All These Years*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bookends*
Simon & Garfunkel, *Bridge over Troubled Water*
Simon & Garfunkel, *The Concert in Central Park*

Mark Simos
Mark Simos, *Race the River Jordan*

Simple Gifts
Simple Gifts, *Down by the Sally Gardens*

Martin Simpson
Martin Simpson/Martin & Jessica Ruby Simpson/Band of Angels, *Cool and Unusual*

Shelby S. Singleton Jr.
The Flatlanders, *Unplugged*

Declan Sinnott
The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black, *The Black Family*
The Black Family/Shay, Michael, and Martin Black, *Time for Touching Home*
Mary Black, *Collected*

Ricky Skaggs
Ricky Skaggs, *Bluegrass Rules*
Ricky Skaggs, *Highways and Heartaches*
Ricky Skaggs, *Waitin' for the Sun to Shine*

Patrick Sky
Séamus Ennis, *Forty Years of Irish Piping*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Today!*
Eugene O'Donnell, *Mick Moloney with Eugene O'Donnell*
Patrick Sky, *Songs That Made America Famous*

Skyedance
Skyedance, *Way out to Hope Street*

Skylark
Skylark, *Light and Shade*

Sean Slade
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *No Depression*
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Still Feel Gone*

Rob Smaling
The Dubliners, *Live in Carre, Amsterdam*

Fred Small
Fred Small, *Heart of the Appaloosa*

Jackie Small
Mary Bergin/Dordan, *Irish Traditional and Baroque*
Frankie Gavin, *Croch Suas é—Up and Away*

Judy Small
Judy Small, *The Best of the '80s*
Judy Small, *Second Wind*

Arthur Smith
Mac Wiseman, *The Mac Wiseman Story*

Betty Smith
Betty Smith, *Both Sides, Then and Now*
Betty Smith, *Psaltery Concert*

Debi Smith
Smith Sisters/Debi Smith, *A Canary's Song*
Camille West, *Gabby Road–Out of the Mouths of Babes: Life According to the Bitchin' Babes*

Harry Smith
The Fugs, *The Fugs First Album*
The Fugs, *The Fugs Second Album*

Jerry Read Smith
Jerry Read Smith, *Heartdance*
Jerry Read Smith, *Homecoming*
Jerry Read Smith, *The Stray-away Child*
David Wilcox, *The Nightshift Watchman*

Kenny Smith
Lonesome River Band, *Studebaker*

Lynn "Chirps" Smith
Chirps Smith, *Midwestern Harvest*

Megan Smith
Smith Sisters/Debi Smith, *A Canary's Song*

Russell Smith
The Amazing Rhythm Aces, *Out of the Blue*
The Amazing Rhythm Aces, *Ride Again*
Alaska's Hobo Jim, *Thunderfoot*
Alaska's Hobo Jim, *Where Legends Are Born*

Steuart Smith
Shawn Colvin, *Cover Girl*
Julian Dawson, *Move Over, Darling*
Julian Dawson, *Travel On*

Taylor "Chip" Smith
Primitive Characters, *The Leavin's*

Dick Smothers
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Sibling Revelry*

Tom Smothers
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Sibling Revelry*

Steve Smulian
Bill Staines, *Bridges*

Ed Snodderly
The Brother Boys, *Presley's Grocery*

Don Snyder
Sylvia Woods, *The Harp of Brandiswhiere: A Suite for Celtic Harp*
Sylvia Woods, *Three Harps for Christmas*
Sylvia Woods, *3 Harps for Christmas Volume II*

John Snyder
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, *Gate Swings*
James Cotton, *Living the Blues*
Maria Muldaur, *Fanning the Flames*

Floyd Soileau
The Balfa Brothers/Freres Balfa, *The Balfa Brothers Play Traditional Cajun Music, Vols. 1 & 2*
Boozoo Chavis, *Zydeco Trail Ride*
Keith Frank, *What's His Name?*
Keith Frank, *You'd Be Suprized*
Dennis McGee, *La Vielle Musique Acadienne*
Doris "D.L." Menard, *Cajun Memories*
Willis Prudhomme, *Willis Prudhomme and Zydeco Express*
Aldus Roger, *Marie/Be Careful, You're Breaking My Heart*
Rockin Sidney, *Rockin' Sydney and His Dukes: They Call Me Rockin'*
Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys, *Hier Et Aujourd'hui*
Sundown Playboys/Lesa Cormier & the Sundown Playboys, *Saturday Night Special/Valse de Soliel Coucher*
Tasso, *The Old Timey Way*

J. Steven Soles
Steve Young, *Switchblades of Love*

Jon Solins
Bill Harley, *I'm Gonna Let It Shine—A Gathering of Voices for Freedom*

Pete Solley
Steve Forbert, *Little Stevie Orbit*

Arnie Solomon
Wayne Henderson, *Rugby Guitar*

Maynard Solomon
Joan Baez, *The First Ten Years*
Joan Baez, *Joan Baez 5*
Richard and Mimi Fariña/Mimi Fariña, *Best Of*
Richard and Mimi Fariña/Mimi Fariña, *Memories*
John Hammond Jr., *The Best of John Hammond*
Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band, *Greatest Hits*
Paul Robeson, *The Essential Paul Robeson*
Buffy Sainte-Marie, *I'm Gonna Be a Country Girl Again*

Solomon's Seal
Lorraine (Lee) Hammond/Lorraine & Bennett Hammond/Solomon's Seal/Rick & Lorraine Lee, *The Old Road*

Son Volt
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Trace*

Jo-El Sonnier
Jo-El Sonnier, *Cajun Pride*

Sons of the Never Wrong
Sons of the Never Wrong, *Three Good Reasons*

Karen Sorensen
Chic Street Man, *Beau-ti-ful*
Chic Street Man, *Everybody Be Yo'self*
Chic Street Man, *Guns Away*

Rosalie Sorrels
Rosalie Sorrels, *Report from Grimes Creek*
Rosalie Sorrels, *Then Came the Children*

Larry Sparks
Larry Sparks, *The Rock I Stand On*
Larry Sparks, *Silver Reflections*
Larry Sparks, *Sings Hank Williams*

Mark Spector
Tom Rush, *The Best of Tom Rush*

Bill Spence
John Roberts & Tony Barrand, *Mellow with Ale from the Horn*
Bill Spence, *Fennigmania*
Bill Spence, *The Hammered Dulcimer*
Bill Spence, *The Hammered Dulcimer Strikes Again*

Mark Spencer
Blood Oranges/Cheri Knight/Wooden Leg/Beacon Hillbillies, *Wooden Leg*

Buddy Spicher
Boys from Indiana, *Touchin Home*

Richard Spottswood
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, *Les Blues du Bayou*
Michael Coleman, *From Galway to Dublin*
Michael Coleman, *Milestone at the Garden*
Canray Fontenot, *Les Blues du Bayou*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Avalon Blues 1963*
Mississippi John Hurt, *Worried Blues*

Daithi Sproule
Liz Carroll, *Liz Carroll*
Trian, *Trian*
Trian, *Trian II*

Gregory Squires
Sally Rogers, *Laments & Dances*

Wes Stace
John Wesley Harding, *It Happened One Night*

Jeanie Stahl
Mason Daring/Jeanie Stahl and Mason Daring, *The Early Years*
Jeanie Stahl/Jeanie Stahl & Mason Daring, *The Early Years*

Peter Stampfel
The Holy Modal Rounders, *The Holy Modal Rounders*

Roebuck Staples
Pops Staples, *Peace to the Neighborhood*

John Starling
Carl Jackson, *Spring Training*

Ringo Starr
Harry Nilsson, *Son of Dracula*

Andy Statman
Andy Statman, *Songs for Our Fathers*

Jody Stecher
California Cajun Orchestra, *Nonc Adam Two-Step*
California Cajun Orchestra, *Not Lonesome Anymore*
Alasdair Fraser, *The Driven Bow*
Katy Moffatt, *Kate Brislin & Katy Moffatt*
Joseph Spence, *The Spring of Sixty-Five*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Blue Lightning*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Going up on the Mountain*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Heart Songs: The Old Time Country Songs of Utah Phillips*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Our Town*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *A Song That Will Linger*
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin, *Stay Awhile*
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Nonc Adam Two-Step*
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Not Lonesome Anymore*

Allan Steckler
Roy Rogers, *Peace in the Valley*

Steeleye Span
Steeleye Span, *Storm Force Ten*

Tom Steenbergen
The Dubliners, *Live in Carre, Amsterdam*

Rafe Stefanini
Rafe Stefanini, *Old Paint*

Adam Stemple
Boiled in Lead, *Songs from the Gypsy*

Tom Stern
Don Reno & Red Smiley, *Family & Friends*

Cat Stevens
Cat Stevens, *Foreigner*
Cat Stevens, *Izitso*

Al Stewart
Al Stewart, *Between the Wars*

Andy M. Stewart
Andy M. Stewart, *Dublin Lady*

Gary Stewart
Phil Ochs, *Farewells & Fantasies*

Jim Stewart
Otis Redding, *Live in Europe*
Otis Redding, *Otis Blue*

John Stewart
John Stewart, *Airdream Believer*
John Stewart, *Bullets in the Hourglass*
John Stewart, *Dream Babies Go Hollywood*
John Stewart, *The Last Campaign*
John Stewart, *Neon Beach*
John Stewart, *Secret Tapes '86*

Michael Stewart
John Stewart, *Lonesome Picker Rides Again*
John Stewart, *Sunstorm*

Don Stiernberg
Homer & Jethro, *Swing Low, Sweet Mandolin*

Stephen Stills
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Long May You Run*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Manassas*
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Stephen Stills*
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *Manassas*

Harry Stinson
Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes, *Dead Reckoning*
Kieran Kane/The O'Kanes, *A Night of Reckoning*
Tammy Rogers, *Tammy Rogers*
Kevin Welch, *Life down Here on Earth*
Kevin Welch, *A Night of Reckoning*

Michael Stipe
Vic Chesnutt, *West of Rome*

Alan Stivell
Alan Stivell, *70/95 ZOOM*
Alan Stivell, *Again*
Alan Stivell, *Live in Dublin*
Alan Stivell, *The Mist of Avalon*

Mike Stoller
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Ferguslie Park*
Stealers Wheel/Gerry Rafferty, *Stealers Wheel*

Stone Soup
Carrie Newcomer, *Long Fields*
Carrie Newcomer, *October Nights*

Brian Stone
Buffalo Springfield, *Buffalo Springfield*

Ed Stone
Ani DiFranco, *Like I Said*

Stoney Lonesome
Stoney Lonesome, *Blue Heartache*
Stoney Lonesome, *Lonesome Tonight*

Noel Paul Stookey
David Mallett, *Inches & Miles 1977–1980*

Dan Storper
Dougie MacLean, *Putamayo Presents the Dougie MacLean Collection*

Don Stover
Don Stover, *Things in Life*

Chris Strachwitz
Nathan Abshire, *French Blues*
Any Old Time String Band, *Any Old Time String Band*
Any Old Time String Band, *I Bid You Goodnight*
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin, *La Musique Creole*
Amédée Ardoin, *I'm Never Comin' Back: The Roots of Zydeco*
Amédée Ardoin, *Louisiana Cajun Music, Vol. 6: Amade Ardoin: The First Black Zydeco Recording Artist*
California Cajun Orchestra, *Cajun Jam Session*
California Cajun Orchestra, *Not Lonesome Anymore*
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle/The Carlisles, *Blues Yodeling and Steel Guitar Wizard*
C.J. Chenier, *My Baby Don't Wear No Shoes*
Clifton Chenier, *60 Minutes with the King of Zydeco*
Harry Choates, *Fiddle King of Cajun Swing*
John Delafose, *Joe Pete Got Two Women*
David Doucet, *Beau Solo*
David Doucet, *Master of the Folk Violin*
Canray Fontenot, *Louisiana Hot Sauce, Creole Style*
Hackberry Ramblers, *Early Recordings: 1935–1948*
Hackberry Ramblers, *Jolie Blonde*
Hazel & Alice/Hazel Dickens/Alice Gerrard, *Get Acquainted Waltz*
Lightnin' Hopkins, *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 1*
Lightnin' Hopkins, *The Gold Star Sessions, Volume 2*
Lightnin' Hopkins, *Texas Blues*
Klezmorim, *First Recordings 1976–78*
Furry Lewis, *Mississippi Delta Blues Jam, Volume I*
Mance Lipscomb, *Texas Blues Guitar*
Mance Lipscomb, *Texas Songster*
Mance Lipscomb, *Texas Songster Volume II: You Got to Reap What You Sow*
The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox, *America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band—Their Original Recordings 1946–1951*
The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox, *Maddox Brothers & Rose, Volume II*
The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox, *On the Air: The 1940s*
Magnolia Sisters, *Prends Courage*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Good Morning Little School Girl*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Mississippi Delta Blues*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *This Ain't No Rock 'n' Roll*
Doris "D.L." Menard, *Under the Green Oak Tree*
"Cheese" Read, *Cajun House Party: C'ez Cheese*
"Cheese" Read, *Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians*
The ReBirth Brass Band, *Here to Stay*
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Cajun Jam Session*
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Home Music with Spirits*
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Live! At the Dance*
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, *Two-Step d'Amédée*
Mike Seeger, *Get Acquainted Waltz*
Leo Soileau, *Cajun String Bands: Cajun Breakdown*
Leo Soileau, *Pioneer Cajun Fiddler (1929–37)*
Strange Creek Singers, *Get Acquainted Waltz*
Lawrence Walker, *Cajun Honky Tonk*
Bukka White, *Sky Songs*

Syd Straw
Syd Straw, *Surprise*
Syd Straw, *War and Peace*

Streamline Productions BMI
Karen Mueller, *Clarity*

Chic Street Man
Chic Street Man, *Beau-ti-ful*
Chic Street Man, *Everybody Be Yo'self*
Chic Street Man, *Guns Away*

Strength in Numbers
Strength in Numbers, *The Telluride Sessions*

Strings & Things
Tina Bergmann, *Going to Boston*
Tina Bergmann, *Just Because*

Philip Strong
Mary Jane Lamond, *Suas e!*

Chad Stuart
Chad & Jeremy, *Chad Stuart and Jeremy Clyde*

Bill Stunt
Lynn Miles, *Chalk This One up to the Moon*

Carolyn H. Sturgill
Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr., *Pap Brewer/Finley J. Brewer Sr. from Roan Mountain, TN*

Hugh Sturgill
Tim Lake, *Same Old Roadside Inn*

The subdudes
The subdudes, *Annunciation*

Kazunori Sugiyama
Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews, *Spinning Coin*

Carolyn Surrick
Ensemble Galilei, *Music in the Great Hall*

Jim Sutherland
Les Barker, *The Stones of Callanish*
Shooglenifty, *Venus in Tweeds*
Shooglenifty, *A Whiskey Lass*
Sileas, *Play on Light*
Whistlebinkies, *A Wanton Fling*

Pete Sutherland
The Amidons, *I'll Never Forget*
Mike Casey, *The Pleasures of Hope*
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Songlines*
Ken Perlman, *Island Boy*
Jerry Rockwell, *The Blackbird and the Beggarman*
Carla Sciaky, *The Awakening*
Carla Sciaky, *Spin the Weaver's Song*
Carla Sciaky, *The Undertow*
Pete Sutherland, *Eight Miles from Town*
Pete Sutherland, *Mountain Hornpipe*
Pete Sutherland, *Poor Man's Dream*

Kirk Sutphin
Kirk Sutphin, *Fiddlin' Around*
Kirk Sutphin, *Old Hollow String Band*

Glenn Sutton
Jim & Jesse, *Jim & Jesse: Bluegrass and More*

Matthew Sutton
Boys of the Lough, *Live at Carnegie Hall*

Martin Swan
Mouth Music, *Mo-Di*
Mouth Music, *Mouth Music*
Mouth Music, *Shorelife*

Mike Swinson
Jim Eanes, *Heart of the South*

John Switzer
Vance Gilbert, *Fugitives*
Jane Siberry, *Bound by the Beauty*
Jane Siberry, *No Borders Here*

Matt Szostak
Anne Dodson, *Almost Grown*
Anne Dodson, *From Where I Sit*

Bill Szymczyk
The Eagles, *One of These Nights*
The Eagles, *Their Greatest Hits, 1971–1975*
B.B. King, *Completely Well*

Garry Tallent
The Burns Sisters, *In This World*
Julian Dawson, *Travel On*

James Talley
James Talley, *"The Road to Torreon: Photographs of New Mexico Villages" by Cavalliere Ketchum, songs by James Talley*
James Talley, *Blackjack Choir/Ain't It Somethin'*
James Talley, *Got No Bread/Tryin' like the Devil*

Shel Talmy
Pentangle, *Basket of Light*
Pentangle, *Cruel Sister*
Pentangle, *Sweet Child*

Tamarack
Tamarack, *Leaving Inverarden*
Tamarack, *On the Grand: The Story of a River*
Tamarack, *The Tamarack Collection*

John Tams
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *Rise up like the Sun*

Chaim Tannenbaum
Loudon Wainwright III, *More Love Songs*

Tasso
Tasso, *1929 and Back: Traditional Cajun Music*

Dallas Taylor
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Manassas*

Eric Taylor
Eric Taylor, *Shameless Love*

Tut Taylor
Jerry Douglas/Douglas, Barenberg & Meyer, *The Great Dobro Sessions*
Sally Van Meter, *The Great Dobro Sessions*

Ted Templeman
Van Morrison, *St. Dominic's Preview*

Ray Templeton
Nathan Abshire, *The Legendary Jay Miller Sessions*

Jon ten Broek
Les Gustafson-Zook, *Cascade Noel*
Les Gustafson-Zook, *Gather at the River*

Phil Tennant
The Saw Doctors, *All the Way from Tuam*
The Saw Doctors, *If This Is Rock & Roll, I Want My Old Job Back*
The Saw Doctors, *Same Oul' Town*

Joe Terry
The Roches, *No Trespassing*

Al Tharp
Beausoleil, *Cajun Conja*
David Doucet, *Quand J'ai Parti*
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys, *Trace of Time*

Hans Theessink
Hans Theessink/Blue Groove, *Call Me*

Bob Thiele
Memphis Minnie, *I Ain't No Bad Gal 1941*

IIIrd Tyme Out
IIIrd Tyme Out, *Letter to Home*
IIIrd Tyme Out, *Puttin' New Roots Down*

Bob Thomas
Sara Grey, *Sara*

Chris Thomas
Tom Robinson Band/Tom Robinson/Sector 27, *Power in the Darkness*

Graham Thomas
Carrie Newcomer, *Visions and Dreams*

Linda Thomas
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Among Old Friends*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *The Gathering Place*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Merry Christmas*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Music from the Heart*
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey, *Plain and Simple*

Richard Thomas
Carrie Newcomer, *Long Fields*
Carrie Newcomer, *October Nights*
Carrie Newcomer, *Visions and Dreams*

Bobby Thompson
Jim & Jesse, *The Jim & Jesse Story*

D. Clinton Thompson
Jonathan Richman, *Jonathan Goes Country*

Eric Thompson
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Bluegrass Guitar*

Eric and Suzy Thompson
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Adam and Eve Had the Blues*

Mike Thompson
Steeleye Span, *Storm Force Ten*

Peter Thompson
Good Ol' Persons, *Good n' Live*

Richard Thompson
Sandy Denny/Fotheringay, *The North Star Grassman and the Ravens*
Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson, *I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight*
Loudon Wainwright III, *I'm Alright*
Loudon Wainwright III, *More Love Songs*

Suzy Thompson
California Cajun Orchestra, *Not Lonesome Anymore*
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Nonc Adam Two-Step*
Eric & Suzy Thompson, *Not Lonesome Anymore*

Alan Thorne
Paul Kelly, *Comedy*

Rick Thum
Rick Thum, *Hammered Fiddle Tunes*
Rick Thum, *A Reason to Dance*

Scott Thurston
Jackson Browne, *"I'm Alive"*

Kathryn Tickell
Kathryn Tickell, *The Gathering*

Steve Tilston
Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle, *All under the Sun*

Timbuk 3
Timbuk 3, *Edge of Allegiance*
Timbuk 3, *Espace Ornano*
Timbuk 3, *Looks like Dark to Me*

Michael Timmins
Cowboy Junkies, *Black Eyed Man*
Cowboy Junkies, *Caution Horses*
Cowboy Junkies, *Lay It Down*

Nathan Tinkham
Cindy Church, *Just a Little Rain*
Cindy Church, *Love on the Range*

Russ Titelman
Eric Clapton, *From the Cradle*
Ry Cooder, *Paradise and Lunch*
Rickie Lee Jones, *Pirates*
Rickie Lee Jones, *Rickie Lee Jones*
Randy Newman, *Good Old Boys*
Randy Newman, *Lonely at the Top*
Randy Newman, *Sail Away*
Randy Newman, *Trouble in Paradise*
Paul Simon, *Hearts and Bones*
James Taylor, *Gorilla*

Gerry Tolman
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *CSN*

Brennan Totten
Jonathan Richman, *Having a Party with Jonathan Richman*
Jonathan Richman, *Jonathan Richman*

Jack Tottle
Jim Eanes, *The Early Days Of Bluegrass, Volume 4*

Allen Toussaint
Dr. John, *In the Right Place*

Pete Townshend
John Lee Hooker, *The Iron Man*

Trapezoid
Trapezoid, *Trapezoid: Another Country*

Stephen Traub
Moxy Früvous, *You Will Go to the Moon*

Artie Traum
Priscilla Herdman, *Seasons of Change*
Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum, *The Test of Time*
The Woodstock Mountain Revue, *Mud Acres: Music among Friends*
The Woodstock Mountain Revue, *Music from Mud Acres*
Diane Zeigler, *Sting of the Honeybee*

Happy Traum
Paul Siebel, *Woodstock Mountains*
Happy Traum/Happy & Artie Traum, *Buckets of Rain*
The Woodstock Mountain Revue, *Mud Acres: Music among Friends*
The Woodstock Mountain Revue, *Music from Mud Acres*

Mark Trehus
Koerner, Ray & Glover, *One Foot in the Groove*

Tom Treumuth
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *After the Tempest*
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Figgy Duff*
Figgy Duff/Pamela Morgan, *Weather out the Storm*

Didier Tricard
Buddy Guy, *Alone and Acoustic*
Buddy Guy, *Stone Crazy*

Trillium
Margaret MacArthur, *The Sun She Rises*
Margaret MacArthur, *Wild Flowers*

Jean Trouillet
Altan, *Ireland*
De Danann/De Dannan, *Ireland*
Frankie Gavin, *Ireland*

Susan Trump
Lois Hornbostel, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer*
Mark Nelson, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer*
Betty Smith, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer*
Susan Trump, *Masters of the Mountain Dulcimer*
Susan Trump, *Tree of Life*
Susan Trump, *What the Hill People Say*

Cecil Tuck
Smothers Brothers/Pat Paulsen, *Pat Paulsen for President*

Steve Turner
Moving Hearts, *Live Hearts*

Steve Tveit
disappear fear, *Live at the Bottom Line*

Jeff Tweedy
Uncle Tupelo/Wilco/Son Volt, *Being There*

Ian Tyson
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *All the Good 'Uns*
Ian Tyson, *Ian Tyson*
Ian Tyson, *Old Corrals and Sagebrush*

Lou Ukelson
Mac Wiseman, *Classic Bluegrass*

Uncle Bonsai
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *The Inessential Uncle Bonsai*
Electric Bonsai Band/Uncle Bonsai, *Myn and Wymyn*

Jay Ungar
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, *Brother's Keeper*
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, *The Lover's Waltz*

Union Springs
Jason Carter, *Help Me, Lord*
Union Springs, *Help Me, Lord*
Union Springs, *Next Train Headed South*

Bill Usher
The Horseflies/The Tompkins County Horseflies, *Human Fly*

Gary Usher
The Byrds, *The Notorious Byrd Brothers*
The Byrds, *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*
The Byrds, *Younger Than Yesterday*

Chad & Jeremy, *Of Cabbages and Kings*

Michael Utley
Jimmy Buffett, *Feeding Frenzy*
Todd Snider, *Songs for the Daily Planet*

Guy Van Duser
Billy Novick, *The New Penny-whistle Album*
Billy Novick, *Raisin' the Rent*
Billy Novick, *These n' That n' Those*
Guy Van Duser, *American Finger-Style Guitar*
Guy Van Duser, *Stride Guitar*

Guido van Rijn
Washington Phillips, *Denomination Blues*

Dave Van Ronk
Dave Van Ronk, *Sunday Street*

Townes Van Zandt
Townes Van Zandt, *Rear View Mirror*

Peter Van-Hooke
Nanci Griffith, *Late Night Grande Hotel*

Philippe Varlet
Michael Coleman, *From Galway to Dublin*
Michael Coleman, *Milestone at the Garden*
Joe Derrane, *Irish Accordion*
Joe Derrane, *Joe Derrane and Jerry O' Brien: Accordion Duets*

David Vaught
Tammy Rogers, *In the Red*

Suzanne Vega
Suzanne Vega, *Days of Open Hand*

Trevor Veitch
Tom Rush, *Work in Progress*

Garry Velletri
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *A Bigger Piece of Sky*
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *Gringo Honeymoon*

Nick Venet
Glen Campbell, *Big Bluegrass Special*
Glen Campbell, *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*
Fred Neil, *Fred Neil*
John Stewart, *California Bloodlines/Willard Minus 2*
John Stewart, *The Phoenix Concerts—Live*

Mike Vernon
Eric Clapton, *John Mayall's Bluesbreakers*

Norman Verso
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*

Butch Vig
Freedy Johnston, *This Perfect World*

Julian Vignoles
Séamus Ennis, *The Séamus Ennis Story*

Johanan Vigoda
Richie Havens, *Mixed Bag*
Richie Havens, *Mixed Bag II*

Tony Visconti
Mary Hopkin, *Earth Song/Ocean Song*

Joe Vitale
Crosby, Stills and Nash/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young/David Crosby/Crosby & Nash/Graham Nash/Stephen Stills, *Live It Up*

Jimmy Vivino
Lovin' Spoonful, *I Want My Roots*

Eric Von Schmidt
Eric Von Schmidt, *Baby, Let Me Lay It on You*

Chris von Sneidern
John Wesley Harding, *John Wesley Harding's New Deal*

Bil VornDick
Alison Brown, *I've Got That Old Feeling*

Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla, *Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla*
Vassar Clements, *Grass Routes*
Judith Edelman, *Perfect World*
Claire Lynch/The Front Porch String Band, *Friends for a Lifetime*
Claire Lynch/The Front Porch String Band, *Moonlighter*
Mad Pudding, *Rattle on the Stovepipe*
Northern Lights, *Take You to the Sky*

Jane Voss
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *An Album of Songs*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Get to the Heart*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Pullin' Through*
Jane Voss/Jane Voss & Hoyle Osborne, *Sparkle and Shine*

Clark Vreeland
The subdudes, *Primitive Streak*

Stephen Wade
Tony Ellis, *Dixie Banner*
Tony Ellis, *Farewell My Home*

Loudon Wainwright III
Loudon Wainwright III, *Career Moves*
Loudon Wainwright III, *Grown Man*
Loudon Wainwright III, *I'm Alright*
Loudon Wainwright III, *Little Ship*
Loudon Wainwright III, *A Live One*
Loudon Wainwright III, *More Love Songs*

Tom Waits
Tom Waits, *Rain Dogs*
Tom Waits, *Swordfishtrombones*

Dusty Wakeman
Lucinda Williams, *Sweet Old World*

Wendy Waldman
The New Grass Revival, *Friday Night in America*

Dennis Walker
Ted Hawkins, *Happy Hour*
Ted Hawkins, *Watch Your Step*

Jerry Jeff Walker
Jerry Jeff Walker, *Christmas Gonzo Style*
Jerry Jeff Walker, *Live at Gruene Hall*

Andy Wallace
Jeff Buckley, *Grace*
Will Keys, *Masters of the Banjo*

Kate Wallace
Kate Wallace, *Kate Wallace*

Shaun Wallace
Lá Lugh, *Brighid's Kiss*

Joe Walsh
Albert King, *Red House*

David Walters
Helicon, *Walking Stones: A Celtic Sojourn*
Ken Kolodner, *Walking Stones*
Chris Norman, *Highlands*
Carol Thompson, *Carolan's Welcome*

Matt Walters
Leadbelly/Huddie Ledbetter, *Last Sessions*

Michael Wanchic
James McMurtry, *Candyland*

Wandering Ramblers
Dirk Powell, *Rambling and Wandering*

Greg Ward
Dick Siegel, *Tomorrow Morning*

Kendra Ward
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Dulcimer Country*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *The Hammered Dulcimer Christmas Sampler*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Some Glad Morning!*
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence, *Way Down Yonder*

John Ware
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, *Back on the Street Again*

Jennifer Warnes
Jennifer Warnes, *Famous Blue Raincoat: The Songs of Leonard Cohen*

Lenny Waronker
Kevin Burke, *Last of the Brooklyn Cowboys*
Ry Cooder, *Into the Purple Valley*
Ry Cooder, *Paradise and Lunch*
Arlo Guthrie, *All over the World*
Rickie Lee Jones, *Pirates*
Rickie Lee Jones, *Rickie Lee Jones*
Gordon Lightfoot, *Don Quixote*
Gordon Lightfoot, *Endless Wire*
Gordon Lightfoot, *If You Could Read My Mind*
Gordon Lightfoot, *Summertime Dream*
Maria Muldaur, *Maria Muldaur*
Maria Muldaur, *Sweet Harmony*
Maria Muldaur, *Waitress in a Donut Shop*
Randy Newman, *Good Old Boys*
Randy Newman, *Lonely at the Top*
Randy Newman, *Randy Newman*
Randy Newman, *Sail Away*
Randy Newman, *Trouble in Paradise*
Paul Simon, *Hearts and Bones*
James Taylor, *Gorilla*

Rich Warren
Anne Hills, *Woman of a Calm Heart*

Don Was
Robert Earl Keen Jr., *The Road Goes on Forever*
Willie Nelson, *Across the Borderline*
Bonnie Raitt, *Luck of the Draw*
Bonnie Raitt, *Nine Lives*

Linda Waterfall
Heidi Muller, *Cassiopeia*
Heidi Muller, *Matters of the Heart*
Linda Waterfall, *Body English*
Linda Waterfall, *Everything Looks Different*
Linda Waterfall, *A Little Bit at a Time*
Linda Waterfall, *My Heart Sings*

Rick Watson
Cosy Sheridan, *Quietly Led*

Duncan Watt
Barbara Kessler, *Notion*

Neil Wayne
John Kirkpatrick, *Plain Capers*

David Weber
Malcolm Dalglish, *Hymnody of Earth*
Malcolm Dalglish, *Pleasure*

Steve Weber
The Holy Modal Rounders, *The Holy Modal Rounders*

Joe Weed
Neal Hellman, *Dream of the Manatee*

Reinoud Weidema
The Dubliners, *Live in Carre, Amsterdam*

Bob Weinstock
Mose Allison, *Greatest Hits*
Mose Allison, *Local Color*

Bob Weir
David Rea, *Slewfoot*

Richard Weize
The Delmore Brothers, *When They Let the Hammer Down*
Johnnie & Jack, *Johnnie & Jack with Kitty Wells at KWKH*
The Maddox Brothers & Rose/Rose Maddox, *Rockin' Rollin' Maddox Brothers & Rose*
Mac Wiseman, *Teenage Hangout*

Kevin Welch
Kevin Welch, *Life down Here on Earth*

Pete Welding
Lightnin' Hopkins, *The Complete Aladdin Sessions*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *Amazing Grace*
Mississippi Fred McDowell, *My Home Is in the Delta*
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, *Whoopin' the Blues: The Capitol Recordings, 1947–50*

Melanie Wells
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Player Deluxe*
David Schnaufer, *Dulcimer Sessions*

Pete Wernick
Chris Thile, *Leading Off*

Mark Wessell
Northern Lights, *Living in the City*

Garry West
Alison Brown, *I Love this Town*
Alison Brown, *Look Left*
Alison Brown, *Out of the Blue*
Alison Brown, *Quartet*
Clive Gregson, *I Love This Town*
Leslie Tucker, *In This Room*

Tommy West
Jim Croce, *Photographs & Memories: His Greatest Hits*
Jim Croce, *You Don't Mess Around with Jim*

Jerry Wexler
Dr. John, *Dr. John's Gumbo*
Willie Nelson, *Phases and Stages*

Cheryl Wheeler
Cheryl Wheeler, *Mrs. Pinocci's Guitar*

Dan Wheetman
Marley's Ghost, *Honey Be There*

Bill Whelan
Andy Irvine, *Rude Awakening*
Liam O'Flynn/Liam ó Floinn, *The Seville Suite*
Patrick Street, *All in Good Time*

John Whelan
John Whelan, *Celtic Crossroads*
John Whelan, *Celtic Reflections: Misty-Eyed Morning*
John Whelan, *From the Heart*

Whistlebinkies
Whistlebinkies, *Anniversary*
Whistlebinkies, *Inner Sound*

Amy White
Al Petteway, *Caledon Wood*

D. Gregory White
Owen "Snake" Chapman, *Fiddle Ditty*

Geri White
Mark Nelson, *December's Hearth*

Tom White
Mark Nelson, *December's Hearth*

Ken Whiteley
John Hammond Jr., *Nobody but You*
Grit Laskin, *A Few Simple Words*
Tom Lewis, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Singer*
Raffi, *Baby Beluga*
Raffi, *Raffi's Christmas Album*
Raffi, *Singable Songs Collection*

Lou Whitney
Jonathan Richman, *Jonathan Goes Country*

Wiggy
Billy Bragg, *The Internationale*

David Wilcox
David Wilcox, *East Asheville Hardware*
David Wilcox, *Turning Point*

Miles Wilkinson
Guy Clark, *Boats to Build*
Guy Clark, *Dublin Blues*
Guy Clark, *Old Friends*

Steve Wilkison
Elliot Murphy, *Going through Something: The Best of Elliott Murphy*

Billy Williams
Walter Hyatt/Uncle Walt's Band, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Lyle Lovett, *I Love Everybody*
Lyle Lovett, *Joshua Judges Ruth*
Lyle Lovett, *Lyle Lovett and His Large Band*
Lyle Lovett, *The Road to Ensenada*

Brooks Williams
Salamander Crossing, *Passion Train*
Maria Sangiolo, *Eyes of the World*
Dar Williams, *The Honesty Room*

Dar Williams
The Nields, *The Honesty Room*
Dar Williams, *The Honesty Room*

Don Williams
Don Williams, *An Evening with Don Williams: Best of Live*

Fred Williams
Wayne Henderson, *Guitar Pickin' with Herb Key*

Lesley Williams
Etta Baker, *One-Dime Blues*

Lucinda Williams
Lucinda Williams, *Lucinda Williams*
Lucinda Williams, *Sweet Old World*

Margaret Williams
Gabby Pahinui, *Two Slack-Key Guitars*

Mark Williams
Carrie Newcomer, *My Father's Only Son*

Mike Williams
Bill & Bonnie Hearne, *Smilin'*

Ray Williams
Eliza Carthy/Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr/Kings of Calicutt, *Heat Light & Sound*

Cris Williamson
Tret Fure, *Between the Covers*
Cris Williamson, *The Changer and the Changed*
Cris Williamson, *Circle of Friends: Cris Live*

Robin Williamson
Robin Williamson, *Celtic Harp Airs and Dance Tunes*
Robin Williamson, *Legacy of the Scottish Harpers, Volume I*
Robin Williamson, *Legacy of the Scottish Harpers, Volume II*
Robin Williamson, *Ten of Songs*

Earl Willis
Townes Van Zandt, *Live at the Old Quarter, Houston, Texas*

Alan Wilson
Son House, *Death Letter Blues*

Dale Wilson
Ted Hawkins, *Happy Hour*

Darleen Wilson
The Chenille Sisters, *True to Life*
Lui Collins, *Moondancer*
Catie Curtis, *From Years to Hours*
Catie Curtis, *Truth from Lies*
Bob Franke, *In This Night*
Charlie King, *Two Good Arms*
Patty Larkin, *I'm Fine*
Cosy Sheridan, *One Sure Thing*

Jim Wilson
The Flatlanders, *Unplugged*

Joe Wilson
Cephas & Wiggins, *Cool Down*
Irish Tradition/Brendan Mulvihill & Billy McComiskey, *The Morning Dew*
Will Keys, *A Banjo Original*
Will Keys, *Masters of the Banjo*
Kirk Sutphin, *Old Roots and New Branches*

Joemy Wilson
Kim Robertson, *Treasures of the Celtic Harp*
Joemy Wilson, *Beatles on Hammered Dulcimer*
Joemy Wilson, *Carolan's Cottage*
Joemy Wilson, *Carolan's Cup*
Joemy Wilson, *Celtic Dreams*
Joemy Wilson, *Celtic Treasures*
Joemy Wilson, *Dargason: A Dulcimer Sampler*
Joemy Wilson, *Dulcimer Lullabies*

Joseph Wilson
Hank Williams, *The Legend of Hank Williams*

Mark Wilson
Owen "Snake" Chapman, *Up in Chapman's Hollow*
Roger Cooper, *Going Back to Old Kentucky*
Wilson Douglas, *The Right Hand Fork of Rush's Creek*
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley, *Maysville*
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley, *Wild Rose of the Mountain*
Lonnie Robertson, *Lonnie's Breakdown!*
Fred Stoneking, *Saddle Old Spike: Fiddle Music from Missouri*
Buddy Thomas, *Kitty Puss*

Red Wilson
Bruce Greene, *Old Time Pickin'*

Tom Wilson
Country Joe and the Fish, *C.J. Fish*
Bob Dylan, *Another Side of Bob Dylan*
Bob Dylan, *Bringing It All Back Home*
Bob Dylan, *Highway 61 Revisited*
Bob Dylan, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*

Wally Wilson
Joan Baez, *Gone from Danger*

Jesse Winchester
Jesse Winchester, *Humour Me*
Jesse Winchester, *Learn to Love It*

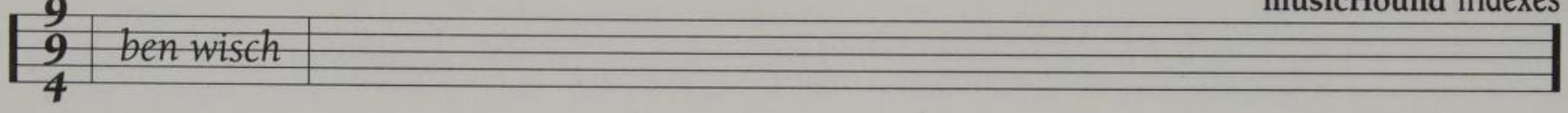
Alan Winstanley
Hothouse Flowers, *Home*
Hothouse Flowers, *People*

George Winston
Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer, *Mauna Kea: White Mountain Journal*
Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer, *Moe'Uhane Kika (Takes from the Dream Guitar)*
Keola Beamer/Keola and Kapono Beamer/Nona Beamer, *Wooden Boat*
Bob Brozman, *Kika Kila Meets Ki Hoalu*
Sonny Chillingworth, *Sonny Solo*
Hui Ohana/Ledward Kaapana, *Led Live Solo*
George Kahumoku Jr., *Drenched by Music*
Moses Kahumoku, *Ho' okupu ("The Gift")*
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, *Pua'ena ("Glow Brightly")*
Ray Kane/Raymond Kane, *Punahele*
Ozzie Kotani, *Kani Ki Ho'alu ("The Sound of Slack Key")*
George Kuo, *Aloha No Na Kupuna–"Love for the Elders"*
George Kuo, *Hawaiian Touch*
Leonard Kwan, *Ke'ala's Mele*
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, *Mana*
The Pahinui Brothers/Cyril Pahinui/James "Bla" Pahinui, *Six- and 12-String Slack-Key*

Johnny Winter
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, *Whoopin'*
Muddy Waters, *Muddy "Mississippi" Waters Live*

Paul Winter
Pete Seeger, *Pete*

Stephanie Winters
The Nudes, *The Nudes*
The Nudes, *Velvet Sofa*



Ben Wisch
David Wilcox, *Home Again, for the First Time*

Joe Wissert
Gordon Lightfoot, *If You Could Read My Mind*

Ben Wittman
The Story, *The Angel in the House*
The Story, *Grace in Gravity*

Billy Wolf
Chesapeake, *Full Sail*
Eddie from Ohio, *Actually Not*
Eddie from Ohio, *Big Noise*
Eddie from Ohio, *I Rode Fido Home*
Smith Sisters/Debi Smith, *A Canary's Song*

Kate Wolf
Kate Wolf, *Give Yourself to Love*

Tom "T-Bone" Wolk
Eileen Ivers, *Wild Blue*

Thom Wolke
Guy Davis, *Stomp Down Rider*

Brian Wood
Bill Staines, *Just Play One More Tune*
Bill Staines, *Looking for the Wind*

Jeffrey Wood
Luka Bloom, *Riverside*

John Wood
Shirley Collins/Shirley and Dolly Collins/Etchingham Steam Band, *Morris On*
Sandy Denny/Fotheringay, *The North Star Grassman and the Ravens*
Clive Gregson, *Welcome to the Workhouse*
Ashley Hutchings/The Albion Band, *Battle of the Field*
Richard Thompson/Linda Thompson/Richard & Linda Thompson, *I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight,*
Loudon Wainwright III, *A Live One*
Whistlebinkies, *Anniversary*

Royston Wood
Young Tradition, *No Relation*

Terry Woodford
Mac McAnally, *Mac McAnally*

Sylvia Woods
Sylvia Woods, *The Harp of Brandiswhiere: A Suite for Celtic Harp*

John Work
Muddy Waters, *Complete Plantation Recordings: The Historic 1941–42 Library of Congress Field Recordings*

Paul Worley
Chris Hillman/The Desert Rose Band, *The Desert Rose Band*

Jim Wray
Zachary Richard, *Snake Bite Love*

Samantha Wright
Rosalie Sorrels, *The Long Memory*

Tryp Wyeth
Ebin-Rose, *Down to Tryp's*
Ebin-Rose, *Mr. Boot*
Ebin-Rose, *Seems So Childlike*
Ebin-Rose, *Through the Wires*

Peter Yarrow
Peter, Paul & Mary, *Peter, Paul, and Mommy Too*

Kevin Yatarola
Eileen Ivers, *So Far: The Eileen Ivers Collection, 1979–1995*

Douglas Yeager
Richie Havens, *Richie Havens Sings the Beatles and Bob Dylan*

Jerry Yester
Tom Waits, *Anthology of Tom Waits*
Tom Waits, *Closing Time*

York/Pala
Buffalo Springfield, *Buffalo Springfield Again*

Brian Young
Runrig, *Maral*

Carol Young
Shawn Colvin, *Live '88*

Chip Young
Joe Ely, *Honky Tonk Masquerade*

Dave Young
The Oyster Band, *Little Rock to Leipzig*
The Oyster Band, *Ride*

Jesse Colin Young
Jesse Colin Young, *The Best of Jesse Colin Young: The Solo Years*

Neil Young
Neil Young, *After the Gold Rush*
Neil Young, *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*
Neil Young, *Everybody's Rockin'*
Neil Young, *Harvest*
Neil Young, *Harvest Moon*
Neil Young, *Old Ways*
Neil Young, *Rust Never Sleeps*
Neil Young, *Tonight's the Night*

Victoria Young
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young, *Long Journey*
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young, *Lover's Return*

Robert W. Zachary Jr.
Paul Siebel, *Jack-Knife Gypsy*
Paul Siebel, *Paul Siebel*

Jeff Zaraya
Ian & Sylvia/Ian Tyson/The Great Speckled Bird/Sylvia Tyson Fricker, *Live at Newport*
Tom Paxton, *Heroes*

Catherine Zavala
The Mollys, *This Is My Round*
The Mollys, *Tidings of Comfort and Joy*

Hector Zazou
Jane Siberry, *Songs from the Cold Seas*

Radim Zenkl
Radim Zenkl, *Galactic Mandolin*

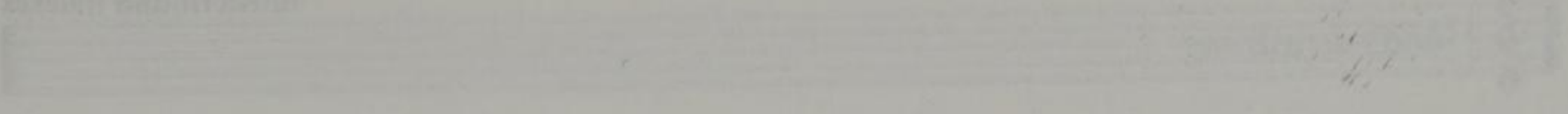
Jimi Zhivago
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House/Susan McKeown & Lindsey Horner, *Bones*

Gus Ziesing
Michael Hurley, *WolfWays*

John Zollman
Silly Wizard, *Caledonia's Hardy Sons*

John Zorn
Duck Baker/Duck Baker and Molly Andrews, *Spinning Coin*

musicHound roots index



Which artists or groups have had the most influence on the acts included in MusicHound Folk*? The Roots Index will help you find out. Under each artist or group's name—not necessarily a folk act—are listed the acts found in* MusicHound Folk *that were influenced by that artist or group. By the way, Bob Dylan is the influence champ: he appears in the ⏪ section of a whopping 50 artists or groups.*

Nathan Abshire
Paul Daigle
Eddie LeJeune
Iry LeJeune
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Tracy Schwarz
Horace Trahan

Will Ackerman
Artie Traum

Roy Acuff
Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley
George Jones
Jimmy Martin
Ian Tyson
Hank Williams

Cecil Adams
Garrison Keillor

Sheila Adams
Laura Boosinger

Doc Addington
Ralph Blizard

Garfield Akers
Robert Wilkins

Alba
Ossian

Texas Alexander
Lightnin' Hopkins

Pat Alger
Artie Traum

Rex Allen
Don Edwards
Red Steagall

Terry Allen
Jo Carol Pierce

Mose Allison
Gideon Freudmann
Van Morrison

Allman Brothers Band
Brooks Williams

Almanac Singers
Ronnie Gilbert

Altan
Lá Lugh
Whirligig

Gene Ammons
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Tori Amos
Paula Cole

Eric Andersen
Jackson Browne
Jack Logan

Alistair Anderson
Kathryn Tickell

Laurie Anderson
Ed's Redeeming Qualities
Jane Siberry

Pink Anderson
Roy Book Binder
Paul Geremia

Tom Anderson
Boys of the Lough
Kathryn Tickell

Julie Andrews
Mary Hopkin

The Andrews Sisters
Artisan
The Chenille Sisters
Dan Hicks
Moxy Früvous

Anglin Brothers
Johnnie & Jack

The Animals
The Chambers Brothers

Dave Apollon
Evan Marshall
Radim Zenkl

Arcady
Lá Lugh

Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
Nathan Abshire
Chris Ardoin
Boozoo Chavis
John Delafose
Keith Frank
Beau Jocque

Amédée Ardoin
Nathan Abshire
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
Lynn August
Beausoleil
Buckwheat Zydeco
Boozoo Chavis
Clifton Chenier
Geno Delafose
John Delafose
Rockin' Dopsie
Canray Fontenot
Beau Jocque
Eddie LeJeune
Iry LeJeune
Queen Ida
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Jo-El Sonnier
Tasso

Joan Armatrading
Luka Bloom
Tracy Chapman
Sloan Wainwright

9 9 6 louis armstrong

Louis Armstrong
Leon Redbone
Martin Sexton

Tom Armstrong
Liam O'Flynn

Eddy Arnold
Don Walser

Herman Arnspiger
Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Clarence Ashley
Bascom Lamar Lunsford

Chet Atkins
Russ Barenberg
J.J. Cale
Robin Kessinger
Leo Kottke
Evan Marshall
Guy Van Duser

Will Atkinson
Kathryn Tickell

Mike Auldridge
Jerry Douglas
Sally Van Meter

Gene Autry
Patsy Montana
Willie Nelson
Riders in the Sky
Tex Ritter
Roy Rogers
Red Steagall
Ian Tyson

Aztec Two-Step
David Buskin
Jeanie Stahl

B-52s
Sons of the Never Wrong

Johann Sebastian Bach
Karen Ashbrook
Scott Cossu
Dead Can Dance
Michael Miles

Burt Bacharach
Harry Nilsson

Joan Baez
Tracy Chapman
Judy Collins
Bob Dylan
Kat Eggleston
Marianne Faithfull
Ferron
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Margo Hennebach
Priscilla Herdman
Tish Hinojosa
Janis Ian
Cindy Kallet
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Carol McComb
Melanie
Holly Near
Laura Nyro
Kristina Olsen
Phranc
Bonnie Raitt
Buffy Sainte-Marie
Tommy Sands
Maria Sangiolo
Carla Sciaky
Linda Waterfall

Christian Bailey
Walt Michael

Aly Bain
Johnny Cunningham

Chet Baker
Paula Cole

Janita Baker
Hollis Landrum

Kenny Baker
James Bryan

Dewey Balfa
Balfa Toujours
Basin Brothers
Beausoleil
California Cajun Orchestra
Magnolia Sisters
Dirk Powell
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Eric & Suzy Thompson

The Balfa Brothers
Any Old Time String Band
Karen Ashbrook
Balfa Toujours
Basin Brothers
Bayou Seco
David Doucet
Doris "D.L." Menard
Jimmy C. Newman
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys
Tracy Schwarz
Tasso
Horace Trahan

The Band
Eric Clapton
Fairport Convention
Robin Holcomb
Colin Linden
James McMurtry
Moving Hearts
Red Clay Ramblers
Mark Simos
The subdudes
Jesse Winchester
The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Jacob do Bandolim
Rudy Cipolla

Joe Bane
Kevin Crawford

Bobby Bare
Jerry Jeff Walker

Bare Necessities
Carrie Crompton

Russ Barenberg
Scott Nygaard
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Syd Barrett
Robyn Hitchcock

Béla Bartok
Baltimore Consort

Cathy Barton
Rick Thum

Battlefield Band
The House Band
Ossian
Runrig
Wolfstone

Bauhaus
Dead Can Dance

The Beach Boys
Tina Louise Barr
Free Hot Lunch!
Art Garfunkel
Harry Nilsson
Phranc
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel

Beale Street Sheiks
Memphis Jug Band
Memphis Minnie

Keola Beamer
Ozzie Kotani
Magical Strings

The Beatles
Artisan
Lou and Peter Berryman
Buffalo Springfield
The Byrds
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Gene Clark
Dana Cooper
Scott Cossu
Crosby, Stills & Nash
Julian Dawson
Donovan
Nick Drake
The Eagles
Gideon Freudmann
Richie Havens
Walter Hyatt
Freedy Johnston
The Kennedys
The Mamas & the Papas
Dave Mason
The Nields
Harry Nilsson
The Nylons
Peter Rowan
Steve Schneider
Martin Sexton
Michael Smith
Stealers Wheel
James Taylor
The Waterboys
Jesse Colin Young

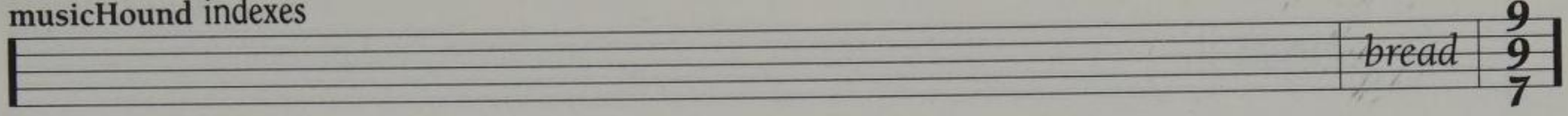
BeauSoleil
Filé

Noah Beavers
Chirps Smith

Sidney Bechet
Billy Novick

Schloimke Beckerman
The Klezmatics

Bee Gees
Moxy Früvous



Bob & Evelyn Beers
Sara Grey

The Beers Family
The Amidons
Betty Smith

Ludwig van Beethoven
Scott Cossu
Love

Harry Belafonte
Odetta

Adrian Belew
The Nields

Derek Bell
Patrick Ball
Ken Kolodner
Joemy Wilson

Peter Bellamy
Tom Lewis
John Roberts & Tony Barrand

Lola Beltran
Linda Ronstadt

Mac Benford
Walt Koken

Willie P. Bennett
Stephen Fearing
Garnet Rogers

Emile Benoit
Figgy Duff

Pierre Bensusan
Carol McComb
Gayla Drake Paul

Bergmann Brothers
The Plaid Family

Byron Berline
Stuart Duncan

Elmer Bernstein
Steve Schneider

Chuck Berry
Dave Alvin
The Band
Steve Forbert
John Prine
Jonathan Richman

Peter & Lu Berryman
Camille West

Carroll Best
Laura Boosinger

Dickie Betts
Brooks Williams

Big Brother and the Holding Company
Country Joe and the Fish

Big Star
Freedy Johnston

Theodore Bikel
Rachel Buchman

The Billys
Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Dave Bing
Diane Jones and & King

Mary Black
Atwater-Donnelly
Grace Griffith
Eleanor McEvoy
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House

Ben Black Bear
Kevin Locke

Black Flag
Uncle Tupelo

Scrapper Blackwell
Paul Geremia

Blackwood Brothers
The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Blind Blake
Roy Book Binder
Cephas & Wiggins
John Jackson
Blind Willie McTell
Leon Redbone
Joseph Spence
Josh White

Norman Blake
Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band
Robin Bullock
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Alan Freeman
Kate MacLeod

Bobby "Blue" Bland
The Band
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

James Bland
Paul Robeson

Nick Blanton
Karen Ashbrook

Blaze X
The Saw Doctors

Bagad Bleimor
Alan Stivell

Rory Block
Caroline Aiken
Keb' Mo'
Les Sampou

Blowzabella
The House Band

Blue Sky Boys
The Chestnut Grove Quartet
The Delmore Brothers
Vern Gosdin
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young
Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice
Lilly Brothers
Louvin Brothers
Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss
The Whitstein Brothers
Mac Wiseman

The Blue Sky Boys
The Buckhannon Brothers

Bluegrass Album Band
Longview

Bob & Ray
Garrison Keillor

Dock Boggs
Mike Seeger

Scott Bohanna
Muddy Waters

Gordon Bok
Scott Alarik
Anne Dodson

Karla Bonoff
Ferron

Bonzo Dog Band
The Foremen
Free Hot Lunch!

James Booker
Dr. John

Booker T & the MGs
The Band
Black 47

The Boomtown Rats
Luka Bloom

Victor Borge
Steve Schneider

The Boswell Sisters
The Chenille Sisters
Magpie

The Bothy Band
Altan
Karen Ashbrook
Clannad
Déanta
Dervish
Matt Flinner
Mando Mafia
Moving Hearts
Karen Mueller
Patrick Street
Jerry Read Smith
Wolfstone

Chris Bouchillon
Herschel Brown

Bryan Bowers
Les Gustafson-Zook
Alan Mager
Karen Mueller

Charlie Bowman
Will Keys

The Boxtops
The Amazing Rhythm Aces

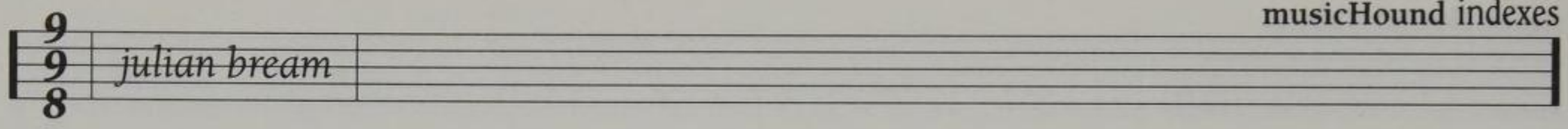
Boys of the Lough
Connie Dover
Marley's Ghost
Silly Wizard

Skara Brae
The Bothy Band

Oscar Brand
David Rea

Naftuly Brandwein
The Klezmatics
Klezmorim

Bread
John Denver
Loggins & Messina



Julian Bream
John Fahey

Bertolt Brecht
Patrick Sky

Jacques Brel
Leonard Cohen

Fannie Brice
Mary Hopkin

Anne Briggs
Sandy Denny
Kate Rusby
June Tabor

Chuck Brodsky
Michael McNevin

Sonny Brogan
James Keane

David Bromberg
Kristina Olsen

Big Bill Broonzy
Guy Davis
Dick Gaughan
Steve Goodman
John Renbourn
Chic Street Man
Rosetta Tharpe
Hans Theessink
Bukka White

Brothers Four
The Limeliters

Charles Brown
Mose Allison

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Albert Collins
B.B. King

Greg Brown
Catie Curtis
Jon Gailmor
Garnet Rogers

James Brown
The Chambers Brothers
Van Morrison

Milton Brown
Bob Wills

Willie Brown
Sleepy John Estes
Son House
Robert Johnson

Willow Brown
Albert Collins

Garech Browne
Whistlebinkies

Jackson Browne
America
Dan Fogelberg
Dougie MacLean
Diane Zeigler

Bob Brozman
Kelly Joe Phelps

Lenny Bruce
Patrick Sky

James Bryan
Jenny Allinder
Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band
Red Mountain White Trash

Tim Buckley
Scott Appel
Jeff Buckley
Nick Drake

Buckwheat Zydeco
Lynn August
C.J. Chenier
Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas

Jimmy Buffett
Free Hot Lunch!

Sonny Burgess
Dave Alvin

Joe Burke
Billy McComiskey

Kevin Burke
Jenny Allinder

Solomon Burke
Van Morrison
Otis Redding

Dave Burland
Kate Rusby

Jethro Burns
Steve Goodman
Radim Zenkl

Robert Burns
Jean Redpath

Burns Sisters
Smith Sisters

Howie Bursen
Ken Perlman

James Burton
David Lindley

Kate Bush
Margo Hennebach
Jane Siberry

Sam Bush
Tina Louise Barr
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Kentucky Standard Band
Darrell Scott

Anner Bylsma
Ensemble Galilei

The Byrds
Buffalo Springfield
The Eagles
Fairport Convention
Flying Burrito Brothers
Vern Gosdin
The Kennedys
Love
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Gram Parsons
Sweethearts of the Rodeo
Neil Young

David Byrne
Mouth Music

Martin Byrne
Liz Carroll

Cache Valley Drifters
Acousticats

John Cage
David Folks

J.J. Cale
Eric Clapton

Cab Calloway
Bo Diddley

Isla Cameron
Anne Briggs

Camp Creek Boys
Benton Flippen

Ian Campbell
Pentangle
Dave Swarbrick

Jean Campbell
Alison Kinnaird
Wendy Stewart

Sarah Elizabeth Campbell
Sara Hickman

Vincent Campbell
Tommy Peoples

Gus Cannon's Jug Stompers
The Grateful Dead
Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band
Furry Lewis
Memphis Jug Band
Sunshine Skiffle Band

Paddy Canny
Martin Hayes

Capercaillie
Ceolbeg
Mad Pudding
Shooglenifty

Bob Carlin
Walt Koken

Bonnie Carol
Lois Hornbostel

Carolan
The Chieftains

French Carpenter
Wilson Douglas

Mary Chapin Carpenter
Kate Campbell
John Jennings
Carrie Newcomer
The Rankin Family
Kate Wallace

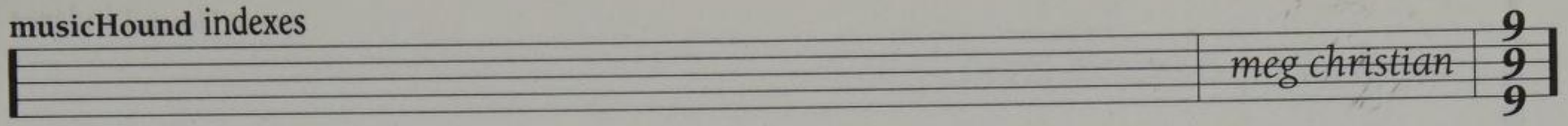
Roy Carrier
Chubby Carrier
Willis Prudhomme

Kevin Carroll
Liz Carroll

Liz Carroll
Cherish the Ladies

Fiddlin' John Carson
Frank Hutchison
Earl Johnson
The Skillet Lickers

Bo Carter
Roy Book Binder



Carlene Carter
Mary Chapin Carpenter

Floyd Carter
Tom T. Hall

June Carter Cash
Bill & Bonnie Hearne

Maybelle Carter
Joan Baez
Tina Louise Barr
Becky Blackley
Julie Davis
Wayne Henderson
Riley Puckett

Wilf Carter
Stompin' Tom Connors
Mac Wiseman

The Carter Family
Any Old Time String Band
Judy Austin
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
Mac Benford
Ralph Blizard
Bryan Bowers
Ann and Phil Case
Johnny Cash
The Chuck Wagon Gang
Bill Clifton
Country Ham
Wayne Erbsen
Farmer's Daughters
Mike Fenton
The Freight Hoppers
Ronnie Gilbert
Woody Guthrie
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young
Emmylou Harris
Hazel & Alice
Carol McComb
Kate & Anna McGarrigle
Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys
The New Lost City Ramblers
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
John Prine
Red Clay Ramblers
Harvey Reid
Rhythm Rats
Strange Creek Singers
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin
Jane Voss
Gillian Welch
Kitty Wells
Hank Williams

Martin Carthy
Pierre Bensusan
Eliza Carthy
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Michael Hedges
Christy Moore
Mark Simos
Martin Simpson
Dave Swarbrick
Tamarack
Brooks Williams

Martin Carthy & Dave Swarbrick
Robin and Barry Dransfield

Cascades
Dan Fogelberg

Bobby Casey
Kevin Burke

Johnny Cash
Richard Buckner
Rosanne Cash
Guy Clark
Mark Germino
Butch Hancock
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Robert Earl Keen Jr.
Don McLean
James McMurtry

Rosanne Cash
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Darden Smith
Lucinda Williams

The Cass County Boys
Spade Cooley

Con Cassidy
Altan

Joe Cassidy
Tommy Peoples

Celtic Thunder
Solas

Ceoltóirí Cualann
The Bothy Band
The Chieftains
Seán Keane
Planxty

Raymond Chandler
Kinky Friedman

Tom Chapin
Raffi

George "Doc" Chapman
Owen "Snake" Chapman

Marshall Chapman
k.d. lang

Tracy Chapman
Patty Griffin
Jewel
Keb' Mo'
Cheryl Wheeler

Charlatans
Dan Hicks

Bobby Charles
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Ray Charles
Mose Allison
Walter Hyatt
Lyle Lovett
Taj Mahal
Van Morrison
Bernice Johnson Reagon
Martin Sexton
Tom Waits

Charles River Valley Boys
Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

Sam Charters
"Spider" John Koerner

Bo Chatmon
Mississippi Sheiks

Henderson Chatmon
Mississippi Sheiks

Sam Chatmon
Mississippi Sheiks

Boozoo Chavis
Buckwheat Zydeco
Roy Carrier
Rockin' Dopsie
Keith Frank
Queen Ida

Clifton Chenier
Lynn August
Buckwheat Zydeco
Chubby Carrier
Roy Carrier
C.J. Chenier
Geno Delafose
Rockin' Dopsie
David Lindley
Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas
Queen Ida
Rockin Sidney
Zydeco Force

Cherish the Ladies
Solas

The Chieftains
Big Blow and the Bushwackers
Boys of the Lough
Carrie Crompton
Mike Cross
Déanta
Ashley MacIsaac
Magical Strings
The Pogues
Alan Stivell
Sweeney's Men
The Waterboys
Whistlebinkies
Joemy Wilson

Chiffons
The Nylons

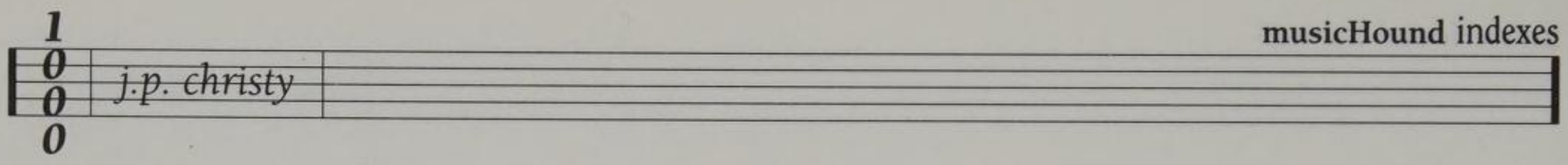
Sonny Chillingworth
Keola Beamer
Moses Kahumoku
George Kahumoku Jr.
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
Ray Kane
Ozzie Kotani
Leonard Kwan
Hui Ohana
Gabby Pahinui
The Pahinui Brothers

Angus Chisolm
Jerry Holland
Buddy MacMaster

Harry Choates
Hackberry Ramblers
Doris "D.L." Menard
"Cheese" Read
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Charlie Christian
Ry Cooder

Meg Christian
Cris Williamson



J.P. Christy
Paul Robeson

Christy Minstrels
The Brothers Four

Chuck Wagon Gang
The Cox Family

Clan Alba
Ceolbeg

Willie Clancy
Mary Bergin
Noel Hill
James Keane
Seán Keane
Mick Moloney
Liam O'Flynn

Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem
The Chieftains
The Dubliners
Irish Rovers
The Johnstons
Mick Moloney
Christy Moore
The Pogues
Tommy Sands
Sweeney's Men

Clannad
Altan
Déanta
Enya
The Rankin Family

Eric Clapton
Bob Margolin
Dave Mason
The subdudes

Guy Clark
Jason Eklund
Steve Fisher
Lyle Lovett
Kimberly M'Carver
David Olney
Darrell Scott
Michelle Shocked
Darden Smith
Eric Taylor
Jerry Jeff Walker
Kevin Welch

Roy Clark
Leo Kottke

The Clash
Blood Oranges
Billy Bragg
Brenda Kahn
The Oyster Band
Uncle Tupelo

Johnny Clegg
Tony Bird
Loreena McKennitt

Samuel Clemens
John Hartford

Vassar Clements
Emily & Al Cantrell
Mark O'Connor

Bill Clifton
Mike Fenton

Cripple Cleve Cline
Walt Michael

Patsy Cline
Blood Oranges
Cowboy Junkies
Rosie Flores
Butch Hancock
Carolyn Hester
k.d. lang
Ranch Romance
Linda Ronstadt

Harlan Coble
Hollow Rock String Band

Eddie Cochran
Mike Fenton

Bruce Cockburn
Stephen Fearing
Dan Fogelberg
Carrie Newcomer
Pierce Pettis
Tom Prasada-Rao
The Story

Joe Cocker
Jennifer Warnes

Fred Cockerham
Paul Brown
Bob Carlin
Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva
Dirk Powell
Rafe Stefanini

Pete Coe
Jez Lowe

Fr. Charlie Coen
Noel Hill

Jack Coen
Mike Casey
Irish Tradition
Joanie Madden
Billy McComiskey
Carol Thompson

Leonard Cohen
Jackson Browne
Crash Test Dummies
Ebin-Rose
David Mallett
Peter Mulvey
Laura Nyro
Tamarack
Timbuk 3
Jennifer Warnes

Nat King Cole
Harry Belafonte

Michael Coleman
Kevin Burke
Matt Molloy
Eugene O'Donnell

Judy Collins
Lui Collins
Kat Eggleston
Nanci Griffith
Priscilla Herdman
Madeline MacNeil
Laura Nyro
Maria Sangiolo
Carly Simon

Kathleen Collins
Ken Perlman

Christine Collister
Adie Grey

Bob Coltman
Debby McClatchy

John Coltrane
Tim Buckley
The Byrds
Love
Joni Mitchell
Todd Phillips

Shawn Colvin
Vance Gilbert
Barbara Kessler
Keb' Mo'

P.J. Conlon
Joe Derrane

Billy Connoll
Les Barker

Seamus Connolly
John Whelan

Contraband
Ossian

Ry Cooder
The Cheap Suit Serenaders
David Lindley
The Pahinui Brothers
Brooks Williams

Harry Cook
A.L. Lloyd

Peter Cook
Les Barker

Sam Cooke
Cliff Eberhardt
Art Garfunkel
Richie Havens
Ted Hawkins
Van Morrison
Ann Peebles
Otis Redding

Blackie Cool
Sam Rizzetta

Joe Cooley
Arcady
James Keane

The Coon Creek Girls
Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

Wilma Lee Cooper
Country Ham
Hazel & Alice

Aaron Copland
Baltimore Consort

Jim Copper (Bob's father)
The Copper Family

The Copper Family
Robin and Barry Dransfield
John Roberts & Tony Barrand
Steeleye Span

The Voice Squad
Waterson:Carthy
The Watersons
Young Tradition

Sean Corcoran
The Johnstons

Sheryl Cormier
Kristi Guillory

Bill Cosby
Vance Gilbert

Elvis Costello
Dan Bern
Billy Bragg
Clive Gregson
John Wesley Harding
Brenda Kahn
Jack Logan

Elizabeth Cotten
Etta Baker
Woody Guthrie
Mike Seeger
Peggy Seeger

James Cotton
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Koerner, Ray & Glover

Count Basie
Asleep at the Wheel

Counting Crows
The Nields

Country Cooking
Tony Trischka

Country Gazette
Byron Berline
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers
The Nashville Bluegrass Band
The New Grass Revival

Country Gentlemen
Boone Creek
J.D. Crowe
Doyle Lawson
The Seldom Scene

The Cowboy Junkies
Luka Bloom
Richard Buckner

Ida Cox
Jane Voss

Cranberries
The Nields

Dan Crary
Steve Kaufman

Virgil Craven
David Holt
Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Homer Crawford
Dock Boggs

Papa John Creach
Keb' Mo'

Kyle Creed
Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Piney Creek Weasels
Rafe Stefanini

Lonnie Crosbie
Hollow Rock String Band

Bing Crosby
Mary Hopkin
Leon Redbone

Crosby, Stills & Nash
Joni Mitchell
Seals & Crofts

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
America

Sheryl Crow
Jewel

J.D. Crowe & the New South
Boone Creek
Tim Lake
Lonesome River Band
Union Springs

Rodney Crowell
Rosanne Cash

Cumberland Three
John Stewart

Johnny Cunningham
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House

Phil Cunningham
Connie Dover
Steve Schneider

Paddy Curley
Michael Coleman

Alex Currie
Hamish Moore

King Curtis
David Lindley

Ted Daffan
Lefty Frizzell

Paul Daigle
Sheryl Cormier
Kristi Guillory

Malcolm Dalglish
Dan Duggan
No Strings Attached
Maggie Sansone
Jerry Read Smith

Vernon Dalhart
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
Bascom Lamar Lunsford
Blind Alfred Reed
Carson Robison

Barbara Dane
Robin Flower

Rick Danko
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Bobby Darin
Richard Meyer

Clyde Davenport
Red Mountain White Trash

Shaun Davey
Rita Connolly

Joel Davidson
Uncle Dave Macon

Miles Davis
Tim Buckley
Matt Flinner
Pentangle

Rev. Gary Davis
Rory Block
Roy Book Binder
David Bromberg
Country Joe and the Fish
Guy Davis
Stefan Grossman
Hot Tuna
Janis Ian
Larry Johnson
Leo Kottke
Lovin' Spoonful
Dave Van Ronk

Spencer Davis
Tret Fure

De Danann
Arcady

Patrick Street
Jerry Read Smith

Alex de Grassi
Artie Traum

Claude Debussy
Enya

Oscar Degrenia
Lorraine (Lee) Hammond

Del Lords
Ed Pettersen

John Delafose
Willis Prudhomme
Zydeco Force

The Delmore Brothers
Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin
Jim & Jesse
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar
Louvin Brothers

Iris DeMent
Kate Campbell

Sandy Denny
Scott Appel
Mary Black
Polly Bolton
Christine Collister
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House

John Denver
Sara Hickman
David Mallett
Peter, Paul & Mary

Desert Rose Band
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

Al Dexter
Jack Guthrie

Alex di Grassi
Al Petteway

Hazel Dickens
The Lynn Morris Band
Elaine Purkey

Hazel Dickens & Alice Gerrard
Ann and Phil Case
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Jimmy Dickens
Glen Campbell

Bo Diddley
Greg Kihn
Van Morrison

Ani DiFranco
Atwater-Donnelly
Dan Bern

The Dildines
The Amidons

Doug Dillard Band
Kathy Chiavola

Dillards
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers
Muleskinner

Dwight Diller
Cordelia's Dad
Diane Jones & Hubie King
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole

John Dilleshaw
Herschel Brown

Dion
Ed Pettersen

Dirty Dozen Brass Band
The ReBirth Brass Band

The Dixie Hummingbirds
The Fairfield Four

Dixieland Jug Blowers
Memphis Jug Band

Don Dixon
Dana Cooper
Julian Dawson

Willie Dixon
Mose Allison
John Lee Hooker
Colin Linden
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women
Pete Seeger

DNA
Suzanne Vega

Bonnie Dobson
Carla Sciaky

John Doherty
Altan

Fats Domino
Taj Mahal
Randy Newman

Don & Dewey
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Donovan
Mary Hopkin
Incredible String Band
Al Stewart

Bev Doolittle
Kimberly M'Carver

Rev. Thomas Dorsey
Red Foley

Thomas A. Dorsey
The Fairfield Four

Albert d'Ossche
Neal Hellman

Michael Doucet
Tasso

Doug & Jack &Wallin
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva

Jerry Douglas
Sally Van Meter

Wilson Douglas
Dwight Diller

Patrick Doyle
The Rankin Family

Nick Drake
Scott Appel
Vic Chesnutt
Ebin-Rose
David Folks
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
Jack Hardy
Gayla Drake Paul
Richard Thompson
David Wilcox

Robin & Barry Dransfield
Kate Rusby

Dubliners
Irish Rovers
The Johnstons
Mick Moloney
The Pogues
Sweeney's Men

Dave Dudley
Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

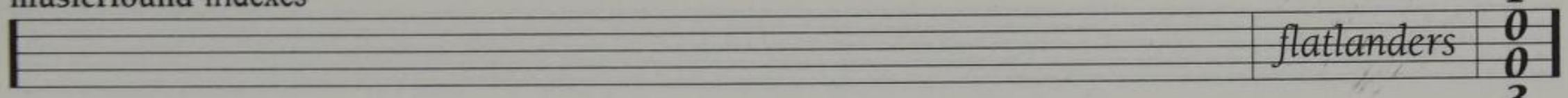
Lorraine Duisit
Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude

Bob Dylan
Eric Andersen
Joan Baez
Dan Bern
Paul Brady
Chuck Brodsky
David Bromberg
Tim Buckley
T-Bone Burnett
The Byrds
Emily & Al Cantrell
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Tom Chapin
Frank Christian
Gene Clark
Bruce Cockburn
Leonard Cohen
Scott Cossu
Crosby, Stills and Nash
Sandy Denny
disappear fear
Donovan
Nick Drake
Pete Droge
Fred Eaglesmith
Steve Earle
Cliff Eberhardt
Jason Eklund
Fairport Convention
Steve Forbert
Michael Fracasso
Jackson C. Frank
Mark Germino
Steve Goodman
Grateful Dead
Butch Hancock
Tim Hardin
John Wesley Harding
Jack Hardy
Richie Havens
Tish Hinojosa
Robyn Hitchcock
Alaska's Hobo Jim
Ian & Sylvia
Indigo Girls
Michael Jerling
Paul Kelly
Greg Kihn
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Kris Kristofferson
Jimmy LaFave
Patty Larkin
Larry Long
Rod MacDonald
Marley's Ghost
David Massengill
Eleanor McEvoy
James McMurtry
Ralph McTell
Richard Meyer
Van Morrison
Pete Morton
Peter Mulvey
Elliot Murphy
Michael Nesmith
Laura Nyro
Ellis Paul
Peter, Paul & Mary
Tom Prasada-Rao
John Prine
Willis Alan Ramsey
Tom Robinson Band
Tom Russell
Buffy Sainte-Marie
Richard Shindell
Paul Siebel
Dick Siegel
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Todd Snider
Cat Stevens
Al Stewart
James Taylor
Richard Thompson
Happy Traum
Townes Van Zandt
Loudon Wainwright III
The Waterboys
Don Williams
Lucinda Williams
Jesse Winchester
The Woodstock Mountain Revue
Jesse Colin Young
Neil Young
Steve Young

The Eagles
America
Kevin Welch

Steve Earle
Mark Germino
Todd Snider

Easy Club
Sileas



Cliff Eberhardt
Hugh Blumenfeld

Duane Eddy
David Lindley

Dave Edmunds
Tina Louise Barr

Edward II
Shooglenifty

Mark Eitzel
Jack Logan

The Electric Bonsai Band
Eddie from Ohio

Danny Elfman's "Mystic Knights of the Oingo Boingo"
Klezmorim

Duke Ellington
Klezmorim
Billy Novick

Ramblin' Jack Elliott
The Greenbriar Boys
Peter, Paul & Mary
Loudon Wainwright III

Big Chief Ellis
Cephas & Wiggins

Joe Ely
Robert Earl Keen Jr.

Enemy Orchard
Black 47

Lyman Enloe
Fred Stoneking

Lymon Enloe
Primitive Characters

James Ennis (Séamus Mac Aonghusa)
Séamus Ennis

Seamus Ennis
Derek Bell
Mary Bergin
Andy Irvine
Christy Moore
Liam O'Flynn

Brian Eno
Mouth Music
Jane Siberry

Kevin Enoch
Boiled Buzzards

Ensemble Galilei
Hesperus

Enya
Mouth Music

Sleepy John Estes
Memphis Jug Band
Josh White Jr.

Melissa Etheridge
Patty Griffin

Bill Evans
Steve Schneider

Ike Everly
Merle Travis

The Everly Brothers
The Brother Boys
Buffalo Springfield
Rosanne Cash
Chad & Jeremy
Crosby, Stills and Nash
Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin
The Eagles
Marianne Faithfull
Mike Fenton
The Mamas & the Papas
Peter & Gordon
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Stealers Wheel
Sweethearts of the Rodeo
Trout Fishing in America
Young Tradition

John Fahey
Harvey Reid

Paddy Fahy
Kevin Burke
Martin Hayes

Fairfield Four
The Nashville Bluegrass Band

Fairport Convention
Boiled in Lead
Polly Bolton
Robin and Barry Dransfield
Figgy Duff
Ashley Hutchings
Incredible String Band
The New St. George
The Oyster Band
Runrig
Spirit of the West
Steeleye Span
Tamarack
Whirligig

Marianne Faithfull
Mary Hopkin
Mary Margaret O'Hara

Cleoma Breaux Falcon
David Doucet
Kristi Guillory
Magnolia Sisters
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Joe Falcon
Amédée Ardoin
Jo-El Sonnier

Joe Falcon & Cleoma Breaux
Lawrence Walker

Famous Bluejay Singers
Golden Gate Quartet

Mimi and Richard Fariña
Judy Collins
Cindy Kallet

Richard Fariña
Alan Freeman
Greg Kihn
Mark Nelson
Don Pedi
Jerry Rockwell
Kevin Roth
Trapezoid

Jim Farthing
Frank George

Fat Meat Boys
The Chicken Chokers

Tuba Fats & the Chosen Few
The ReBirth Brass Band

John Henry Faulk
Garrison Keillor

William Faulkner
Tom Russell

Fendermen
David Lindley

Mike Fenton
Alan Mager

Willie Fernie
Alasdair Fraser

Ferron
Stephen Fearing
Connie Kaldor
James Keelaghan
Erica Wheeler

Betty Mae Fikes
Bernice Johnson Reagon

Cathy Fink
Bill Harley

Alec Finn
Robin Bullock

Fred Finn & Peter Horan
Matt Molloy

Archie Fisher
Eric Bogle
Brian McNeill
Ed Miller
Old Blind Dogs
Garnet Rogers
Andy M. Stewart

Fisk Jubilee Singers
The Fairfield Four

Ella Fitzgerald
Judy Austin
Richard Meyer

Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald
Jerry Holland
Buddy MacMaster

Five Blind Boys of Alabama
The Fairfield Four

Five Hand Reel
Runrig

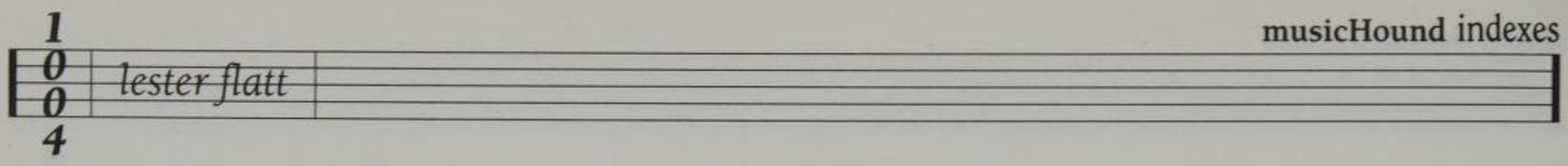
Mike Flanagan (of the Flanagan Brothers)
Joe Derrane

The Flanagan Brothers
De Danann
Frankie Gavin
Mick Moloney

Helen Flanders
Lorraine (Lee) Hammond
Margaret MacArthur

Flanders & Swann
Chad & Jeremy

Flatlanders
Bill & Bonnie Hearne



Lester Flatt
Gibson Brothers Band
Jon Sholle

Flatt & Scruggs
Boys from Indiana
The Charles River Valley Boys
The Dillards
Robin and Barry Dransfield
John Hartford
Chris Hillman
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers
The Lewis Family
Lonesome Standard Time
Special Consensus
Ralph Stanley
Mason Williams

Béla Fleck
Alison Brown
Matt Flinner
Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude
Strength in Numbers

Chuck Fleming
Johnny Cunningham

Benton Flippen
Paul Brown
The Chicken Chokers
Primitive Characters

Russell Fluharty
Madeline MacNeil
Sam Rizzetta
Bob Shank

Dan Fogelberg
Sara Hickman
Bill Miller
Diane Zeigler

Canray Fontenot
Chris Ardoin
Beausoleil
California Cajun Orchestra
John Delafose
Queen Ida
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band

Richard Fool Bull
Kevin Locke

Steve Forbert
Hugh Blumenfeld
Michael Fracasso
David Massengill

Robert Force
Neal Hellman

Howdy Forrester
Chubby Wise

Stephen Foster
Rosamund Campbell
Robin Holcomb
Randy Newman
Pete Seeger
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Foster & Lloyd
Kieran Kane

Fotheringay
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House

The Four Freshmen
The Four Preps

Fourgone Conclusions
The American Cafe Orchestra

J.P. Fraley
Farmer's Daughters
Alan Freeman
Buddy Thomas

Erik Frandsen
Frank Christian

Bob Franke
Garnet Rogers

Aretha Franklin
Judy Austin
Laura Nyro
Ann Peebles

Alasdair Fraser
Karen Ashbrook

Iain Fraser
Alasdair Fraser

Freedom Singers
Bernice Johnson Reagon
Sweet Honey in the Rock

Sylvia Fricker
Julie Davis

Lefty Frizzell
Alaska's Hobo Jim
George Jones
Willie Nelson
John Pinamonti
Jim Ringer
James Talley

Alain Froment
Skyedance

Fugazi
Ani DiFranco

Darley Fulks
Bruce Greene

Blind Boy Fuller
Etta Baker
Roy Book Binder
Cephas & Wiggins
The Rev. Gary Davis
Sleepy John Estes
John Jackson
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee

Jesse Fuller
John Jackson

Tom Fuller
Brad Leftwich

Lowell Fulson
Clifton Chenier

Peter Gabriel
Paula Cole
Loreena McKennitt
Jane Siberry

Vincenzo Galilei
Ensemble Galilei

Les Gallier
Hollis Landrum

James Galway
Chris Norman

Houston Galyean
Tommy Jarrell

James Gannon
Michael Coleman

Vin Garbutt
Artisan

Jerry Garcia
Peter Rowan

Bobby Gardiner
Billy McComiskey

Worley Gardner
Sam Rizzetta
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

Art Garfunkel
Jackson C. Frank

Judy Garland
Art Garfunkel

Richard Gary
Sue Richards

Marvin Gaster
Piney Creek Weasels

Gateway Singers
The Kingston Trio

Dick Gaughan
Eric Bogle
Ceolbeg
Jez Lowe
Brian McNeill
Runrig

Marvin Gaye
The Band
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

The J. Geils Band
Tret Fure

The Genial Hawaiians
Bob Brozman

Bobbie Gentry
Kate Campbell
Kimmie Rhodes

George & Ira Gershwin
Randy Newman
Harry Nilsson
Tom Waits

Stan Getz
Ensemble Galilei

Bob Gibson
Bob Franke
Steve Goodman
Phil Ochs
Claudia Schmidt
Michael Smith

Don Gibson
Kenny Baker

Ronnie Gilbert
Janis Ian
Holly Near
Rude Girls
Peggy Seeger
Judy Small
Cris Williamson

Dizzy Gillespie
Joni Mitchell
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Tony Gilmore
Lyman Enloe

Johnny Gimble
Emily & Al Cantrell
Mark O'Connor

Alan Ginsberg
The Fugs

Matt Glaser
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Henry Glover
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Goadec Sisters
Alan Stivell

Arthur Godfrey
Garrison Keillor

Golden Gate Quartet
Marley's Ghost

Arlo Good Bear
Kevin Locke

Good Ol' Persons
The All Girl Boys
Kathy Kallick

Benny Goodman
Billy Novick

Steve Goodman
Chuck Brodsky
Bob Franke
Claudia Schmidt

John Gorka
Catie Curtis
Pierce Pettis
Richard Shindell

Johnny Gorman
Michael Coleman

Michael Gorman
Kevin Burke

Gosdin Brothers
Chris Hillman

Davey Graham
Duck Baker
Pierre Bensusan
Martin Carthy
Jack Hardy
Andy Irvine
Bert Jansch
Pentangle

John Renbourn

Grant Street String Band
The All Girl Boys

Stephane Grappelli
Acousticats
Mark O'Connor

The Grateful Dead
Eddie from Ohio
Walter Hyatt
Marley's Ghost
Sons of the Never Wrong

Josh Graves
Jerry Douglas
Sally Van Meter

G.B. Grayson
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil
Pap Brewer

Grayson & Whittier
Earl Johnson

Al Green
Lyle Lovett

Eli Green
Mississippi Fred McDowell

Green Fields of America
Trian

Greenbrier Boys
Frank Wakefield
The Woodstock Mountain Revue

Bruce Greene
Don Pedi

Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
Leslie Tucker

Nanci Griffith
The Black Family
Kate Campbell
Iris DeMent
Betty Elders
John Gorka
Kate Jacobs
Kimberly M'Carver
Kathy Mattea
Kate Rusby
Darden Smith
Bill Staines
The Story
Susan Werner

Erica Wheeler

David Grisman
Alison Brown
Tony Elman
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Matt Flinner
Mando Mafia
Evan Marshall
Mike Marshall
Peter Ostroushko
Todd Phillips
Psychograss
Strength in Numbers
Radim Zenkl

Stefan Grossman
Rory Block

Dave Guard
John Stewart

Rufus Guinchard
Figgy Duff

Mark Gunther
Chirps Smith

Arlo Guthrie
Dan Bern
Jon Gailmor

Woody Guthrie
Eric Andersen
Dan Bern
Billy Bragg
Oscar Brand
Rachel Buchman
Country Joe and the Fish
Ani DiFranco
Lonnie Donegan
Bob Dylan
Steve Earle
Jason Eklund
Ramblin' Jack Elliott
Richard and Mimi Fariña
Jon Gailmor
Dick Gaughan
Steve Goodman
John Gorka
Arlo Guthrie
Butch Hancock
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young
Alaska's Hobo Jim
Cisco Houston
Andy Irvine
Burl Ives

Ella Jenkins
Si Kahn
Charlie King
"Spider" John Koerner
Gordon Lightfoot
Larry Long
The Chad Mitchell Trio
Bill Morrissey
Fred Neil
Phil Ochs
Ellis Paul
Tom Paxton
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Elaine Purkey
Willis Alan Ramsey
Jim Ringer
Tom Rush
Helen Schneyer
Pete Seeger
Michelle Shocked
Fred Small
James Talley
Townes Van Zandt
Josh White
Glenn Yarbrough

Buddy Guy
Ry Cooder
Keb' Mo'

Hackberry Ramblers
Harry Choates
Filé
"Cheese" Read
Leo Soileau

Merle Haggard
Dave Alvin
Asleep at the Wheel
The Byrds
Five Chinese Brothers
Butch Hancock
Gram Parsons
Tom Russell
Uncle Tupelo

Ed Hale
Rick Thum

Ed Haley
Owen "Snake" Chapman
Wilson Douglas
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley
Bruce Molsky
Pete Sutherland
Buddy Thomas

Kenny Hall
Mark Nelson

Roy Hall
Jim Eanes

Wendell Hall
Carson Robison

Dana Hamilton
Scott Jackson
Rick Thum

John Hammond Jr.
Cephas & Wiggins
Keb' Mo'

Burl Hammons
Dave Bing
The Bing Brothers

Sherman Hammons
Dave Bing
The Bing Brothers

The Hammons Family
Dwight Diller

Butch Hancock
Jimmy LaFave

W.C. Handy
Furry Lewis

Harambee Singer
Bernice Johnson Reagon

Tim Hardin
Nick Drake

Jack Hardy
Hugh Blumenfeld
Frank Christian
Cliff Eberhardt
Michael Jerling
David Massengill

Slim Harpo
Van Morrison

Jean Harriman
Sue Richards

Earl Harris
Charley Patton

Emmylou Harris
Kate Campbell
Rosanne Cash
Kathy Chiavola
Cindy Church
Iris DeMent
Betty Elders
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
Gibson Brothers Band
Alison Krauss
Claire Lynch
Kate MacKenzie
Kimmie Rhodes
Cathie Ryan
David Schnaufer
Jane Siberry
Ricky Skaggs
Barry & Holly Tashian
The Whites
Lucinda Williams

Phil Harris
Asleep at the Wheel

Garry Harrison
Chirps Smith

Bill Harte
James Keane

John Hartford
Austin Lounge Lizards
Fletcher Bright Fiddle Band
Joel Mabus

Roy Harvey
Riley Puckett

Richie Havens
Cliff Eberhardt
Ben Harper
David Wilcox

James Clarence Hay
Dirk Powell

P.J. Hayes
Martin Hayes

William Shakespeare Hayes
Rosamund Campbell

Lee Hays
Pete Seeger

Hazel & Alice
Emmylou Harris
Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice
Strange Creek Singers

John Healy
Trian

Joe Heaney
Cathie Ryan
Robin Williamson

Mark Heard
Pierce Pettis

Michael Hedges
Adrian Legg

Jascha Heifetz
Evan Marshall

Helicon
Simple Gifts
Skyedance

Neal Hellman
Mike Casey
Lois Hornbostel

Sid Hemphill
Mississippi Fred McDowell

Hamish Henderson
Ed Miller

Jimi Hendrix
Eric Clapton
Ry Cooder
Dave Mason
Richard Thompson

Clarence "Frogman" Henry
The Band

Mike Heron
Robin Williamson

Sam Herrmann
Madeline MacNeil

Carolyn Hester
Betty Elders
Nanci Griffith
Maria Sangiolo

John Hiatt
Dan Bern
Paul Kelly
James McMurtry

Hickory Wind
Boiled in Lead

Bobby Hicks
Jason Carter

Dan Hicks
Gideon Freudmann

Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks
The Chenille Sisters

High Country
Good Ol' Persons

Highwoods String Band
Boiled Buzzards
The Chicken Chokers
Critton Hollow String Band
The Horseflies
Primitive Characters
Skeeter & the Skidmarks

Joe Hill
Si Kahn
Charlie King
Larry Long

Paddy Hill
Noel Hill

The Hillmen
The Bluegrass Cardinals

Robyn Hitchcock
Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Adolf Hofner
Bob Wills

Billie Holiday
Mary Black
Rickie Lee Jones
Magpie
Maria Muldaur
Jane Voss

Jerry Holland
Natalie MacMaster

The Hollies
Stealers Wheel

Tony Hollins
John Lee Hooker

The Hollow Rock String Band
Fuzzy Mountain String Band

Buddy Holly
Terry Allen
T-Bone Burnett
Joe Ely
Marianne Faithfull
Michael Fracasso
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Greg Kihn
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Joe Holmes
Skylark

David Holt
Laura Boosinger

Holy Modal Rounders
Michael Hurley

Homer and Jethro
Austin Lounge Lizards

Earl Hooker
Sue Foley
Roy Rogers

John Lee Hooker
Mississippi Fred McDowell
Van Morrison
Bonnie Raitt
Chic Street Man

Hoosier Hotshots
The Maddox Brothers & Rose

Joel Hopkins
Lightnin' Hopkins

Lightnin' Hopkins
John Fahey
John Hammond Jr.
Eric Taylor
Townes Van Zandt

Lena Horne
Harry Belafonte

Zelphia and Myles Horton
Guy Carawan

Hot Rize
Emily & Al Cantrell
Front Range
Northern Lights
Tim O'Brien

Hotmud Family
Critton Hollow String Band

Son House
Rory Block
Michael Bloomfield
Big Bill Broonzy
Sleepy John Estes
Jesse Fuller
Paul Geremia
Stefan Grossman
Skip James
Robert Johnson
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Muddy Waters

House Band
Simple Gifts

Cisco Houston
Gordon Bok
Richard and Mimi Fariña
Sandy & Caroline Paton

Howlin' Wolf
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Bonnie Raitt

Jim Hudson
Rick Thum

Jimmy Hueston
Tommy Peoples

Mississippi John Hurt
Rory Block
Roy Book Binder
Mike Cross
Bob Franke
Paul Geremia
Stefan Grossman
Hot Tuna
Frank Hutchison
"Spider" John Koerner
Lovin' Spoonful
Chris Smither
Happy Traum
Dave Van Ronk
Josh White Jr.

Ashley Hutchings
Blowzabella
John Kirkpatrick

Joe Hutton
Kathryn Tickell

Janis Ian
Judy Austin
Carrie Newcomer
Cosy Sheridan

Ian & Sylvia
Cindy Church
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Neal & Leandra

The Impressions
The Band

Incredible String Band
Steve Schneider

Indigo Girls
Kristen Hall

International Submarine Band
Barry & Holly Tashian

The Irish Tradition
Karen Ashbrook
Helicon
Lisa Moscatiello
Solas
Trian

Andy Irvine
Atwater-Donnelly
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Donal Lunny

Bill Irwin
Malcolm Dalglish

Atta Isaacs
Gabby Pahinui

Eileen Ivers
Simple Gifts

Burl Ives
Theodore "Theo" Bikel
Bok, Muir & Trickett
Oscar Brand
The Brothers Four
Cindy Kallet
Sandy & Caroline Paton

Charles Ives
Baltimore Consort
Robin Holcomb

Aunt Molly Jackson
Robin Flower
Elaine Purkey

Jim Jackson
Memphis Minnie
Charley Patton
Robert Wilkins

Mahalia Jackson
Odetta
Ann Peebles

Papa Charlie Jackson
Big Bill Broonzy

Tommy Jackson
James Bryan

Wanda Jackson
Rosie Flores

Jackson Five
Laura Love

David James
Karen Ashbrook

Elmore James
Michael Bloomfield
Ry Cooder

Skip James
Paul Geremia
Stefan Grossman

"Spider" John Koerner
Koerner, Ray & Glover

Bert Jansch
Pierre Bensusan
Ebin-Rose
Dick Gaughan
John Renbourn
Brooks Williams

Victor Jara
Magpie

Al Jarreau
Martin Sexton

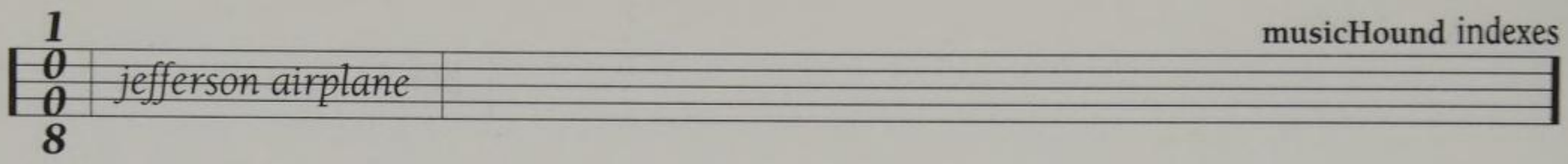
Ben Jarrell
Tommy Jarrell

Tommy Jarrell
Boiled Buzzards
Paul Brown
The Camp Creek Boys
Bob Carlin
The Chicken Chokers
Tony Ellis
Wayne Erbsen
Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Carol Elizabeth Jones & James Leva
Brad Leftwich
Bruce Molsky
Dirk Powell
Primitive Characters
Rhythm Rats
Mike Seeger
Pete Sutherland
Kirk Sutphin

Keith Jarrett
Steve Schneider

Jason & the Scorchers
Blood Oranges

Blind Lemon Jefferson
Big Bill Broonzy
The Rev. Gary Davis
Ted Hawkins
Roscoe Holcomb
John Lee Hooker
Lightnin' Hopkins
B.B. King
Leadbelly
Mance Lipscomb
Mississippi Fred McDowell
Charley Patton
Josh White



Jefferson Airplane
Fairport Convention
Steeleye Span

Ella Jenkins
Peter Alsop
Rachel Buchman

Jean Simmons Jennings
David Schnaufer

Waylon Jennings
Hoyt Axton
Ray Wylie Hubbard
Robert Earl Keen Jr.

Joan Jett
Tret Fure

John Hill Jewett
Rosamund Campbell

Jim & Jesse
Gibson Brothers Band
Carl Jackson

Santiago Jimenez
Flaco Jimenez

Joan of Arc
Jo Carol Pierce

Beau Jocque
Chris Ardoin
Keith Frank

Dr. John
Dick Siegel

Elton John
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter

Johnnie & Jack
Kitty Wells

Johnny & the Pirates
Van Morrison

Blind Willie Johnson
Washington Phillips

Crow Johnson
Joni Bishop

Elliott Johnson
Bayou Seco

Lonnie Johnson
Lightnin' Hopkins
Robert Johnson
B.B. King

Robert Johnson
Rory Block
Big Bill Broonzy
Bob Brozman
Guy Davis
Sleepy John Estes
John Fahey
John Hammond Jr.
Richie Havens
Ted Hawkins
John Lee Hooker
Michael Jerling
Taj Mahal
Mississippi Fred McDowell
Keb' Mo'
Kelly Joe Phelps
David Rea
Muddy Waters
Lucinda Williams

Tommy Johnson
Rory Block
Sleepy John Estes
Skip James
Robert Johnson
Mississippi Sheiks

Johnson Mountain Boys
The Lynn Morris Band

Johnstons
Mick Moloney

Jolly Boys
Magical Strings

Bessie Jones
Bernice Johnson Reagon

Casey Jones
Lyman Enloe

George Jones
Five Chinese Brothers
Dirk Powell

Grandpa Jones
The Holy Modal Rounders

Grandpa and Ramona Jones
Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Marti Jones
Dana Cooper

Nic Jones
Kate Rusby

Rickie Lee Jones
Ani DiFranco
Deb Pasternak

Suzanne Vega

Spike Jones & His City Slickers
The Hoosier Hot Shots
Tom Waits

Janis Joplin
Tracy Nelson

Charlie Jordan
Memphis Jug Band

Louis Jordan
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Clifton Chenier
Bo Diddley

Steve Jordan
The Mollys

Ledward Kaapana
Moses Kahumoku
George Kahumoku Jr.

Si Kahn
John McCutcheon

Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
George Kuo

Raymond Kane
Moses Kahumoku
George Kahumoku Jr.
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
George Kuo
Mark Nelson

Moussa Kanoute
Magical Strings

Steve Kaufman
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey

Singh Kaur
Kim Robertson

Ron Kavana
The Black Family

Danny Kaye
Ella Jenkins

Dolores Keane
Grace Griffith
Lisa Moscatiello
Maura O'Connell
Cathie Ryan
Skylark

Rita Keane
Dolores Keane

Sarah Keane
Dolores Keane

Salif Keita
Sileas

Bill Keith
Tony Trischka

Luke Kelley
Dick Gaughan

Frank Kelly
Tommy Peoples

Patrick Kelly
Seán Keane

Kentucky Colonels
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers
The Nashville Bluegrass Band
The New Grass Revival

Jack Kerouac
Cindy Lee Berryhill
Richard and Mimi Fariña

Barney Kessel
Glen Campbell

Clark Kessinger
Robin Kessinger
Mando Mafia
Buddy Thomas

Kessinger Brothers
Lonnie Robertson

Chaka Khan
The Story

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
Jeff Buckley

Kids in the Hall
Moxy Früvous

Killbilly
Bad Livers

Louis Killen
Gordon Bok
Tom Lewis

Paddy Killoran
Kevin Burke
Eugene O'Donnell

John Kimmel
Joe Derrane

Bradley Kincaid
Blue Sky Boys
Red Foley
Mac Wiseman

Albert King
Michael Bloomfield
Eric Clapton
Buddy Guy

B.B. King
Michael Bloomfield
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Buddy Guy
Albert King

Carole King
Rickie Lee Jones
Lynn Miles
Laura Nyro
Carly Simon
James Taylor

Earl King
The subdudes

Freddie King
Luther Allison
Eric Clapton
Bob Margolin

King Crimson
Amazing Blondel
Al Stewart

Kingston Trio
America
Bright Morning Star
The Foremen
The Four Preps
The Limeliters
Lee Murdock
The New Christy Minstrels
The Chad Mitchell Trio
Rooftop Singers
Schooner Fare
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Smothers Brothers
John Stewart

Kinks
Tom Robinson Band

Alison Kinnaird
Sileas
Wendy Stewart

John Kirkpatrick
Blowzabella

The Plaid Family

Dorothy Knauss
Carol Thompson

Walt Koken
Michael Miles
Ken Perlman

Fred Koller
Four Bitchin' Babes

Ken Kolodner
Rick Thum

Alexis Korner
Van Morrison

Kornog
The House Band

Leo Kottke
Scott Appel
Michael Hedges
Peter Mulvey
Harvey Reid

Ernie Kovacs
Michael Nesmith

Kraftwerk
The Devlins

Alison Krauss
Blue Highway
Alison Brown
Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla
Tammy Rogers
Chris Thile

Miriam Kressyn
Klezmer Conservatory Band

Kris Kristofferson
Pat Alger
T-Bone Burnett
Ray Wylie Hubbard
James McMurtry

Virginia Kron
Kim Robertson

Leon S. Kurzer
Rooftop Singers

Leonard Kwan
Moses Kahumoku
George Kahumoku Jr.
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi

Jim Kweskin's Jug Band
Lou and Peter Berryman

The Cheap Suit Serenaders
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Timbuk 3

Labelle
Laura Nyro

Bill Lamey
Jerry Holland
Buddy MacMaster

John Landry
Marley's Ghost

k.d. lang
Phranc

Daniel Lanois
Jane Siberry

Sheila Larchet-Cuthbert
Derek Bell

Patty Larkin
Peter Mulvey

Jim Lauderdale
Buddy Miller

Christine Lavin
Electric Bonsai Band
John Forster
Four Bitchin' Babes
Camille West
Cheryl Wheeler

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver
Blue Highway
IIIrd Tyme Out

Izeb Laza
Clifton Chenier

Le Hot Club de France
Dan Hicks

Leadbelly
Lou and Peter Berryman
Theodore "Theo" Bikel
Gordon Bok
Oscar Brand
Tim Buckley
Leonard Cohen
Lonnie Donegan
Bob Dylan
John Fahey
Jesse Fuller
Paul Geremia
Richie Havens
John Jackson
"Spider" John Koerner

Van Morrison
Bill Morrissey
The New Christy Minstrels
Sandy & Caroline Paton
Pete Seeger
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
Hans Theessink
Eric Von Schmidt
Josh White
Josh White Jr.

Vorris "Shorty" LeBlanc
Jo-El Sonnier

Led Zeppelin
Toshi Reagon

Lilly May Ledford
Molly O'Day

Brenda Lee
Rosie Flores

Dick Lee
Hamish Moore

Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper
Delia Bell and Bill Grant
Johnnie & Jack

Scott LeFaro
Hot Tuna

Brad Leftwich
Jake Krack
Red Mountain White Trash

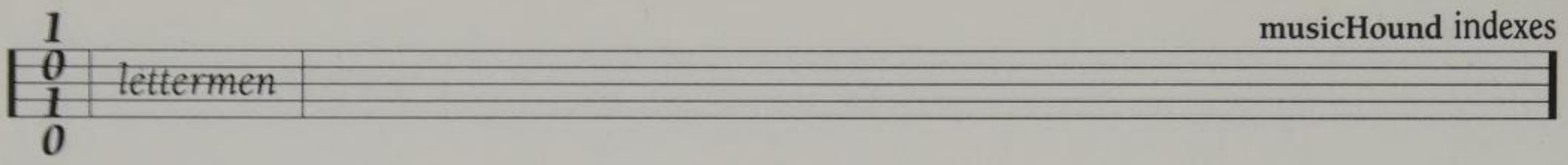
Rush Leftwich
Brad Leftwich

Tom Lehrer
John Forster
Rude Girls
Shel Silverstein

Eric Leinsdorf
Malcolm Dalglish

Iry LeJeune
Bruce Daigrepont
Doug Kershaw
Eddie LeJeune
Doris "D.L." Menard
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Jo-El Sonnier
Horace Trahan

John Lennon
Robyn Hitchcock
Rod MacDonald



Lettermen
Seals & Crofts

Furry Lewis
Memphis Jug Band
Memphis Minnie

Jerry Lee Lewis
John Prine

Shari Lewis
Kevin Roth

Laurie Lewis & Grant Street
Tony Furtado

Joe Liggins
Dr. John

Urg Light
Will Keys

Light Crust Doughboys
Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies

Gordon Lightfoot
Bruce Cockburn
Jim Croce
Grit Laskin
David Mallett
Eileen McGann
Ralph McTell
The Nudes
Peter, Paul & Mary
Harvey Reid
Jeanie Stahl
Bill Staines
Tamarack

Lilly Brothers
Joe Val & the New England Bluegrass Boys

The Limeliters
Bright Morning Star
The Foremen
Schooner Fare

The Limeliters
The Four Preps
The Chad Mitchell Trio

David Lindley
Kelly Joe Phelps
Martin Simpson

Mance Lipscomb
Guy Davis
Stefan Grossman
Kristina Olsen

Little Feat
Tret Fure

Little Richard
Bob Dylan
Harry Nilsson
Otis Redding

Little Walter
Paul Butterfield Blues Band

A.L. Lloyd
Frankie Armstrong
Anne Briggs
Martin Carthy
Bert Jansch
John Roberts & Tony Barrand
The New St. George

Ernest Lloyd
A.L. Lloyd

Frank Loesser
Loudon Wainwright III

Ar Log
Robin Huw Bowen

Jack Logan
Vic Chesnutt

Alan Lomax
Helen Schneyer

Alan & John Lomax
Margaret MacArthur
Eric Von Schmidt

John Lomax
Wayne Erbsen

Professor Longhair
Clifton Chenier
Dr. John

Los Lobos
The Mollys

The Louvin Brothers
The Brother Boys
Johnny Cash
Josh Crowe and David McLaughlin
The Eagles
Everly Brothers
Gibson Brothers Band
Emmylou Harris
Jim & Jesse
Red Clay Ramblers
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Uncle Tupelo
The Whitstein Brothers

Lyle Lovett
John Jennings
Robert Earl Keen Jr.
Deb Pasternak

The Lovin' Spoonful
Free Hot Lunch!

Charlie Lowe
Tommy Jarrell

Jez Lowe
The Black Family

Lulubelle & Scotty
Molly O'Day

Phil Lumpkin
A.L. Lloyd

Emmett Lundy
Red Mountain White Trash

Ted Lundy
James King

Donal Lunny
The Johnstons

Bascom Lamar Lunsford
Marvin Gaster
Grandpa Jones
Betty Smith

Claire Lynch
The Forbes Family

Mac & Bob
Blue Sky Boys

Macalla
Altan

Margaret MacArthur
Mark Nelson

Ewan MacColl
Frankie Armstrong
Eric Bogle
Dave Burland
Andrew Calhoun
The Dubliners
Archie Fisher
Tom Lewis
Christy Moore
Sandy & Caroline Paton
Young Tradition

Alan MacDonald
Tannahill Weavers

Rod MacDonald
Hugh Blumenfeld

Sir John A. MacDonald
Stompin' Tom Connors

Paul Machlis
Alasdair Fraser

Ashley MacIsaac
Mary Jane Lamond

Dougie MacLean
Atwater-Donnelly
Silly Wizard

Morag MacLeod
Sileas

Buddy MacMaster
The Barra MacNeils
Alasdair Fraser
Natalie MacMaster
Hamish Moore
Skyedance

Natalie MacMaster
Simple Gifts

Adam MacNaughton
Ed Miller

Maddie MacNeil
Susan Trump

Madeline MacNeil
Tony Elman

Flora MacNeill
Capercaillie

Uncle Dave Macon
Clarence "Tom" Ashley
Pap Brewer
Bill Carlisle
The Cheap Suit Serenaders
The Chicken Chokers
The Double Decker String Band
The Freight Hoppers
Homer & Jethro
Earl Johnson
Grandpa Jones
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar
Sam & Kirk McGee
George Pegram
Primitive Characters
Pete Seeger

Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton
Stringbean

Joe Madden
Joanie Madden

Rose Maddox
Country Ham
Carolyn Hester

Mary Magdalene
Jo Carol Pierce

Magic Sam
Luther Allison

Magical Strings
Ceoltoiri

Magpie
Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude

Wade Mainer
Pap Brewer

Wade Mainer and Zeke Morris
The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Sarah Makem
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem

Steve Mann
Duck Baker

Roger Manning
Brenda Kahn

Nicholas Markey
Séamus Ennis

Bob Marley
Ben Harper
Marley's Ghost
Toshi Reagon

Vaughn Marley
Hollow Rock String Band

Beryl Marriott
Dave Swarbrick

Marshall Family
The Forbes Family

Benny Martin
Jason Carter

Jimmy Martin
Red Allen
J.D. Crowe
Doyle Lawson

The Osborne Brothers

Marcus Martin
Rafe Stefanini

Sara Martin
Dock Boggs

Martin & Lewis
Smothers Brothers

John Martyn
Stephen Fearing
Michael Hedges
Garnet Rogers
David Wilcox

Marcy Marxer
Bill Harley

Hugh Masakela
Tony Bird

Iain Matthews
Ebin-Rose

Curtis Mayfield
Ben Harper
Ted Hawkins

Curtis Mayfield & the Impressions
Van Morrison

Taylor McBaine
Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Mary McCabe
Séamus Ennis

Jim McCall
Union Springs

Paul McCartney
Peter & Gordon

Mary McCaslin
Kate MacLeod

"Haywire Mac" McClintock
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

Ewan McColl
Dick Gaughan
Bert Jansch

John McCutcheon
No Strings Attached
Jerry Read Smith

P.J. McDermott
Michael Coleman

Mississippi Fred McDowell
Ry Cooder
Stefan Grossman
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Washington Phillips
Bonnie Raitt

Red River Dave McEnery
The Greenbriar Boys

Reba McEntire
Elaine Purkey

John McEuen
Mark Johnson

Andy McGann
Irish Tradition
Ken Perlman

Kate & Anna McGarrigle
The Burns Sisters
The Roches

Dennis McGee
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
Amédée Ardoin
The Balfa Brothers
Balfa Toujours
Bayou Seco
Harry Choates
Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon
Canray Fontenot
Hackberry Ramblers
"Cheese" Read
Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Leo Soileau
Tasso
Eric & Suzy Thompson

Sam McGee
Frank Hutchison

Sam & Kirk McGee
Uncle Dave Macon

Brownie McGhee
Cephas & Wiggins
Artie Traum
Happy Traum
Dave Van Ronk

Frazer McGlen & His Scottish Country Dance Band
Dougie MacLean

Arty McGlynn
Robin Bullock

Sean McGlynn
Billy McComiskey
Trian

John McGreevy
Liz Carroll

Johnny McGreevy
Trian

Roger McGuinn
T-Bone Burnett
Rod MacDonald

Tom McHaile
Mary Bergin

Ellen McIlwaine
Les Sampou

Antoinette McKenna
Maire Ni Chathasaigh

John McKenna
De Danann
Frankie Gavin

Loreena McKennitt
Atwater-Donnelly

Clayton "Pappy" McMichen
Darby and Tarlton
Ed Haley

Clayton McMichen & His Georgia Wildcats
The Skillet Lickers

Ralph McTell
Andrew Calhoun

"Blind" Willie McTell
Roy Book Binder
Guy Davis
Paul Geremia
Leslie Riddle

Melanie
Catie Curtis

John Mellencamp
James McMurtry
Todd Snider

Jacob Melton
Russell Family

Raymond Melton
Russell Family

Memphis Jug Band
Lou and Peter Berryman

Memphis Minnie
Sue Foley
Mance Lipscomb
Judy Roderick
Rosetta Tharpe

Memphis/Muscle Shoals
Flying Burrito Brothers

D.L. Menard
Basin Brothers
David Doucet
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Metamora
Helicon

Richard Meyer
Hugh Blumenfeld

Walt Michael
Scott Jackson
No Strings Attached
Linda Thomas & Dan De-Lancey

Miko
Noel Hill

Betsy Miller
Ewan MacColl

Emmett Miller
Jesse Fuller
Leon Redbone

Rodney Miller
The American Cafe Orchestra

Roger Miller
Lou and Peter Berryman
Glen Campbell
Tom T. Hall
Bill Staines

Ross Miller
Hollow Rock String Band

Mills Brothers
Golden Gate Quartet

Gerry Milnes
Diane Jones and & King

Charles Mingus
Davey Graham
Bert Jansch
Joni Mitchell
Pentangle

The Miracles
The Band

Mississippi Sheiks
Jesse Fuller
Leon Redbone

Howie Mitchell
Bok, Muir & Trickett
Neal Hellman
Bill Spence

Joni Mitchell
Scott Appel
Joan Armatrading
Luka Bloom
Polly Bolton
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Rosanne Cash
Tracy Chapman
Lui Collins
Shawn Colvin
Rita Connolly
Iris DeMent
Sandy Denny
Ani DiFranco
disappear fear
Nick Drake
Ebin-Rose
David Folks
Julia Fordham
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
Annie Gallup
Margo Hennebach
Robin Holcomb
Rickie Lee Jones
Cindy Kallet
Lucy Kaplansky
Patty Larkin
Christine Lavin
Dougie MacLean
Mary McCaslin
Kate& Anna McGarrigle
Lynn Miles
Laura Nyro
Deb Pasternak
Gayla Drake Paul
David Rea
Toshi Reagon
Maria Sangiolo
Jane Siberry
Carly Simon
The Story
Suzanne Vega
Sloan Wainwright
Linda Waterfall
Paula Joy Welter
David Wilcox

Chad Mitchell Trio
Bright Morning Star
The Foremen
Schooner Fare

Tau Moe
Bob Brozman

Matt Molloy
Kevin Crawford
Chris Norman

Mick Moloney
Cherish the Ladies
Donal Lunny
The Mollys

Sean Moloney
Mike Casey

Bill Monroe
Red Allen
Bad Livers
Kenny Baker
Delia Bell and Bill Grant
Byron Berline
Bryan Bowers
Boys from Indiana
David Bromberg
Sam Bush
The Camp Creek Boys
Vassar Clements
The Country Gentlemen
The Cox Family
Flatt & Scruggs
Richard Greene
David Grisman
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Johnson Mountain Boys
Alison Krauss
Lonesome Standard Time
Mike Marshall
Jimmy Martin
The Del McCoury Band
Walt Michael
Muleskinner
Northern Lights
The Osborne Brothers
Peter Ostroushko
George Pegram
Todd Phillips
Psychograss
Don Reno & Red Smiley
Joseph "Butch" Robins
Peter Rowan
Salamander Crossing
Ricky Skaggs
Special Consensus
Ralph Stanley

The Stanley Brothers
Andy Statman
Stoney Lonesome
Chris Thile
Linda Thomas & Dan De-Lancey
Frank Wakefield
Chubby Wise

Bill Monroe & His Bluegrass Boys
The Dillards
Fiddle Fever
The Kentucky Colonels
The Laurel Canyon Ramblers

The Monroe Brothers
The Buckhannon Brothers
The Lilly Brothers
Cliff Perry & Laurel Bliss
Doc Watson

Patsy Montana
Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer
The Maddox Brothers & Rose

Wes Montgomery
Richard Thompson

Monty Python
The Foremen

Clyde Moody
Jim Eanes

Kermit Moody
Cathy Barton and Dave Para

Moody Blues
Amazing Blondel

Christy Moore
The Johnstons
Donal Lunny
The Mollys

Hamish Moore
Skyedance

James Morrison
De Danann
Frankie Gavin
Matt Molloy
Eugene O'Donnell

Van Morrison
Paul Brady
Steve Fisher
Marley's Ghost
Richard Thompson
The Waterboys

Bill Morrissey
Córmac McCarthy
Ellis Paul
Erica Wheeler

Jelly Roll Morton
Billy Novick
Leon Redbone

Motörhead
Bad Livers

Motown
Joni Mitchell

Mound City Blue Blowers
Sunshine Skiffle Band

Mouth Music
Mary Jane Lamond
Shooglenifty

Moving Hearts
Mad Pudding
Shooglenifty

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Joemy Wilson

Mr. Fox
Ashley Hutchings
Steeleye Span

Maria Muldaur
Prudence Johnson
Kate& Anna McGarrigle

Muleskinner
The All Girl Boys

Martin Mulhaire
Billy McComiskey

Brendan Mulkere
John Whelan

Ron Mullenex
Diane Jones and & King

Moon Mullican
Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen

Brendan Mulvihill
Eileen Ivers
Natalie MacMaster

Martin Mulvihill
Irish Tradition
Eileen Ivers

Elliott Murphey
Greg Kihn

Michael Martin Murphey
Don Edwards
Waddie Mitchell

Dennis Murphy & Julia Clifford
Jackie Daly

Joe Murtagh
Mark Simos

Musica Reservata
Baltimore Consort

Na h-Oganaich
Capercaillie

Nashville Bluegrass Band
Blue Highway

Holly Near
Ferron
Connie Kaldor
Judy Small
Cris Williamson

Eleanor Neary
Liz Carroll

Fred Neil
Crosby, Stills and Nash
Lovin' Spoonful

Rick Nelson
The Mamas & the Papas

Tracy Nelson
Katy Moffatt

Willie Nelson
Guy Clark
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Butch Hancock
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Ray Wylie Hubbard

Aaron Neville
Vance Gilbert

Neville Brothers
The subdudes

New Christy Minstrels
The Byrds
John Denver
Seals & Crofts

New Grass Revival
Acousticats
Sam Bush
Tim O'Brien
Maura O'Connell
Strength in Numbers

The New Lost City Ramblers
Any Old Time String Band
Mac Benford
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil
Bryan Bowers
Country Ham
The Double Decker String Band
Rhythm Rats
Strange Creek Singers

New Shades of Grass
The Seldom Scene

New York Dolls
Phranc

Mickey Newbury
Townes Van Zandt

Newgrass Revival
Joel Mabus

Jimmy C. Newman
Zachary Richard

Randy Newman
Vince Bell
T-Bone Burnett
Rickie Lee Jones
Lyle Lovett
Mac McAnally
James McMurtry
Harry Nilsson
David Olney
Trout Fishing in America
Tom Waits

Maire Ni Chatasaigh
Sue Richards

Roger Nicholson
Blowzabella

Robert Nighthawk
Luther Allison
Roy Rogers

John Jacob Niles
Rosalie Sorrels

Ken Nordine
Tom Waits

Cari Norris
Atwater-Donnelly

NY Pro Musica
Baltimore Consort

Laura Nyro
Karla Bonoff
Rickie Lee Jones
Laura Love
Lynn Miles
Carly Simon
Sloan Wainwright

Philip O'Beirne
Michael Coleman

Ann O'Brien
Déanta

Paddy O'Brien
Irish Tradition
John Whelan

Tim O'Brien
Judith Edelman

Tim & Mollie O'Brien
Hot Rize

Turlough O'Carolan
Patrick Ball
Trapezoid

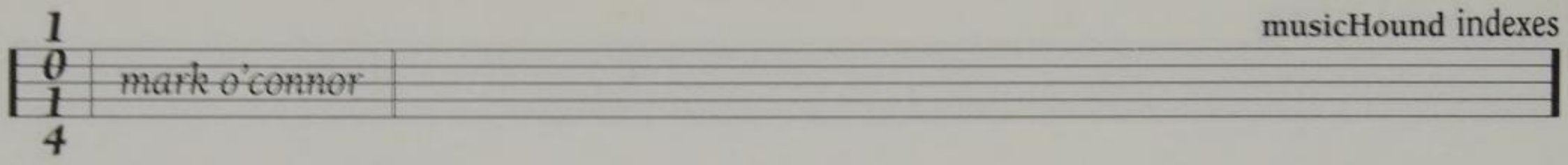
Rory Dall O'Cathain
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Phil Ochs
Eric Bogle
Jackson Browne
Harry Chapin
disappear fear
Anne Dodson
The Foremen
Tim Hardin
John Wesley Harding
Mary Hopkin
Brenda Kahn
Si Kahn
Charlie King
Rod MacDonald
Magpie
Fred Small

Maura O'Connell
Christine Collister
Prudence Johnson
Leslie Tucker
Susan Werner

Flannery O'Connor
Lucinda Williams

Mairtin O'Connor
Sharon Shannon



Mark O'Connor
Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla
Stuart Duncan
Steve Kaufman
Tammy Rogers

October Project
Sloan Wainwright

Lee O'Daniel & the Light Crust Doughboys
James Talley

Molly O'Day
Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper
Dry Branch Fire Squad
Jane Voss

Odetta
Joan Armatrading
Melanie
Bonnie Raitt
Bernice Johnson Reagon
Judy Small
Sweet Honey in the Rock

Eugene O'Donnell
Eileen Ivers

Padraig O'Keefe
Jackie Daly

Johnny O'Leary
Jackie Daly

Proinsias ó Maonaigh
Altan

Oisín
Dervish

Roy Orbison
Rosanne Cash
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Ted Hawkins
k.d. lang

Oregon
Scott Cossu

Sean O'Riada
Alan Stivell
Joemy Wilson

Cleofes Ortiz
Bayou Seco

Sonny Osborne
Joseph "Butch" Robins

Over the Rhine
Sloan Wainwright

Herman Overton
Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Buck Owens
Gibson Brothers Band
Emmylou Harris

Pace Jubilee Singers
Washington Phillips

Patti Page
Mary Hopkin

Gabby Pahinui
Keola Beamer
Sonny Chillingworth
Hui Ohana
Moses Kahumoku
George Kahumoku Jr.
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
Ray Kane
George Kuo
David Lindley
Hui Ohana
The Pahinui Brothers

Jim Paine
Stan Rogers

Zack Paine
Tommy Jarrell

Tom Paley
Tom Chapin

Charlie Parker
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Marianne Faithfull
Bela Fleck

Chet Parker
Sam Rizzetta

Graham Parker
Paul Kelly
Greg Kihn

Van Dyke Parks
T-Bone Burnett
Harry Nilsson

Alan Parson Project
Al Stewart

Gram Parsons
Richard Buckner
The Eagles
Five Chinese Brothers
Emmylou Harris
Willis Alan Ramsey
Tom Russell

David Schnaufer
Uncle Tupelo
Kevin Welch

Dolly Parton
Kate Jacobs
Alison Krauss
Maria Muldaur

Sandy & Caroline Paton
Sally Rogers

Charley Patton
Rory Block
Jesse Fuller
Son House
Skip James
Robert Johnson
Mississippi Fred McDowell
Tommy Peoples
Bukka White

Les Paul
Chet Atkins

Tom Paxton
Peter Alsop
Eric Bogle
John Denver
Anne Dodson
The Foremen
Bob Franke
Nanci Griffith
Jack Hardy
Ian & Sylvia
Si Kahn
Cindy Kallet
Charlie King
Joel Mabus
Peter, Paul & Mary
Raffi
Fred Small

Pearls Before Swine
Gideon Freudmann

Herb Pedersen
Mark Johnson

Penguin Cafe Orchestra
Gideon Freudmann

Pentangle
Polly Bolton
Clannad
Incredible String Band
Kentucky Standard Band
Susan McKeown & the Chanting House
The Oyster Band

People's International Silver String Band
Boiled in Lead

Matt Peoples
Tommy Peoples

Tommy Peoples
Altan
Sharon Shannon

Carl Perkins
Mark Germino
Butch Hancock
Leo Kottke

Pinetop Perkins
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Peter & Gordon
Iain Matthews

Peter, Paul & Mary
Bok, Muir & Trickett
David Buskin
Emily & Al Cantrell
Chad & Jeremy
Eddie from Ohio
Ian & Sylvia
Christine Lavin
Madeline MacNeil
David Mallett
Neal & Leandra
Rooftop Singers
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Sons of the Never Wrong
Paula Joy Welter

Tom Petty
Pete Droge

Bruce "Utah" Phillips
Jody Stecher & Kate Brislin
Kate Wolf

Wilson Pickett
The Chambers Brothers
Ted Hawkins

Pindar Family
Any Old Time String Band

Pioneers
David Lindley

Plank Road
The Chicken Chokers

Planxty
Altan
Arcady
The Bothy Band
Déanta
De Danann
Dervish
Connie Dover
Moving Hearts
Ossian
Patrick Street
Silly Wizard
Wolfstone

Poco
America
Loggins & Messina
Sweethearts of the Rodeo

The Pogues
Black 47
The Mollys

The Police
The Horseflies

Doc Pomus
Carole King

Charlie Poole
The Double Decker String Band
The Holy Modal Rounders
Bascom Lamar Lunsford
Leslie Riddle
Kirk Sutphin

Charlie Poole & the North Carolina Ramblers
The Charles River Valley Boys
Red Clay Ramblers

Cole Porter
Harry Nilsson

Dirk Powell
Will Keys

Bob Prater
Roger Cooper

Vicky Pratt-Keating
Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude

Elvis Presley
Hoyt Axton
Bob Dylan
Butch Hancock
Phil Ochs
Gram Parsons
Linda Ronstadt
Townes Van Zandt

Lee Monroe Presnell
Cordelia's Dad

The Pretenders
Brenda Kahn

Primitive Baptist Hymnal
Ginny Hawker & Kay Justice
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker

Christine Primrose
Capercaillie

John Prine
Vince Bell
Dan Bern
Chuck Brodsky
Greg Brown
T-Bone Burnett
Cowboy Junkies
Steve Fisher
Alaska's Hobo Jim
Kieran Kane
Mac McAnally
James McMurtry
David Olney
Kristina Olsen
Jennifer Warnes
Susan Werner

Maddy Prior
Connie Dover

Riley Puckett
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
Darby and Tarlton
John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw
The Double Decker String Band
Jimmie Rodgers

Fred Punahoa
Hui Ohana

Frank Quinn
Joe Derrane

R.E.M.
Vic Chesnutt
Crash Test Dummies
Indigo Girls
Eleanor McEvoy

Rafael Rabello
Steve Schneider

Gerry Rafferty
Julian Dawson

Mike Rafferty
Joanie Madden

Ma Rainey
Memphis Jug Band
Judy Roderick
Bessie Smith

Bonnie Raitt
Caroline Aiken
Mary Black
Catie Curtis
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
Keb' Mo'
Katy Moffatt
Les Sampou
The subdudes
Erica Wheeler
Lucinda Williams

Boo Boo Ramey
The Bing Brothers

The Ramones
Cordelia's Dad

Rank & File
Blood Oranges

The Rankin Family
The Barra MacNeils

Raspberries
Freedy Johnston

Byard Ray
Laura Boosinger

Wallace "Cheese" Read
Harry Choates
Magnolia Sisters
Eric & Suzy Thompson

Seymour Rechtzeit
Klezmer Conservatory Band

The Red Clay Ramblers
The Freight Hoppers
Debby McClatchy

Tampa Red
Ry Cooder
Memphis Jug Band

Otis Redding
The Chambers Brothers
Julian Dawson
Ted Hawkins

Jean Redpath
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

Henry Reed
Hollow Rock String Band
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole

Jimmy Reed
Grateful Dead
John Hammond Jr.
Albert King
John Pinamonti

Lou Reed
Cowboy Junkies
Brenda Kahn
Greg Kihn
Elliot Murphy

Ola Belle Reed
Ann and Phil Case
George Pegram

Goebel Reeves
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

Harvey Reid
Becky Blackley

Django Reinhardt
Glen Campbell
Walter Hyatt
B.B. King
Jon Sholle

Relativity
Nightnoise

John Renbourn
Carrie Crompton
Nick Drake
Carol McComb
Al Petteway
Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle
Brooks Williams

Don Reno
Tony Ellis
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Reno & Smiley
Peter Kessler & Gail Fratar

Malvina Reynolds
Peter Alsop
Lui Collins
Pete Seeger

Django Rheinhardt
Richard Thompson

Rice Brothers
Mark Johnson

Tony Rice
Beppe Gambetta
Chesapeake
David Grier
Mike Marshall
Peter McLaughlin
Karen Mueller

Don Rich
Gibson Brothers Band

Zachary Richard
Filé

Nansi Richards
Robin Huw Bowen

Kim Richey
Kate Wallace

Jonathan Richman
Cindy Lee Berryhill
Ed's Redeeming Qualities

Almeda Riddle
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil

Bonnie Rideout
Maggie Sansone

Riders of the Purple Sage
Spade Cooley

Steve Riley
Balfa Toujours

Paul Rishell
Les Sampou

Jean Ritchie
Atwater-Donnelly
Mitzie Collins
Shirley Collins
Lorraine (Lee) Hammond
Priscilla Herdman
Anne Hills
Kate MacLeod
Heidi Muller
Sandy & Caroline Paton
Sally Rogers
Kevin Roth
Claudia Schmidt
Peggy Seeger
Michelle Shocked
Rosalie Sorrels
Trapezoid
Susan Trump

The Ritchie Family
Jean Ritchie

Sam Rizzetta
Bob Shank

Marty Robbins
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Mary McCaslin
Ian Tyson

Doc Roberts
The Chicken Chokers
Buddy Thomas

Eck Robertson
Skip Gorman
The New Lost City Ramblers

Jeannie Robertson
Ewan MacColl
Jean Redpath
Sandy & Caroline Paton

Kim Robertson
Sue Richards

Lonnie Robertson
Fred Stoneking

Paul Robeson
Guy Carawan
Ronnie Gilbert
Bernice Johnson Reagon
Sweet Honey in the Rock

Carson Robison
Blind Alfred Reed
Roy Rogers

Carson Robison & the Pioneers
Sons of the Pioneers

The Roches
The Chenille Sisters
Electric Bonsai Band
Moxy Früvous
Sons of the Never Wrong

Martin Rochford
Kevin Burke
Kevin Crawford

Rockin' Dopsie
Chubby Carrier
Roy Carrier
C.J. Chenier
Zydeco Force

Rockin Sidney
Nathan & the Zydeco Cha Chas

Jerry Rockwell
Les & Gary Gallier

Jimmie Rodgers
Gene Autry
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
Big Bill Broonzy
Bill Carlisle
Wilf Carter
Johnny Cash
Jimmie Davis
The Delmore Brothers
Ed's Redeeming Qualities
The Flatlanders
Steve Forbert
Lefty Frizzell
Jesse Fuller
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Butch Hancock
Burl Ives
Grandpa Jones
Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Leon Redbone
Jim Ringer
Paul Siebel
Sons of the Pioneers
James Talley
Happy Traum
Ernest Tubb
Don Walser

Aunty Vickie I'i Rodrigues
Sonny Chillingworth

Aldus Roger
Basin Brothers
Sheryl Cormier
Paul Daigle
Bruce Daigrepont
Zachary Richard
Sundown Playboys

Gamble Rogers
Jimmy Buffett

Garnet Rogers
Stan Rogers

Roy Rogers
Michael Martin Murphey
Tex Ritter
Michael Smith

Stan Rogers
Andrew Calhoun
John Gorka
Priscilla Herdman
James Keelaghan
Grit Laskin
Mad Pudding
Cormac McCarthy
Eileen McGann
Lee Murdock
Garnet Rogers
Sally Rogers

The Rolling Stones
Ry Cooder
Five Chinese Brothers
Grateful Dead

Ronettes
Melanie

Linda Ronstadt
Kathy Chiavola
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
Tish Hinojosa
Claire Lynch
Maura O'Connell
Leslie Tucker

George Frederick Root
Rosamund Campbell

Diana Ross
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter

Peter Rowan
Northern Lights

Leo Rowsome
Liam O'Flynn

Michael Rugg
Neal Hellman

Junior Ruggles
Dave Bing
The Bing Brothers

Todd Rundgren
Tom Robinson Band

Runrig
Wolfstone

Otis Rush
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Buddy Guy

Tom Rush
David Buskin
Mike Cross

Mason Daring
Emmylou Harris
David Rea

Bonnie Russell
David Schnaufer

Kelly Russell
Stan Rogers

Robert Rutland
Robin Kessinger

Sacred Harp Hymnal
Cordelia's Dad

The Marquis de Sade
Patrick Sky

Mort Sahl
Smothers Brothers

Doug Sahm
Kinky Friedman

Buffey Sainte-Marie
Pete Morton

Phil Salazar Band
Acousticats

John Salyer
Bruce Greene
Bruce Molsky
Red Mountain White Trash

Magic Sam
Buddy Guy

Sam the Sham and the Pharoahs
David Lindley

Harvey Sampson
Frank George

Mary Wallin Sands
Doug & Jack Wallin

Sands Family
Tommy Sands

Maggie Sansone
Ceoltoiri

Erik Satie
Enya

Marc Savoy
Geno Delafose
Doris "D.L." Menard

Marc and Ann Savoy
Balfa Toujours

Savoy Doucet Cajun Band
Kristi Guillory
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Eric Von Schmidt
Chris Smither

David Schnaufer
Les & Gary Gallier
Kentucky Standard Band

Eric Schoenberg
Duck Baker

Marty Schuman
June Maugery

Abe Schwartz Orchestra
Klezmorim

Tracy Schwartz
Balfa Toujours
California Cajun Orchestra
Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys

Earl Scruggs
Tony Ellis
Bela Fleck
Carl Jackson
Tim Lake
Lonesome River Band
Alan Munde
Don Reno & Red Smiley
Joseph "Butch" Robins
Don Stover
Livingston Taylor

Seachtar
The Bothy Band

Seatrain
Richard Greene

Charles Seeger
Peggy Seeger

Mike Seeger
Becky Blackley
Bryan Bowers
Alan Mager
Carol McComb
Arnie Naiman & Chris Coole

Peggy Seeger
Adie Grey
Sally Rogers

Pete Seeger
Peter Alsop

Lou and Peter Berryman
Theodore "Theo" Bikel
Gordon Bok
Bok, Muir & Trickett
Oscar Brand
Bright Morning Star
Rachel Buchman
Guy Carawan
Harry Chapin
Tom Chapin
Jon Gailmor
Bob Gibson
Arlo Guthrie
Chris Hillman
Ella Jenkins
Si Kahn
Cindy Kallet
Charlie King
The Kingston Trio
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Grit Laskin
Larry Long
David Mallett
Don McLean
Michael Miles
Bill Morrissey
Holly Near
Fred Neil
The New Christy Minstrels
Odetta
Sandy & Caroline Paton
Tom Paxton
Peter, Paul & Mary
David Rea
Bernice Johnson Reagon
Stan Rogers
Tommy Sands
Helen Schneyer
Schooner Fare
Peggy Seeger
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Fred Small
Bill Staines
Sweet Honey in the Rock
Glenn Yarbrough

Ruth Crawford Seeger
Peggy Seeger

Bob Seger
Sweethearts of the Rodeo

Andres Segovia
Carrie Crompton
Mason Williams

The Seldom Scene
Chesapeake
Northern Lights
Salamander Crossing

Serendipity Singers
Gamble Rogers

Robert W. Service
Debby McClatchy

Sex Pistols
Mary Jane Lamond
Phranc

Jimmy Shand
Phil Cunningham

L. Shankar
Mark O'Connor

Ravi Shankar
The Byrds
Martin Carthy

Joe Shannon
Liz Carroll

Shape Note Singing
The Chestnut Grove Quartet

Cecil Sharp
Ashley Hutchings

Billy Joe Shaver
Kevin Welch

Colin Shaw
Lauchlin Shaw & A.C. Overton

Shegui
The House Band

Jean Shepherd
Garrison Keillor

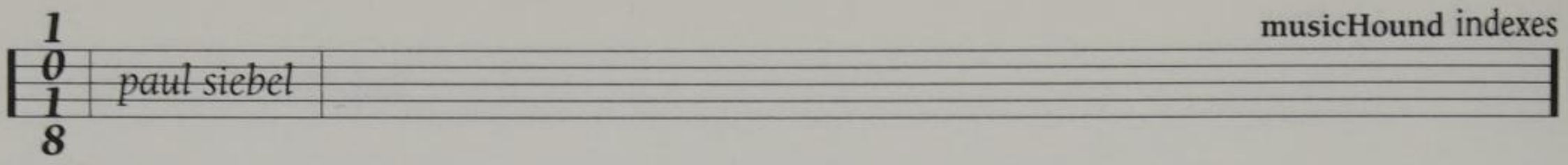
Richard Shindell
Michael McNevin

Shirelles
The Nylons

Michelle Shocked
Luka Bloom
Brenda Kahn

George Shuffler
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier
Larry Sparks

Mort Shuman
Carole King



Paul Siebel
Jack Hardy

Sileas
Ensemble Galilei
Sue Richards

Silly Wizard
Battlefield Band
Ceolbeg
Connie Dover
Mad Pudding
Nightnoise
Andy M. Stewart
Wolfstone

Shel Silverstein
Bob Gibson
Trout Fishing in America

Simmons Family
Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Paul Simon
Jim Croce
Mason Daring
Jackson C. Frank
Annie Gallup
Jack Hardy
James Keelaghan
Patty Larkin
Richard Meyer
Buddy Mondlock
Cat Stevens

Simon & Garfunkel
Indigo Girls
Loggins & Messina
Iain Matthews
The Nudes
The Roches
Jeanie Stahl
James Taylor

Nina Simone
Julia Fordham

Frank Sinatra
Tom Waits

Sisters of Mercy
Dead Can Dance

Sixteen Ninety-One
The Bothy Band

Ricky Skaggs
Chesapeake
Gibson Brothers Band
Union Springs

Skara Brae
Trian

Skillet Lickers
Mac Benford
Marvin Gaster
Piney Creek Weasels
Lonnie Robertson

The Skillet Lickers
The Freight Hoppers

Scott Skinner
Old Blind Dogs

Guitar Slim
Buddy Guy

Sly & the Family Stone
Laura Love

Luke Smathers
Laura Boosinger

Quay Smathers
Laura Boosinger

Arthur Smith
Owen "Snake" Chapman
Lyman Enloe

Bessie Smith
Blind Lemon Jefferson
Brenda Kahn
Maria Muldaur
Tracy Nelson
Judy Roderick
Jane Voss

Fiddlin' Arthur Smith
Benton Flippen
Tommy Jackson

Glenn Smith
Alan Freeman
Jake Krack

Huey "Piano" Smith
Dr. John
David Lindley

Mamie Smith
Blind Lemon Jefferson

Michael Smith
David Folks

Patti Smith
Cindy Lee Berryhill
Mary Margaret O'Hara
The Waterboys

Ralph Lee Smith
Madeline MacNeil

Smokey Valley Boys
Benton Flippen

The Smothers Brothers
The Foremen

Hank Snow
Stompin' Tom Connors
Paul Siebel

Kilby Snow
Mike Seeger

Phoebe Snow
Cheryl Wheeler

Leo Soileau
The Balfa Brothers
Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux Falcon
Hackberry Ramblers
"Cheese" Read

Sons of the Pioneers
Gene Autry
Emily & Al Cantrell

Sons of Hawaii
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
Patsy Montana
Ranch Romance
Riders in the Sky

Rosalee Sorrels
Kate Wolf

J.D. Souther
Kevin Welch

Otis Spann
Mose Allison

Larry Sparks
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier

Benny Spellman
Jimmy Buffett

Bill Spence
Cathy Barton and Dave Para
Mitzie Collins
Scott Jackson
Walt Michael
No Strings Attached
Steve Schneider

Joseph Spence
Brooks Williams

Davy Spillane
Tannahill Weavers

Spirit of the West
Mad Pudding

Carl Sprague
Skip Gorman
David Holt

Dusty Springfield
Melanie

Bruce Springsteen
Dan Bern
Black 47
Cowboy Junkies
Iris DeMent
Steve Earle
Cliff Eberhardt
Mark Germino
Patty Griffin
Greg Kihn
Fred Koller
James McMurtry
Ed Pettersen
Runrig
Todd Snider
The Waterboys

Squeeze
Freedy Johnston

Bill Staines
Mason Daring
Nanci Griffith
Mill Run Dulcimer Band

Art Stamper
Jason Carter
Will Keys

Hiram Stamper
Bruce Greene

Peter Stampfel
Michael Hurley

Carter Stanley
Larry Sparks

Ralph Stanley
Bad Livers
Dry Branch Fire Squad
Flatt & Scruggs
Marley's Ghost
Ricky Skaggs

The Stanley Brothers
Delia Bell and Bill Grant
Bill Clifton
The Country Gentlemen
Judith Edelman
Everly Brothers

Front Range
Dick Harrington & Victoria Young
Hazel & Alice
James King
Lonesome River Band
Longview
Stoney Lonesome
Gillian Welch

Lisa Stansfield
Julia Fordham

John Starling
Marley's Ghost

Statesmen
The Hee Haw Gospel Quartet

Andy Statman
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit

Red Steagall
Don Edwards
Waddie Mitchell

George Steele
Dave Bing

Steeleye Span
Robin and Barry Dransfield
Figgy Duff
Ashley Hutchings
Incredible String Band
Jerry Rockwell
Tamarack
The New St. George

Steely Dan
Rickie Lee Jones

Gertrude Stein
k.d. lang

Bunt Stephens
Rafe Stefanini

Cat Stevens
Jim Croce
Dougie MacLean
Carly Simon

BW Stevenson
Steve Fisher

Al Stewart
James Keelaghan
Buddy Mondlock

Alice Stewart
Julie Davis

Andy Stewart
Atwater-Donnelly
Ceolbeg

Belle Stewart
Ewan MacColl

Lucy Stewart
Andy M. Stewart

Wendy Stewart
Sue Richards

Stephen Stills
Dave Mason

Alan Stivell
Patrick Ball
Robin Huw Bowen
Sileas
Sylvia Woods

Frank Stokes
Memphis Minnie

Stone Poneys
Karla Bonoff

Ernest V. "Pop" Stoneman
Darby and Tarlton

Scotty Stoneman
Vassar Clements
Richard Greene

Stoney Lonesome
Kate MacKenzie

Carl Story
Delia Bell and Bill Grant

Don Stover
Mark Johnson

Evan Stover
Jay Ungar & Molly Mason

Norma Stover
Don Stover

Igor Stravinsky
Baltimore Consort
Leo Kottke

Stringbean
John Hartford

Stripling Brothers
Primitive Characters

Uncle Dave Sturgill
Piney Creek Weasels

The Stylistics
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter

Sugarbeat
Tony Furtado

Dan Sullivan's Shamrock Band
De Danann

Sundown Playboys
Sheryl Cormier
Aldus Roger

Loy Swaggert
Tina Bergmann

Dave Swarbrick
Sandy Denny

Sweeney's Men
The Bothy Band
Planxty

Sweet
Toshi Reagon

Sweethearts of the Rodeo
The Burns Sisters

June Tabor
Kate Rusby

Taj Mahal
Cephas & Wiggins
Ry Cooder
Ben Harper
Keb' Mo'

Talking Heads
Crash Test Dummies
Timbuk 3

Tampa Red
Bukka White

Jock Tamson's Bairns
Ossian

Tannahill Weavers
Battlefield Band
Runrig

Gid Tanner & His Skillet Lickers
Darby and Tarlton
Fiddle Fever
Earl Johnson
Sam & Kirk McGee

Tapezoid
No Strings Attached

Dave Tarras
The Klezmatics
Klezmorim
Andy Statman

Barry & Holly Tashian
Neal & Leandra

Art Tatum
Mose Allison

Cyril Tawney
Tom Lewis

Alex Taylor
Livingston Taylor

Buddy Taylor
Robert Wilkins

James Taylor
America
Jim Croce
Catie Curtis
John Denver
Steve Fisher
Dan Fogelberg
Michael Johnson
Dougie MacLean
Mac McAnally
Joni Mitchell
Buddy Mondlock
Raffi
Carly Simon
Livingston Taylor
Diane Zeigler

Koko Taylor
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Livingston Taylor
Greg Greenway

Willy Taylor
Kathryn Tickell

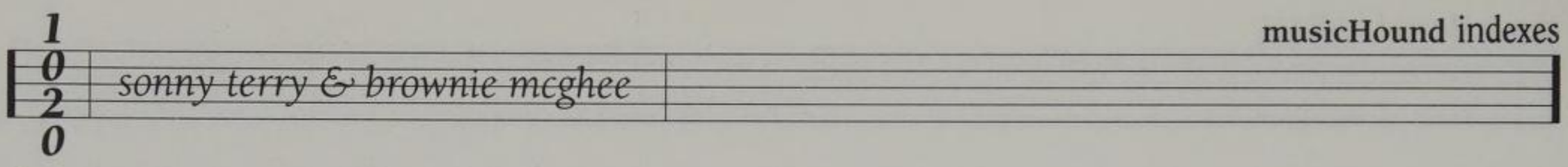
Julie Taymour
Malcolm Dalglish

Terry Teahan
Liz Carroll

Shirley Temple
Mary Hopkin

Tenneva Ramblers
Jimmie Rodgers

Alfred Lord Tennyson
Loreena McKennitt



Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
Cephas & Wiggins
Chic Street Man
Koerner, Ray & Glover
"Spider" John Koerner
Van Morrison

Them
Black 47

They Might Be Giants
Big Blow and the Bushwackers

Art Thieme
Scott Alarik
Joel Mabus
Sally Rogers

Buddy Thomas
Roger Cooper

Carla Thomas
Bernice Johnson Reagon

Hociel Thomas
Eric & Suzy Thompson

Irma Thomas
Jimmy Buffett

Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey
The Plaid Family

Benny Thomasson
Mark O'Connor

Hank Thompson
Ernest Tubb

Linda Thompson
Polly Bolton

Richard Thompson
Scott Appel
Dave Burland
Ebin-Rose
Judith Edelman
Stephen Fearing
David Folks
Clive Gregson
The Kennedys
Jez Lowe
Tom Prasada-Rao

Richard & Linda Thompson
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
Martin Simpson
Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle

Big Mama Thornton
Toshi Reagon
Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women

Willa Mae Thornton
Tracy Nelson

Mike Tickell
Kathryn Tickell

Floyd Tillman
Willie Nelson

Timbuk 3
Sons of the Never Wrong

Mark Tindle
Hollis Landrum

C.A. Tindley
Washington Phillips

Toots & the Maytals
Marley's Ghost

Touchstone
Nightnoise

Patsy Touhey
Séamus Ennis
Frankie Gavin
Skylark

Trapezoid
Tony Elman
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Freyda and Acoustic AttaTude
Helicon
Kentucky Standard Band
Ken Kolodner
John McCutcheon

Merle Travis
Chet Atkins
E.C. Ball and Orna Ball
Jesse Fuller
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Michael Nesmith
Gamble Rogers
Tom Russell
Frank Wakefield
Doc Watson

Ed Trickett
Sara Grey

Jimmy Triplett
Jake Krack

Tony Trischka
Alison Brown
Bela Fleck

Ernest Tubb
Lefty Frizzell
Jack Guthrie

Marshall Tucker
Brooks Williams

Jethro Tull
Nightnoise

Tulla Ceili Band
Martin Hayes
Mick Moloney

Big Joe Turner
Dave Alvin

Bill Turner
John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw

Dr. John Turner
Bonnie Rideout

Gil "Jellyroll" Turner
Kate Wolf

Ike & Tina Turner
Bernice Johnson Reagon

Karen Tweed
Sharon Shannon

Two Nice Girls
Phranc

T. Texas Tyler
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips

Ian Tyson
David Rea
Tamarack

Sylvia Tyson
Anne Hills
Connie Kaldor

Lao Tzu
Loreena McKennitt

U2
The Devlins
Hothouse Flowers

Ukulele Ike
The Cheap Suit Serenaders

Undertones
The Saw Doctors

Paul Van Arsdale
Mitzie Collins
Dan Duggan
John McCutcheon
Bob Shank

Sterl Van Arsdale
Dan Duggan

George Van Eps
Guy Van Duser

Dave Van Ronk
Annie Gallup
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Brenda Kahn
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Christine Lavin
Peter, Paul & Mary
David Rea
Paul Siebel

Townes Van Zandt
Vince Bell
Guy Clark
Cowboy Junkies
Steve Earle
Jason Eklund
Ray Wylie Hubbard
Robert Earl Keen Jr.
Jimmy LaFave
Lyle Lovett
David Olney
John Pinamonti
Richard Shindell
Eric Taylor
Jerry Jeff Walker
Gillian Welch

Edgar Varese
Michael Hedges

Sarah Vaughan
Judy Austin
Lisa Moscatiello

Suzanne Vega
Luka Bloom
Shawn Colvin
Lucy Kaplansky
Barbara Kessler

Jean-Michel Veillon
Mike Casey

Velvet Underground
Elliot Murphy
Jonathan Richman

Ventures
David Lindley
Phranc
Jonathan Richman

Vern & Ray
Good Ol' Persons

The Violent Femmes
Richard Buckner

Vivaldi
Bare Necessities

Eric Von Schmidt
Greg Kihn
Tom Rush

Loudon Wainwright III
Dan Bern
Christine Lavin

Tom Waits
Dan Bern
Lou and Peter Berryman
Greg Brown
Shawn Colvin
Fred Koller
Peter Mulvey
Suzanne Vega

Frank Wakefield
David Grisman

Jimmy Wakely
Spade Cooley

Charlie Walden
Geoff Seitz

Wendy Waldman
Karla Bonoff

Jerry Jeff Walker
Jimmy Buffett
Guy Clark
Jonathan Edwards
Ray Wylie Hubbard
Michael Martin Murphey

Lawrence Walker
The Balfa Brothers
Balfa Toujours
Basin Brothers
Paul Daigle
Aldus Roger
Tracy Schwarz
Jo-El Sonnier
Sundown Playboys

T-Bone Walker
Michael Bloomfield
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Albert Collins
Buddy Guy
Albert King
B.B. King
Jon Sholle

Willie Walker
The Rev. Gary Davis
John Jackson

Gusty Wallace
Bruce Greene

Sippie Wallace
Bonnie Raitt

Fats Waller
Larry Johnson
Red Clay Ramblers
Jeanie Stahl

Berzilla Wallin
Doug & Jack Wallin

Lee Wallin
Doug & Jack Wallin

Little Walter
James Cotton

Bob Walters
Geoff Seitz

Fields and Wade Ward
Paul Brown

Kenneth Ward
Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

Patrick Ward
Séamus Ennis

Warrior River Boys
Johnson Mountain Boys

Washboard Sam
Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band

Isidore "Tuts" Washington
Dr. John

Waterboys
Hothouse Flowers
Peter Mulvey
The Saw Doctors

Linda Waterfall
Heidi Muller

Muddy Waters
Mose Allison
Michael Bloomfield
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
James Cotton
Buddy Guy
Richie Havens
Bob Margolin
Van Morrison
Bonnie Raitt
Timbuk 3

Lal Waterson
June Tabor

The Watersons
Eliza Carthy
Martin Carthy
Robin and Barry Dransfield
Fairport Convention
Jez Lowe
John Roberts & Tony Barrand
Kate Rusby
Steeleye Span
The Voice Squad

Doc Watson
Russ Barenberg
Norman Blake
Dan Crary
Mike Cross
Mike Fenton
Beppe Gambetta
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Wayne Henderson
Kathy Kallick
Steve Kaufman
The Kentucky Colonels
Koerner, Ray & Glover
Joel Mabus
Peter McLaughlin
Richard Meyer
Tony Rice
Gamble Rogers
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier
Linda Thomas & Dan DeLancey
Guy Van Duser

Doc & Merle Watson
Smith Sisters

Merle Watson
Tony Rice

Alan Watts
Jimmie Dale Gilmore

Curley Weaver
Blind Willie McTell

The Weavers
Bright Morning Star
The Brothers Four
The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem
Bruce Cockburn
Bob Dylan
David Folks
Nanci Griffith
Chris Hillman
The Kingston Trio
The Limeliters
Laura Love
Lovin' Spoonful
The Mamas & the Papas
Lee Murdock
The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Peter, Paul & Mary
Schooner Fare
Paul Simon
Simon & Garfunkel
Smothers Brothers

Jimmy Webb
Vic Chesnutt
Freedy Johnston
Iain Matthews

Casey B. Weldon
Memphis Minnie

Junior Wells
Buddy Guy

Kitty Wells
Iris DeMent
Carolyn Hester
Jane Voss

Pete Wernick
Hot Rize

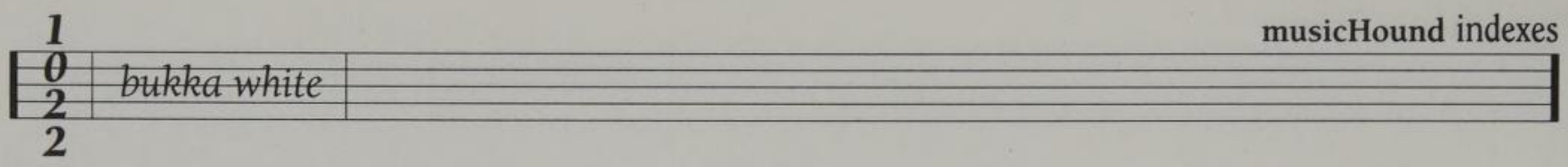
Hedy West
Sara Grey

Cheryl Wheeler
Four Bitchin' Babes
Cosy Sheridan

Jim Wheeler
Dave Bing
The Bing Brothers

Whistlebinkies
Silly Wizard

Whistler Jug Band
Memphis Jug Band



Bukka White
Mike Cross
Jesse Fuller

Clarence White
Dan Crary
Beppe Gambetta
David Grier
Peter McLaughlin
Scott Nygaard
Tony Rice
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier
Eric & Suzy Thompson

Jim White
Dock Boggs

Josh White
Steve Goodman
Davey Graham
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
Josh White Jr.

Whites
The Burns Sisters

Slim Whitman
Don Walser

Who
The Nields
Tom Robinson Band

The Wilburn Brothers
The Brother Boys

David Wilcox
Greg Greenway
Pierce Pettis

Wild Asparagus
The American Cafe Orchestra

Wild Tchoupitoulas
The subdudes

George Wilkerson
Tommy Jackson

Robert Wilkins
Memphis Minnie

Bert Williams
Paul Robeson

Big Joe Williams
Koerner, Ray & Glover

Don Williams
Pat Alger

Hank Williams
Terry Allen
Dave Alvin
Eric Andersen
Leonard Cohen
Cowboy Junkies
Bob Dylan
The Eagles
Joe Ely
The Flatlanders
Flying Burrito Brothers
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Steve Goodman
Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
Chris Hillman
Alaska's Hobo Jim
Michael Jerling
George Jones
Kris Kristofferson
John D. Loudermilk
Marley's Ghost
Doris "D.L." Menard
Roger Miller
Bill Morrissey
Harry Nilsson
Gram Parsons
John Prine
Cathie Ryan
Paul Siebel
Rosalie Sorrels
James Talley
Townes Van Zandt
Don Williams
Steve Young

Victoria Williams
Annie Gallup

Cris Williamson
Ferron

John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson
James Cotton
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
Van Morrison

Sonny Boy Williamson II
Mose Allison

Bob Wills
Asleep at the Wheel
Tina Louise Barr
Milton Brown and the Musical Brownies
Harry Choates
Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen
Steve Goodman
Alaska's Hobo Jim
Walter Hyatt
Marley's Ghost
Roger Miller

Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys
Acousticats
Fiddle Fever
Kinky Friedman
James Talley
Don Walser

Jackie Wilson
Van Morrison

Mari Wilson
Julia Fordham

Teddy Wilson
Guy Van Duser

Willie Wilson
Son House

Jesse Winchester
Marley's Ghost

Melvin Wine
Jake Krack
Rhythm Rats

Mary Wings
Robin Flower

Neil Winston
Mississippi Sheiks

Paul Winter
Scott Cossu
Pete Seeger

"Chubby" Wise
Jason Carter
Stuart Duncan

Mac Wiseman
The Cox Family
Flatt & Scruggs
Gibson Brothers Band

Silly Wizard
Old Blind Dogs

Howlin' Wolf
Taj Mahal

Kate Wolf
Acousticats
Kat Eggleston
Kimberly M'Carver
Leslie Tucker

Hally Wood
Sandy & Caroline Paton

Sylvia Woods
Robin Williamson

The Woodstock Mountain Revue
Fiddle Fever

Sheb Wooley
Roger Miller

XIT
Bill Miller

X-Ray Spex
Brenda Kahn

XTC
Crash Test Dummies
Freedy Johnston

Yankee Ingenuity
The American Cafe Orchestra

Grainne Yeats
Maire Ni Chathasaigh

William Butler Yeats
Carly Simon

Yellow Magic Orchestra
David Lindley

Dwight Yoakam
Richard Buckner
Connie Dover

Neil Young
Pete Droge
Fred Eaglesmith
Stephen Fearing
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
Ben Harper
Bill Miller
Tamarack
Uncle Tupelo

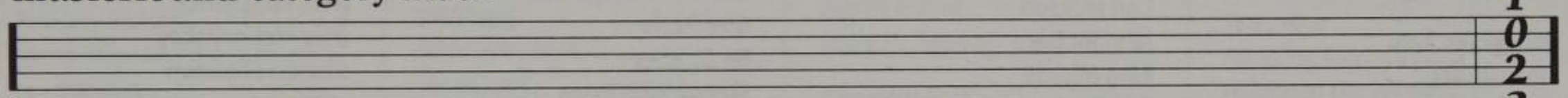
Young Olympia Brass Band
The ReBirth Brass Band

Young Tradition
Shirley Collins
Steeleye Span
The Watersons

Frank Zappa
Austin Lounge Lizards
The Foremen
Psychograss

Roxanne Ziegler
Mitzie Collins

musicHound category index



The Category Index represents an array of categories put together to suggest some of the many groupings under which folk music and folk acts can be classified. The Hound welcomes your additions to the existing categories in this index and also invites you to send in your own funny, sarcastic, prolific, poignant, or exciting ideas for brand new categories.

A Cappella
The Nylons
Voice Squad

All Dry
Bayou Seco

All Wet
Atwater-Donnelly
Dock Boggs
Tim Lake
Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Salamander Crossing
Waterboys/Mike Scott
Muddy Waters
Watersons
Kitty Wells

All in the Family
Amidons
Basin Brothers
Bing Brothers
Black Family
Blue Sky Boys
Brothers Four
Buckhannon Brothers
Burns Sisters
Carter Family
Chenille Sisters
Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem
Copper Family
Cox Family
Delmore Brothers
Dillards
Everly Brothers
Five Chinese Brothers
Forbes Family
Gibson Brothers
Jim and Jesse
Grandpa Jones
Lewis Family
Lilly Brothers
Louvin Brothers
Maddox Brothers and Rose
Magnolia Sisters
Mamas and the Papas
Kate and Anna McGarrigle
The Nields
Osborne Brothers
Pahinui Brothers
Plaid Family
Rankin Family
Russell Family
Smith Sisters
Sons of the Never Wrong
Sons of the Pioneers
Stanley Brothers
Staple Singers/Pop Staples
Whitstein Brothers

And Now for Something Completely Different
Brave Combo
Cheap Suit Serenaders
Gideon Freudman
Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks
Jim Jugband Kweskin
Waddie Mitchell
Sunshine Skiffle Band

And Very Funny
Les Barker
Lou and Peter Berryman
Mike Cross
Four Bitchin' Babes
Kinky Friedman
Holy Modal Rounders
Michael Hurley
Garrison Keillor
Christine Lavin
Shel Silverstein
Smothers Brothers
Cheryl Wheeler

Aptly Named
David Buskin
David Folks

At Sea
Hesperus
Schooner Fare

Autoharp
Judy Austin
Tina Louise Barr
Becky Blackley
Bryan Bowers
Tom Chapin
Bill Clifton
Julie Davis
Mike Fenton
Les Gustafson-Zook
Alan Mager
June Maugery
Karen Mueller
Harvey Reid
Ernest "Pop" Stoneman

Bathroom Fixtures
Basin Brothers
Dr. John
Canray Fontenot
Ernest Tubb

Bible-Toting Viennese Psychiatrists
Gideon Freudman

Blasts from the Past
Eric Andersen
Joan Baez
Harry Belafonte
Theo Bikel
Brothers Four
John Denver
Tim Hardin
Richie Havens
Carolyn Hester
Holy Modal Rounders
Kingston Trio
Limeliters/Glen Yarbrough
Mamas and the Papas
Melanie

Chad Mitchell Trio
Fred Neil
New Christy Minstrels
Peter and Gordon
Paul Robeson
Judy Roderick
Rooftop Singers
Seals and Crofts
Patrick Sky
Smothers Brothers
Cat Stevens
Glen Yarbrough

Bluegrass Acts
Acousticats
All Girl Boys
Blue Highway
Bluegrass Cardinals
Boone Creek
Boys from Indiana
Charles River Valley Boys
Chesapeake
Country Gentlemen
Dillards
Dry Branch Fire Squad
Flatt and Scruggs
Front Range
Gibson Brothers
Good Old Persons
Greenbriar Boys
Hot Rize
Jim and Jesse
Johnson Mountain Boys
Kentucky Colonels
Alison Krauss
Laurel Canyon Ramblers/Herb Pederson
Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver
Laurie Lewis
Lewis Family
Lilly Brothers
Lonesome River Band
Lonesome Standard Time
Longview
Jimmy Martin
Del McCoury
Bill Monroe
Lynn Morris/The Lynn Morris Band
Muleskinner
Nashville Bluegrass Band
New Grass Revival
Northern Lights
Osborne Brothers
Psychograss
Don Reno and Red Smiley
Salamander Crossing
Seldom Scene
Special Consensus
Stanley Brothers
Stoney Lonesome
Union Springs
The Whites

Bluegrass Banjo Players
Alison Brown
J.D. Crowe
Béla Fleck
Tony Furtado
Carl Jackson
John McEuen
Alan Munde
Don Reno and Red Smiley
Butch Robins
Don Stover
Tony Trischka

Bluegrass Fiddlers
Kenny Baker
Byron Berline
Luke Bulla and Jenny Anne
Jason Carter
Vassar Clements
Stuart Duncan
Richard Greene
Tommy Jackson
Alison Krauss
Laurie Lewis
Tim O'Brien
Mark O'Connor
Chubby Wise

Bluegrass Patriarchs
Flatt and Scruggs
Jimmy Martin
Bill Monroe
Ralph Stanley

Bluegrass Vocalists
Harley "Red" Allen
Bill Clifton
Jim Eanes
James King
Jimmy Martin
Bill Monroe
Tim O'Brien
Peter Rowan
Larry Sparks
Ralph Stanley
Mac Wiseman

Blues Legends
Luther Allison
Mose Allison
Pink Anderson
Blind Blake
Rory Block
Michael Bloomfield
Roy Book Binder
Big Bill Broonzy
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
John Cephas and Phil Wiggins
Eric Clapton
Albert Collins
Ry Cooder
James Cotton
Reverend Gary Davis
Guy Davis
Bo Diddley
Sleepy John Estes
Sue Foley
Jesse Fuller
Buddy Guy
John Hammond
Ted Hawkins
John Lee Hooker
Lightnin' Hopkins
Hot Tuna
Son House
Mississippi John Hurt
John Jackson
Skip James
Blind Lemon Jefferson
Blind Willie Johnson
Larry Johnson
Robert Johnson
Albert King
B.B. King
Ray and Glover Koerner
Leadbelly
Furry Lewis
Mance Lipscomb
Taj Mahal
Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin
Fred McDowell
Blind Willie McTell
Memphis Minnie
Mississippi Sheiks
Charley Patton
Roy Rogers
Bessie Smith
Joseph Spence
Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee
Henry Thomas
Muddy Waters
Bukka White
Josh White
Robert Wilkins

Body Parts
Figgy Duff
Adrian Legg
Gordon Lightfoot
Mouth Music
Moving Hearts
Rick Thum

Bouzouki
Andy Irvine

Box Players
Jackie Daly
Joe Derrane
John Kirkpatrick
Billy McComiskey
Sharon Shannon

The Buck Stops Here
Rachel Buchman
Buckhannon Brothers
Jeff Buckley
Richard Buckner
Johnny Cash
Rosanne Cash
Jez Lowe/The Bad Pennies
Phranc

Cajun/Zydeco
Nathan Abshire
Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
Amédée Ardoin
Chris Ardoin
Lynn August
Balfa Brothers
Balfa Toujours
Basin Brothers
Beausoleil
Buckwheat Zydeco
California Cajun Orchestra
Chubby Carrier
Roy Carrier
Boozoo Chavis
C.J. Chenier
Clifton Chenier
Harry Choates
Sheryl Cormier
Paul Daigle
Bruce Daigrepont
Geno Delafose
John Delafose
Rockin' Dopsie
David Doucet
Joe Falcon and Cleoma Breaux
Filé
Canray Fontenot
Keith Frank
Kristi Guillory
Hackberry Ramblers
Beau Jocque

Doug Kershaw
Eddie LeJeune
Iry LeJeune
Magnolia Sisters
Dennis McGee
D.L. Menard
Nathan and the Zydeco Cha Chas
Jimmy C. Newman
Willis Prudhomme
Queen Ida
Wallace Cheese Read
Zachary Richard
Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys
Aldus Roger
Mark Savoy/Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band
Tracy Schwarz/Tracy Schwarz Cajun Trio
Rockin' Sidney
Leo Soileau
Jo-El Sonnier
Sundown Playboys
Tasso
Horace Trahan
Lawrence Walker
Zydeco Force

Celtic Bands
Altan
Arcady
Barra MacNeils
Battlefield Band
Black Family
Bothy Band
Boys of the Lough
Capercaillie
Ceolbeg
Ceoltoiri
Cherish the Ladies
Chieftains
Clannad
De Dannan
Déanta
Dervish
Dubliners
Figgy Duff
Helicon
House Band
Irish Rovers
Irish Tradition
Johnstons
Moving Hearts
New St. George
Nightnoise
Ossian
Patrick Street
Planxty
The Pogues
Rankin Family
Runrig
Shooglenifty
Silly Wizard
Skyedance
Skylark
Solas
Tannahill Weavers
Trian
Whirligig
Whistlebinkies
Wolfstone

Celtic Banjo Players
Mick Moloney

Celtic Fiddlers
Jenny Allinder
Kevin Burke
Liz Carroll
Michael Coleman
John Cunningham
Alasdair Fraser
Frankie Gavin
Martin Hayes
Jerry Holland
Eileen Ivers
Ashley MacIsaac
Buddy MacMaster
Natalie MacMaster
Eugene O'Donnell
Tommy Peoples
Bonnie Rideout

Celtic Harp
Patrick Ball
Derek Bell
Robert Huw Bowen
Ceoltoiri
Alison Kinnaird
Magical Strings
Mary O'Hara
Sue Richards
Kim Robertson
Sileas
Alan Stivell
Carol Thompson
Robin Williamson
Sylvia Woods

Celtic Pipers
Liam O'Flynn
Kathryn Tickell

Celtic Songbirds
Mary Black
Rita Connolly
Connie Dover
Enya
Dolores Keane
Eleanor McEvoy
Loreena McKennitt
Lisa Moscatiello
Maire Ni Chathasigh
Maura O'Connell
Jean Redpath

Celtic Troubadors
Archie Fisher
Andy M. Stewart

Chamber Folk
Amazing Blondel
Pentangle

Checkmate
Joni Bishop
Albert King
B.B. King
Carole King
Charlie King
James King
Queen Ida

Colorful
Harley "Red" Allen
Amazing Blondel
Pink Anderson
Mary Black
Black Family
Black 47
Becky Blackley
Blood Oranges
Blue Highway
Blue Sky Boys
Bluegrass Cardinals
Alison Brown
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Greg Brown
Herschel Brown
Milton Brown
Paul Brown
Jackson Browne
Golden Gate Quartet
Greenbriar Boys
Bruce Greene
Richard Greene
Greg Greenway
Adie Grey
Sara Grey
Indigo Girls
Red Foley
Blind Lemon Jefferson
Limeliters/Glen Yarbrough
Plaid Family
Red Clay Ramblers
Red Mountain White Trash
Leon Redbone
Otis Redding
Jean Redpath

Contra Bands
American Cafe Orchestra
Bare Necessities

Country Crossovers
Pat Alger
Terry Allen
Amazing Rhythm Aces
Asleep at the Wheel
Chet Atkins
Austin Lounge Lizards
Hoyt Axton
Delia Bell and Bill Grant
Joni Bishop
Blasters
Brother Boys
Glen Campbell
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Rosanne Cash
Vic Chesnutt
Kathy Chiavola
Cindy Church
Guy Clark
Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen
Stompin' Tom Connors
Iris DeMent
Steve Earle
Joe Ely
Flatlanders
Rosie Flores
Flying Burrito Brothers
Kinky Friedman
Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Vern Gosdin
Tom T. Hall
Butch Hancock
John Wesley Harding
Emmylou Harris
Chris Hillman/Desert Rose Band
Tish Hinojosa
Hobo Jim
Ray Wylie Hubbard
George Jones
Kieran Kane
Robert Earl Keen
Fred Koller
Kris Kristofferson
John D. Loudermilk
Lyle Lovett

Kathy Mattea
James McMurtry
Buddy Miller
Roger Miller
Michael Martin Murphy
Willie Nelson
Gram Parsons
Ed Pettersen
Ricky Skaggs
James Talley
Ian Tyson
Don Williams
Steve Young

Country Legends
Roy Acuff
Gene Autry
Blue Sky Boys
Milton Brown
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle
Wilf Carter/Montana Slim
Carter Family
Johnny Cash
Chuck Wagon Gang
Spade Cooley
Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper
Darby and Tarlton
Jimmie Davis
Delmore Brothers
John "Seven Foot Dilly" Dilleshaw
Red Foley
Lefty Frizzell
Homer and Jethro
Hoosier Hot Shots
Frank Hutchison
Johnnie and Jack
Grandpa Jones
Louvin Brothers
Uncle Dave Macon
Maddox Brothers and Rose
Sam and Kirk McGee
Emmitt Miller
Patsy Montana
Molly O'Day
Charlie Poole
Riley Puckett
Tex Ritter
Carson Robison and His Pioneers
Jimmie Rodgers
Sons of the Pioneers
Stringbean, a.k.a. David Akeman
Merle Travis
Ernest Tubb
Kitty Wells
Hank Williams
Bob Wills

Denominational
Joni Bishop
Frank Christian
Cindy Church
Mike Cross
Marianne Faithfull
Holy Modal Rounders
Gram Parsons
Buffy Sainte-Marie

Didgeridoo
Big Blow and the Bushwhackers

Divas
Polly Bolton
Tracy Chapman
Judy Collins
Marianne Faithfull
Ronnie Gilbert
Emmylou Harris
Kathy Mattea
Maria Muldaur
Holly Near
Tracy Nelson
Helen Schneyer
Rosalie Sorrels
Jennifer Warnes

Dobro
Jerry Douglas
Sally Van Meter

Duos
Atwater-Donnelly
E.C. and Orna Ball
Cathy Barton and Dave Para
Delia Bell and Bill Grant
Lou and Peter Berryman
Norman and Nancy Blake
Blue Sky Boys
Bob Bovee and Gail Heil
Brother Boys
Buckhannon Brothers
Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla
Emily and Al Cantrell
Bill Carlisle/Cliff Carlisle
Ann and Phil Case
Chad & Jeremy
Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper
Josh Crowe & David McLaughlin
Darby and Tarlton
Delmore Brothers
disappear fear
Barry Dransfield/Robin Dransfield
Joe Falcon and Cleoma Breaux
Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer
Amy Fradon and Leslie Ritter
J.P. and Annadeene Fraley
Gary and Les Gallier
Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen
Clive Gregson and Christine Collister
Dick Harrington and Victoria Young
Ginny Hawker and Kay Justice
Hazel and Alice
Bill and Bonnie Hearne
Homer and Jethro
Ian & Sylvia
Johnnie and Jack
Carol Elizabeth Jones and James Leva
Diane Jones and Hubie King
Pete and Maura Kennedy
Peter Kessler and Gail Fratar
La Lugh
Lorraine Lee and Bennett Hammond
Leftwich and Higginbotham
Loggins and Messina
Louvin Brothers
Magpie
Kate and Anna McGarrigle
Sam and Kirk McGee
Mouth Music
Arnie Naiman and Chris Coole
Neal and Leandra
Sandy and Caroline Paton
Cliff Perry and Laurel Bliss
Peter and Gordon
Jim Ringer and Mary McCaslin
John Roberts and Tony Barrand
Kate Rusby and Kathryn Roberts
Tracy Schwarz & Ginny Hawker
Seals and Crofts
Smith Sisters
Smothers Brothers
Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin
The Story
Barry and Holly Tashian
Eric and Suzy Thompson
Steve Tilston and Maggie Boyle
Jay Ungar and Molly Mason
Whitstein Brothers
Robin and Linda Williams

Early Music
Baltimore Consort
Ensemble Galilei
Hesperus

English Fiddlers
Eliza Carthy
Dave Swarbrick

English Traditional Vocalists
Frankie Armstrong
Anne Briggs
Dave Burland
Martin Carthy
Shirley Collins
Copper Family
A.L. Lloyd
Ewan MacColl
June Tabor
Watersons
Young Tradition

Feel the Heat
Boiled Buzzards
Boiled in Lead
Oscar Brand
Dry Branch Fire Squad
Lightnin' Hopkins
Hot Rize
Hot Tuna
Hothouse Flowers
Larry Sparks
Don Stover

Flora
Luka Bloom
Michael Bloomfield
Hugh Blumenfeld
Bryan Bowers
Sam Bush
Vic Chesnutt
Ebin-Rose
Rosie Flores
Robin Flower
Michael Hedges
Hothouse Flowers
The Leaves
Lilly Brothers
Magnolia Sisters
Holly Near
New Grass Revival
Phil Ochs
Sylvia Woods

Flute
Kevin Locke
Matt Molloy

Chris Norman

Folk Legends
Joan Baez
Harry Belafonte
Theo Bikel
Oscar Brand
Brothers Four
Judy Collins
John Denver
Lonnie Donegan
Donovan
Bob Dylan
Rambling Jack Elliott
Four Preps
Art Garfunkel
Bob Gibson
Ronnie Gilbert
Steve Goodman
Arlo Guthrie
Woody Guthrie
Cisco Houston
Ian & Sylvia
Burl Ives
Kingston Trio
Gordon Lightfoot
Limeliters/Glen Yarbrough
Joni Mitchell
Phil Ochs
Odetta
Tom Paxton
Peter, Paul and Mary
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Tom Rush
Buffy Sainte-Marie
Pete Seeger
Simon and Garfunkel
Dave Van Ronk
Glen Yarbrough

Folk Rock
America
Joan Armatrading
Artisan
Blood Oranges
Luka Bloom
Blowzabella
Boiled in Lead
Polly Bolton
Billy Bragg
Tim Buckley
The Byrds
Chad & Jeremy
Christine Collister
Shawn Colvin
Crash Test Dummies
Dead Can Dance
Sandy Denny
Fairport Convention
Marianne Faithfull
Jackson C. Frank
Clive Gregson
Hothouse Flowers
Incredible String Band
Indigo Girls
Laura Love
Jez Lowe/The Bad Pennies
The Mollys
Mr. Fox/Bob Pegg
Oyster Band
Steeleye Span
Syd Straw
Waterboys/Mike Scott

Food for Thought
Scott Appel
Cindy Lee Berryhill
Lou and Peter Berryman
Buckwheat Zydeco
Jimmy Buffett
T-Bone Burnett
Paul Butterfield Blues Band
Chuck Wagon Gang
Country Ham
Country Joe and the Fish
Figgy Duff
Filé
Flying Burrito Brothers
Free Hot Lunch
Hackberry Ramblers
Hot Rize
Hot Tuna
Blind Lemon Jefferson
Wallace Cheese Read
Tony Rice
Stringbean, a.k.a. David Akeman
Sweet Honey in the Rock

Gospel Greats
E.C. and Orna Ball
Chestnut Grove Quartet
Chuck Wagon Gang
Fairfield Four
Forbes Family
Golden Gate Quartet
Hee Haw Gospel Quartet
Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver
Lewis Family
Washington Phillips
Staple Singers/Pop Staples
Sweet Honey in the Rock
Sister Rosetta Tharpe
IIIrd Tyme Out

Guitar Wizards
Scott Appel
Chet Atkins
Duck Baker
Etta Baker
Russ Barenberg
Pierre Bensusan
Norman Blake
Blind Blake
Rory Block
Michael Bloomfield
Roy Book Binder
David Bromberg
Big Bill Broonzy
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
Bob Brozman
John Cephas and Phil Wiggins
Eric Clapton
Albert Collins
Ry Cooder
Elizabeth Cotten
Dan Crary
Guy Davis
Reverend Gary Davis
Bo Diddley
Nick Drake
John Fahey
Sue Foley
Beppe Gambetta
Dick Gaughan
Paul Geremia
Davey Graham
David Grier
Stefan Grossman
John Hammond
Michael Hedges
Wayne Henderson
John Lee Hooker
Lightnin' Hopkins
Hot Tuna
Son House
Mississippi John Hurt
John Jackson
Skip James
Bert Jansch
Blind Lemon Jefferson
John Jennings
Blind Willie Johnson
Larry Johnson
Robert Johnson
Steve Kaufman
Pete Kennedy
Robin Kessinger
Albert King
B.B. King
Leo Kottke
Leadbelly
Adrian Legg
Mance Lipscomb
Joel Mabus
Fred McDowell
Peter McLaughlin
Scott Nygaard
Mark O'Connor
Charley Patton
Gayla Drake Paul
Al Petteway
Leon Redbone
Harvey Reid
John Renbourn
Tony Rice
Roy Rogers
Sandy Rothman & Steve Pottier
Martin Simpson
Chris Smither
Larry Sparks
Joseph Spence
Hans Theessink
Eric and Suzy Thompson
Richard Thompson
Artie Traum
Happy Traum
Merle Travis
Guy Van Duser
Doc Watson
Brooks Williams

Hammered Dulcimer
Karen Ashbrook
Cathy Barton and Dave Para
Tina Bergmann
Guy Carawan
Ceoltoiri
Mitzie Collins
Carrie Crompton
Malcolm Dalglish
Dan Duggan
Tony Elman
Scott Jackson
Ken Kolodner
Maddie MacNeil
Magical Strings
John McCutcheon
Walt Michael
No Strings Attached
Sam Rizzetta
Maggie Sansone
Steve Schneider
Bob Shank
Jerry Read Smith
Bill Spence
Linda Thomas and Dan DeLancey

Rick Thum
Trapezoid
Kendra Ward/Bob Bence
Joemy Wilson

Healthy
Elaine Purkey
Moving Hearts

Healthy (not!)
Bad Livers
Caroline Aiken
Fiddle Fever
Dead Can Dance
Mississippi John Hurt

Huh?
Asleep at the Wheel
Dead Can Dance
Ed's Redeeming Qualities
Five Chinese Brothers
Moxy Früvous
Nudes
Phranc
Rude Girls
Shooglenifty
Sons of the Never Wrong
Chic Street Man

Hyperbole
Amazing Blondel
Amazing Rhythm Aces
Incredible String Band

I Can See You!
Keola Beamer
Fletcher Bright
Bright Morning Star
Sunshine Skiffle Band

Irish Pipers
Seamus Ennis

Klezmer
Klezmatics
Klezmer Conservatory Band
Klezmorim
Andy Statman

The Ladies of Bluegrass
All Girl Boys
Kathy Kallick
Alison Krauss
Laurie Lewis
Claire Lynch
Kate MacKenzie

Mandolin Greats
Buckhannon Brothers
Sam Bush
Rudy Cipolla
Tom Espinola and Lorraine Duisit
Skip Gorman
David Grisman
Jim and Jesse
Mando Mafia
Evan Marshall
Mike Marshall
Tim O'Brien
Peter Ostroushko
Andy Statman
Chris Thile
Joe Val
Frank Wakefield
Radim Zenkl

Mentally Disturbed
Iris DeMent
Benton Flippen
Joanie Madden
Psychograss
Strange Creek Singers

Modern Day Cowboys
Gene Autry
Don Edwards
Waddie Mitchell
Michael Martin Murphy
Riders in the Sky

Mountain Dulcimer
Atwater/Donnelly
Rosamund Campbell
Mike Casey
Richard and Mimi Fariña
Alan Freeman
Gary and Les Gallier
Adie Grey
Lorraine Lee and Bennett Hammond
Neal Hellman
Lois Hornbostel
Kentucky Standard Band
Hollis Landrum
Margaret MacArthur
Maddie MacNeil
David Massengill
Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Heidi Muller
Mark Nelson
Don Pedi
Jean Ritchie
Jerry Rockwell
Sally Rogers
Kevin Roth
Russell Family
David Schnaufer
Betty Smith
Susan Trump

Needs to Eat Less
Big Bill Broonzy
Chubby Carrier
Chubby Wise

Needs to Eat More
Flaco Jimenez
Don McLean
Fred Small
Judy Small

Not So Colorful
Ralph Blizard
Bukka White
Josh White
Josh White Jr.
The Whites

Old Time Bands
Any Old Time Stringband
Bayou Seco
Bing Brothers
Boiled Buzzards
Camp Creek Boys
Chicken Chokers
Country Ham
Critton Hollow
Deseret String Band
Double Decker String Band
Farmer's Daughters
Freight Hoppers
Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Hollow Rock String Band
Horseflies
Mill Run Dulcimer Band
New Lost City Ramblers
Piney Creek Weasels
Primitive Characters
Red Clay Ramblers
Red Mountain White Trash
Rhythm Rats
Skeeter and the Skidmarks
Skillet Lickers
Strange Creek Singers

Old Time Banjo Players
Clarence (Tom) Ashley
Cathy Barton and Dave Para
Mac Benford
Dock Boggs
Laura Boosinger
Pap Brewer
Paul Brown
Bob Carlin
Dwight Diller
Tony Ellis
Wayne Erbsen
Cathy Fink/Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer
Marvin Gaster
Frank George
Sara Grey
Roscoe Holcomb
David Holt
Mark Johnson
Diane Jones and Hubie King
Grandpa Jones
Will Keys
Walt Koken
Bascom Lamar Lunsford
Joel Mabus
Uncle Dave Macon
Michael Miles
Arnie Naiman and Chris Coole
George Pegram
Ken Perlman
Mike Seeger
Morgan Sextons

Old Time Fiddlers
Dave Bing
Ralph Blizard
Fletcher Bright
James Bryan
Snake Chapman
Roger Cooper
Wilson Douglas
Lyman Enloe
Benton Flippen
J.P. Fraley/J.P. and Annadeene
Skip Gorman
Bruce Greene
Ed Haley
John Hartford
Tommy Jarrell
Earl Johnson
Jake Krack
Brad Leftwich/Leftwich and Higginbotham
Bruce Molsky
Dirk Powell
Lonnie Robertson
Geoff Seitz
Mark Simos
Lynn "Chirps" Smith
Rafe Stefanini
Fred Stoneking
Pete Sutherland
Kirk Sutphin
Buddy Thomas

On the Map
America
American Cafe Orchestra

Arcady
Dan Bern
Boys from Indiana
Cache Valley Drifters
Charles River Valley Boys
Chesapeake
Critton Hollow
John Denver
Connie Dover
Dubliners
Eddie from Ohio
Joe Ely
Five Chinese Brothers
Front Range
Annie Gallup
Golden Gate Quartet
John Hartford
Jerry Holland
Hoosier Hot Shots
Cisco Houston
Mississippi John Hurt
Kentucky Colonels
Kentucky Standard Band
Kingston Trio
Laurel Canyon Ramblers
Uncle Dave Macon
Taj Mahal
Memphis Jug Band
Memphis Minnie
Mississippi Sheiks
Patsy Montana
Nashville Bluegrass Band
Patrick Street
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Washington Phillips
Piney Creek Weasels
Don Reno & Red Smiley
Strange Creek Singers
Union Springs
Woodstock Mountains Revue

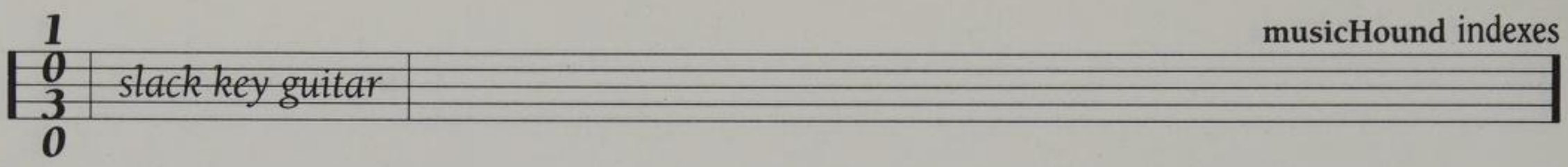
Professional
Artisan
Dock Boggs
Roy Book Binder
Pap Brewer
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Chieftains
Crash Test Dummies
Foremen
John Forster
Ben Harper
Hobo Jim
John Lee Hooker
Albert King
B.B. King
Carole King
Charlie King
James King
Mando Mafia
Mike Marshall
Dave Mason
Bill Miller
Buddy Miller
Ed Miller
Emmitt Miller
Roger Miller
Muleskinner
Queen Ida
Saw Doctors
Skillet Lickers
Doc Watson

Real Gems
Jewel
Garnet Rogers
Saffire

Rock Crossover
The Band
Cindy Lee Berryhill
Black 47
Karla Bonoff
Brave Combo
Jeff Buckley
Buffalo Springfield
Jimmy Buffett
T-Bone Burnett
J.J. Cale
Bruce Cockburn
Cordelia's Dad
Country Joe and the Fish
Cowboy Junkies
Crosby, Still, Nash and Young
The Eagles
Everly Brothers
Dan Fogelberg
The Fugs
Grateful Dead
Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks
Rickie Lee Jones
Carole King
k.d. lang
The Leaves
Loggins and Messina/Kenny Loggins
Lovin' Spoonful
Sarah McLachlan
Tracy Nelson
Michael Nesmith
Harry Nilsson
Kelly Joe Phelps
Bonnie Raitt
Otis Redding
Linda Ronstadt
The subdudes
Uncle Tupelo/Son Volt/Wilco
Jesse Winchester
Jesse Colin Young
Neil Young

Should Get Together
Will Keys and Kevin Locke
Grit Laskin and Tommy Sands

Singer-Songwriters
Eric Andersen
Dan Bern
Tony Bird
Eric Bogle
Billy Bragg
Chuck Brodsky
Greg Brown
Jackson Browne
Andrew Calhoun
Guy Carawan
Harry Chapin
Tom Chapin
Mary Chapin Carpenter
Tracy Chapman
Guy Clark
Leonard Cohen
Lui Collins
Jim Croce
Catie Curtis
Julian Dawson
Ani DiFranco
Anne Dodson
Bob Dylan
Fred Eaglesmith
Cliff Eberhardt
Kat Eggleston
Jason Eklund
Betty Elders
Stephen Fearing
Ferron
Steve Forbert
Bob Franke
Tret Fure
Jon Gailmor
Annie Gallup
Steve Goodman
John Gorka
Greg Greenway
Patty Griffin
Grace Griffith
Nanci Griffith
Kristin Hall
Tim Hardin
Jack Hardy
Bill Harley
John Hartford
Margo Hennebach
Sara Hickman
Anne Hills
Janis Ian
Michael Jerling
Jewel
Si Kahn
Cindy Kallet
Lucy Kaplansky
James Keelaghan
Kris Kristofferson
Patty Larkin
Christine Lavin
Larry Long
Rod MacDonald
Dougie MacLean
Kate MacLeod
David Mallett
David Massengill
Kimberly M'Carver
Joni Mitchell
Katy Moffatt
Buddy Mondlock
Bill Morrissey
Pete Morton
Peter Mulvey
Lee Murdock
Elliott Murphy
Carrie Newcomer
Randy Newman
Laura Nyro
Phil Ochs
David Olney
Kristina Olsen
Deb Pasternak
Ellis Paul
Pierce Pettis
Bruce U. "Utah" Phillips
Tom Prasada-Rao
John Prine
Willis Alan Ramsey
David Rea
Gamble Rogers
Garnet Rogers
Stan Rogers
Les Sampou
Tommy Sands
Maria Sangiolo
Claudia Schmidt
Carla Sciaky
Martin Sexton
Cosy Sheridan
Richard Shindell
Michelle Shocked
Jon Sholle
Jane Siberry
Paul Siebel
Dick Siegel



Paul Simon
Fred Small
Judy Small
Darden Smith
Michael Smith
Rosalie Sorrels
Jeanie Stahl
Bill Staines
James Taylor
Livingston Taylor
Townes Van Zandt
Suzanne Vega
Eric Von Schmidt
Jane Voss
Loudon Wainwright
Sloan Wainwright
Jerry Jeff Walker
Kate Wallace
Linda Waterfall
Gillian Welch
Paula Joy Welter
Susan Werner
Camille West
Cheryl Wheeler
Erica Wheeler
David Wilcox
Dar Williams
Lucinda Williams
Victoria Williams
Cris Williamson
Kate Wolf

Slack Key Guitar
Keola Beamer
Sonny Chillingworth
Hui Ohana
George Kahumoku
Moses Kahumoku
Rev. Dennis Kamakahi
Raymond Kane
Ozzie Kotani
George Kuo
Leonard Kwan
Gabby Pahinui
Pahinui Brothers

Tactile Sensations
Kinky Friedman
Fuzzy Mountain String Band
Furry Lewis

Tejano
Flaco Jimenez

That's Amore
Amazing Rhythm Aces
Love
Laura Love
Lyle Lovett
Lovin' Spoonful
Nightnoise
Ranch Romance
Sweethearts of the Rodeo

Tin Whistle
Mary Bergin
Joanie Madden

Topographical Features
Noel Hill
Anne Hills
Patrick Sky

Travelling People
Freight Hoppers
Hobo Jim

Unclothed?
Bare Necessities
Mason Daring
John Lee Hooker
Nudes
Buffy Sainte-Marie

Weather Phenomena
Lightnin' Hopkins

Western Swing
Milton Brown
Bob Wills

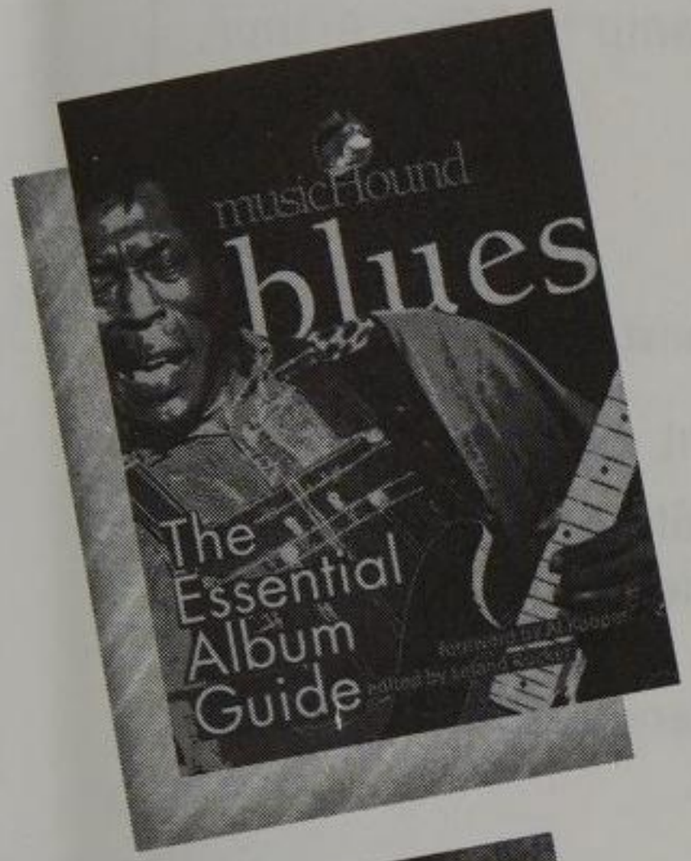
What's That Sound?
Vince Bell
Delia Bell & Bill Grant
Jim Ringer

Where's the Restroom?
Kristin Hall
Tom T. Hall
Rooftop Singers

Who's Driving?
Asleep at the Wheel
Judy Austin
Keola Beamer
Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young
Bill Harley
Van Morrison
Cheryl Wheeler
Erica Wheeler

Wild Things
Acousticats
Duck Baker
Tony Bird
Bluegrass Cardinals
Boiled Buzzards
Buffalo Springfield
The Byrds
Snake Chapman
Chicken Chokers
Country Joe and the Fish
J.D. Crowe
Nick Drake
The Eagles
Joe Falcon and Cleoma Breaux
Patty Griffin
Horseflies
Hot Tuna
Spider John Koerner
Magpie
Mr. Fox/Bob Pegg
Old Blind Dogs
Oyster Band
Primitive Characters
Rhythm Rats
Butch Robins
The Roches
Salamander Crossing
Seals and Crofts
Skylark
Cat Stevens
Trout Fishing in America
Kitty Wells
Kate Wolf
Wolfstone

Attention, Music Lovers:
We've got what you need



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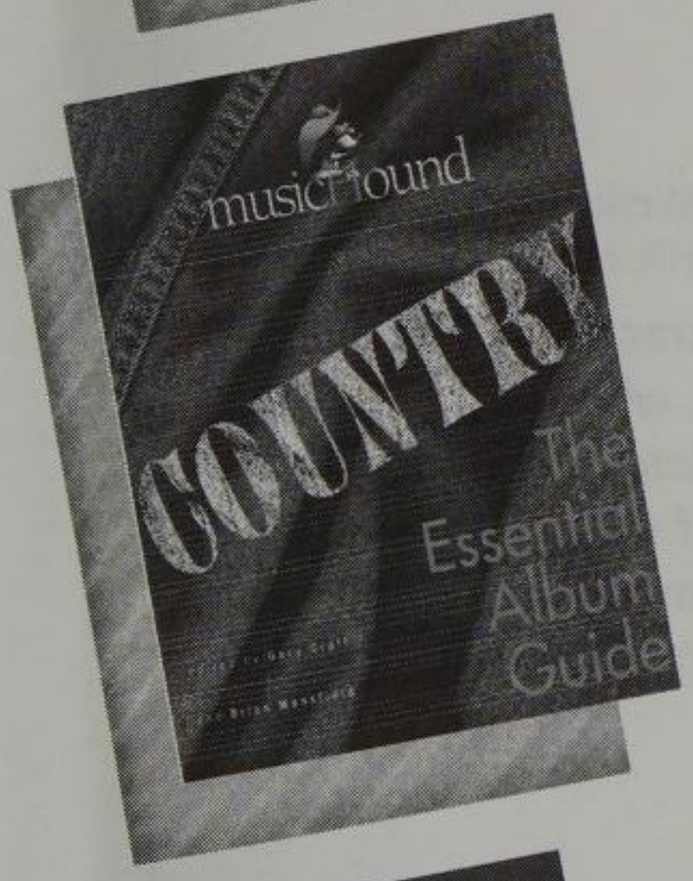

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You'll Get No More of Me

Hazel Dickens

(Hazel Dickens/Happy Valley Music, BMI)
From *A Few Old Memories* (ROUN 11529)

Hazel says she came across the line "you get no more of me" in a 17th-century poem. The phrase jumped out at her, and she later wrote this song around it. She explains that in some relationships, even after one person leaves, they continue to take, and often end up taking much more than they leave behind.

Shortening Bread

The Freight Hoppers

(traditional)
From *Waiting on the Gravy Train* (ROUN 0433)

"'Shortnin' Bread' has been a popular melody in the south for longer than anybody can remember. This version was influenced mainly by Georgia string bands who were recording in the 1920s."—bandmember Frank Lee

J'ai Vu le Loup, le Renard et la Belette

Balfa Toujours

(traditional, arranged by Dewey Balfa)
From *Deux Voyages* (ROUN 6071)

The Balfa Brothers "Cajunized" this track after hearing it performed in virtually every small community they visited in France in the early 1970s. Here, Christine Balfa and band perform the song from their debut Rounder recording.

Reel Béatrice

Natalie MacMaster

(traditional)
From *No Boundaries* (ROUN 7023)

This track features two reels—"Béatrice (Oggi Nevica)," which Natalie learned from Baltimore fiddler Jesse Smith, and "Seán sa Chéo," a well-known Irish reel that she learned from Cheticamp fiddler Arthur Muise.

75 Septembers

Cheryl Wheeler

(Cheryl Wheeler/Amachrist Music—Penrod & Higgins Music, ASCAP)
From *Driving Home* (PHIL 1152)

From Cheryl's 1993 Philo debut, this track was written for her father's 75th birthday. It features guitarist John Jennings, as well as backing vocals from Mary Chapin Carpenter and Jonathan Edwards.

These Cold Fingers

Bill Morrissey

(Bill Morrissey/Dry Fly Music, BMI)
From *Standing Eight* (PHIL 1123)

This is the closing track on Bill's third album, *Standing Eight*, which was hailed as a masterpiece by *Rolling Stone* and introduced him to legions of new fans. The song, with Morrissey's trademark slice-of-life grittiness and pathos, lingers long after the final notes.

Common Bond

The Kennedys

(Pete & Maura Kennedy/1998 Cherry Log Music/Cherry River Music, BMI)
From *Angel Fire* (PHIL 1211)

"Written during a teaching residency at Manhattanville College, this song was inspired by the writings of playwright and Czech president, Václav Havel, probably the only world leader who really is an unashamed idealist. We can dig that."
—Pete & Maura Kennedy

Cover photo of Pete Seeger
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folk

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—Mark D. Moss,

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Neal Walters has been a folk music performer, teacher and collector for nearly 30 years. He writes a review column for the *Dulcimer Player's News* and recently co-published *30 Old Time Songs for Mountain Dulcimer and Autoharp*.

Brian Mansfield is the co-editor of Visible Ink's *MusicHound™ Country*. His work also appears in *USA Today, Country America* and other publications.

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